

# COMMUNICATING SCIENCE

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**Course Description:** Doctoral students in science disciplines spend countless hours learning how to conduct cutting-edge research, but comparatively little time learning to communicate the nature and significance of their science to people outside their field. To narrow this disparity we created an unusual course titled *Communicating Science* for doctoral science trainees at Rutgers University. Our goal was to help students develop an advanced ability to communicate their research clearly and accurately and to emphasize its value and significance to diverse audiences. Course design includes classroom instruction supplemented with improvisation, video recordings, and ample opportunity for students to practice and receive immediate, constructive feedback in a supportive environment. A multidisciplinary faculty with expertise in science, education, communication, and theater arts teach this course. Students also complete a Capstone project in which they work with a professional in the academic or private sector to explore a possible career aspiration. Assessment is based on class participation, critique and feedback on oral and poster presentations, and written abstracts about their research.

**Course Objectives:** As a result of taking our course, you will learn for both oral and written communication how to:

- Identify the essential message that defines your research
- Recognize the diverse audiences you speak to about your research
- Engage your audience and tell them why they should care about what you do
- Speak clearly and vividly in language your audience will understand

**Elements of the course include:**

- Lectures provided by a multidisciplinary core faculty with expertise in science, education, communication and theater arts (plus guest speakers)
- Improvisational exercises
- Opportunities to practice your presentations and get immediate feedback
- Learning to be peer listeners and evaluators
- Collaboration with a professional in an aspirational career-related project