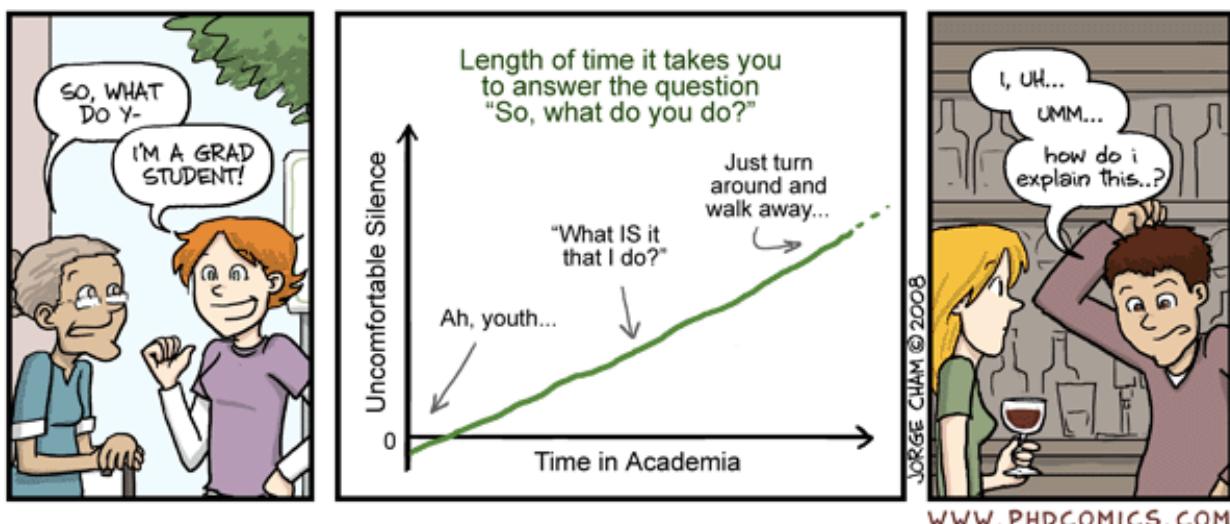


# Science Communication

**UPGEN778 Session 6 / Nov. 13 – 29, 2017**  
**2-3:30 p.m., GSRB 1 4002 ([map](#))**



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## Course Description

"The Public" -- taxpayers, policy makers and pundits -- often doesn't speak your language. But they DO have a powerful influence over your work. In this six-part workshop, we'll share some techniques that will help you communicate your work more effectively with a variety of audiences beyond your colleagues. We will have you practice telling your scientific story in several ways, from tweets and radio interviews to science cafes, blog posts and crowdfunding campaigns. We'll also introduce you to working with a university news office and the news media. Effective communication can help you get noticed by potential mentors and search committees, earn higher marks on your job and postdoc applications and advance your academic career. The workshops will include hands-on, active learning, so please bring writing materials or a laptop.

Date	To Do/Discuss in Class	Due
M 11/13	Welcome & introductions Why we struggle/Recognizing the expert blind spot	
W 11/15	What's in a word?	Assignment 1 due
F 11/17	Metaphor, analogy and simile, in words and numbers	
M 11/20	Understanding with your eyes	Assignment 2 due before Thanksgiving
M 11/27	Storytelling & narrative	
W 11/29	Putting it all together	Assignment 3 due

### **Assignment 1 (due Wednesday, Nov. 15)**

You are wowed by a paper at a conference and you want to tell your friends about it. Read the following paper (three to choose from, to be announced in class -- stay tuned) and condense it into any ONE of these: a lay-friendly headline (5-10 words), a haiku, a song lyric, a limerick, or a sharable tweet (120 characters) that sums up the main point of the paper.

Please email your headline, haiku or tweet (etc.) to [ras10@duke.edu](mailto:ras10@duke.edu) and [kara.manke@duke.edu](mailto:kara.manke@duke.edu) by 2 a.m. on Wednesday Nov. 15, for us to review before Wednesday afternoon's class. Also, please bring a printed copy with you to class if you can. We will share and discuss these in class on Wednesday 11/15; be prepared.

**Recommended reading** before Wednesday: "[The index of banned words](#)" by Carl Zimmer.

Note: When you email your work, please name your document according to this formula: Scicomm.assignment.lastnamefirstinitial.doc. For example, if Jane Doe were to email her work for assignment 1, she would name her document: Scicomm.1.doej.doc. Observing this formula will make it less likely that we end up with 15 documents that are all named "My headline."

### **Assignment 2 (due any time before Thanksgiving, Thursday, Nov. 23)**

The *Journal of Badass Genomics* has invited you to submit a photo or image for consideration for the cover of their next issue. You don't have to be the photographer, but the photo/image should relate to your lab's work or to the work of someone in your department, and you must have permission to share it. Write a 100-word LAY LANGUAGE caption (be sure to credit the creator in your caption). See Examples at "1100 Words" <http://research.duke.edu/1100-words>.

Please email your image and caption to [ras10@duke.edu](mailto:ras10@duke.edu) and [kara.manke@duke.edu](mailto:kara.manke@duke.edu) any time before Thanksgiving (Nov. 23) for us to review before our next class. When we return from Thanksgiving you will view and vote on your favorites. The top image + caption combination will be considered for the 1100 Words feature on the Duke Research site at <http://research.duke.edu/1100-words>.

Note: JPEG or TIF image files are preferred, as large as possible up to 10 MB. As before, please name them according to this formula: Scicomm.2.lastnamefirstinitial

### **Assignment 3 (due Wednesday, Nov. 29; please choose one)**

*Option A)* Congrats! You just got a paper accepted in *YOURFAVORITEJOURNALOFTIME*. The journal has invited you to submit a public/media summary to help highlight your article. Say yes. Pick a recent (i.e., published within the last month) or forthcoming paper from your lab or department and write a lay summary in 400-600 words, using the tools and techniques we've talked about in class: analogies and metaphors, inverted pyramid story structure, simple vocabulary, etc.

Please name your document according to this formula: Scicomm.3.lastnamefirstinitial.doc. Email your summary to us by 2 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29. On the final day of our workshop you will share/critique these and vote on your favorites. The winner will be published on the Duke Research blog at <http://sites.duke.edu/dukeresearch/>.

For examples of public/media summaries of scientific papers, go to <http://www.eurekalert.org/>, and type in any research topic you wish in the search window in the upper left-hand corner.

Also recommended: "[The jargon trap](#)" and "[How to write a news story from a scientific paper](#)"

*Option B)* A project in your lab needs funding and your advisor wants you to launch a crowdfunding campaign. You'll need a project title, a photo, and a good lay-language summary (400-600 words) that

helps an ordinary person with a valid credit card understand WHY it's important and WHY they should help you. Please name your document according to this formula: Scicomm.3.lastnamefirstinitial.doc. Email your work to [ras10@duke.edu](mailto:ras10@duke.edu) and [kara.manke@duke.edu](mailto:kara.manke@duke.edu) by 2 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29. We will share/critique these at the final session.

For examples of successful crowdfunding campaigns visit  
<https://experiment.com/discover?order=funded>, and follow these tips:  
[https://experiment.com/start/the\\_basics](https://experiment.com/start/the_basics).

You can also meet a Duke researcher who used this approach:  
<http://www.prlog.org/12335621-researcher-raises-public-money-to-sequence-fern-genome-with-big-green-potential.html>  
<https://experiment.com/projects/azolla-a-little-fern-with-massive-green-potential>

*Option C)* Prepare and present a Three Minute Thesis, an annual competition for PhD students that got its start in 2008. A 30,000 word dissertation would take over three hours to present. You get three minutes -- that's 180 seconds -- and one Powerpoint slide. Practice and be prepared. Use the tools and techniques we've talked about in class to make it sing: visuals, analogies and metaphors, storytelling, simple vocab, etc. Watch examples of previous winners at <http://threeminutethesis.org/3mt-showcase>.

**Learn more:**

For answers to the question: why do it? What's in it for me? See the intro chapter to "Explaining Research" by Dennis Meredith: [http://dennismeredith.com/introduction\\_282.html](http://dennismeredith.com/introduction_282.html)

Advice for scientists who want to write for the public from NC State professor Rob Dunn:  
<http://www.yourwildlife.org/2013/06/advice-for-scientists-who-want-to-write-for-the-public/>