**MC 4971 - 01: Coastal Environmental Communication**

Fall, 2014 – Section 1

Tuesday/Thursday: 12noon – 1:20pm

Meeting Location: 233 Hodges Hall

**Instructors:** Zeynep Altinay, Paige Brown

**Office:** Hodges 255; **Office hours:** TBA

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**Instructors’ Twitter handles:**@zemaltinay; @FromTheLabBench

**Course Twitter:** @SciCommLSU

**Course Hashtag:** #SciCommLSU

*\*We should respond to your e-mails within 24 hours, with the exception of weekends. If we don’t, send us a polite follow-up e-mail.*

*This is an environmental communication course. We expect you to conserve energy and resources. Please think before printing out readings or buying new books when you can purchase used copies or Kindle versions.*

# **Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the basic skills and knowledge required of an environmental communicator, with a focus on communicating about coastal Louisiana. Students will learn to think critically about the environment and its relation to social, economic, cultural, and global issues. In-class reading and writing exercises will reinforce the basic elements of environmental journalism including story idea creation, finding sources, the interview, communicating uncertainty and ethical issues. Because the investigation of environmental issues needs to address the underlying scientific causes, the course will cover the basics of science writing such as translating jargon, explaining scientific concepts and research methods, and engaging readers through words and visuals. We will discuss effective data visualization techniques in communicating coastal environmental issues.

Throughout the semester students will contribute to a class blog that discusses the sustainability of coastal Louisiana from ecological, social, cultural, economic issues, or policy perspectives. We will arrange field trips to vulnerable coastal communities to collect data, and conduct interviews with scientists/ residents, which students will use to post blog posts to <https://scicommlsu.wordpress.com/>. Students will become familiar with basic elements of publishable feature stories, narratives, editorials, reviews, and stories about scientists while producing in-depth coverage of coastal Louisiana.This course will cover basic and advanced principles of science communication, science journalism, environmental communication and environmental reporting. We will apply principles of environmental psychology to science communication, especially in the context of local and global coastal environmental issues. Students will be encouraged to engage with local environmental issues, and required to practice real-world environmental communication and environmental reporting in a variety of mediums. Students will also be expected to emerge themselves in environmental science news across a variety of media for the duration of this course.

**What are the course objectives?**

1. Make better-informed and critically-aware judgments about choices of language, visuals and media used in environmental and sustainability communication

2. Understand and engage with the complexity and challenges of effective coastal environmental communication

3. Explain and use major theoretical concepts in the field of environmental communication and environmental psychology

(\*Adjusted from International Environmental Communication Association)

**What are the course outcomes?**

* Students will learn the basics of covering scientific research
* Students will become familiar with interviewing scientists, interpreting scientific research papers, and writing press releases, news stories, blog posts and tweets about scientific research studies
* Students will learn the science of various local and global coastal environmental issues
* Students will learn how to apply environmental psychology to coastal environmental management

## What will I need to be able to take the course?

Students must successfully complete a college-level-writing course to become eligible. We encourage for students from a variety of disciplines to enroll to foster interdisciplinary discussions for effective environmental communication.

## What technology will be used to run the course?

The course will run on Moodle. We will send emails to your lsu accounts when necessary. We will use additional technologies social media (blogging sites, Twitter etc.). Students are responsible for configuring and learning the necessary technologies at their end.

**How will this course be evaluated?**

In this class we will be learning how to communicate environmental issues through several different mechanisms. Due to this, we would like to gauge your understanding of the course materials, and effectiveness of the tools and other materials used in the course through a series of questionnaires. This will help us in understanding the needs of the class, the progress of the class and the final takeaways from the class. These questionnaires will be completed three times throughout the course: at the beginning of the semester, mid-semester, and at the end of the semester. All evaluations will be anonymous with an independent evaluator developing and administering the data. This course has never been taught before at LSU, and thus will be experimental and interdisciplinary. We encourage students to provide feedback at any time during the course. We want this course to prepare you to communicate about environmental issues wherever your future career takes you, and we want your feedback course directions, topics, learning outcomes and guest speakers.

# **Required Materials:**

* Toms River, by Dan Fagin, available via Amazon (Kindle edition strongly recommended): <http://www.amazon.com/Toms-River-Story-Science-Salvation/dp/055380653X>
* Clayton & Myers. Conservation Psychology: Understanding and Promoting Human Care for Nature, available via Amazon (Rent or get Kindle edition): <http://www.amazon.com/Conservation-Psychology-Understanding-Promoting-Nature-ebook/dp/B005UQCUOS/ref=tmm_kin_title_0>

Other assigned readings will be posted to Moodle as PDFs, or as links to blog posts, news articles, etc. The course is designed to be a mixture of lecture and in-class discussions, so it is fundamental that you complete the required readings prior to class.

Over the duration of this course, you will also be required to have or to start a…

* **Twitter account (Course Twitter hashtag: #SciCommLSU)**

**Additional Readings and Comments:**

We strongly recommend that students follow news coverage of coastal communities of interest and comment on it depending on the class topic. Instructors can guide students to relevant articles or ask students to do their own research. Here is a selection of environment-related news stories about New Orleans and surrounding area to help you get started:

<http://www.sej.org/sej-annual-conferences/AC2014-new-orleans-and-area-environmental-news>

While this is not required, we encourage you to become a member of Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ). As a student, you may be eligible for reduced membership fees. Professional organizations are a great opportunity to network, and to learn the latest developments in your field.

Blogs to follow: [http://thestrategyroom.tumblr.com](http://thestrategyroom.tumblr.com/); <http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/> Additional reading [[Link](http://bigthink.com/age-of-engagement/reading-list-for-course-on-science-and-environmental-communication)]

# Graded Components:

*Your grade in this course will be based on the following*:

**1. Reading and in-class participation / Tweeting Critiques\* (100 points) 10%**

*\*Weekly Storify (of Tweets) worth 10 points - 6 Storifys* [*https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MdYDlhOlciMAsM\_VKf63AVpYIYAyhbESSxH2XFMxEaM/edit?usp=sharing*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MdYDlhOlciMAsM_VKf63AVpYIYAyhbESSxH2XFMxEaM/edit?usp=sharing)

**2. Regular class blog contributions (50 points - 5 posts worth 10 points) 5%**

\*Two blog posts will come from guest lectures

\*Three blog posts will be at your discretion / on topics that you choose. Be creative and use visual content.

\*You may also blog about any environmental communication or science communication research or stories as you wish! We will maintain this blog as a writing portfolio for you.

<http://scicommlsu.wordpress.com/>

**3. 7 Writing assignments (700 points; 100 points each) 70%**

*\*Specific instructions will be given out through the semester.*

*Unless otherwise noted as posts for the class blog, writing assignments will be turned in via Moodle. Some of these assignments are to be blogged, but don’t count toward your 5 regular class blog contributions.*

**4. Community Outreach Plan (150 points) 15%**

**Total (1000 points) 100%**

# **Grades:**

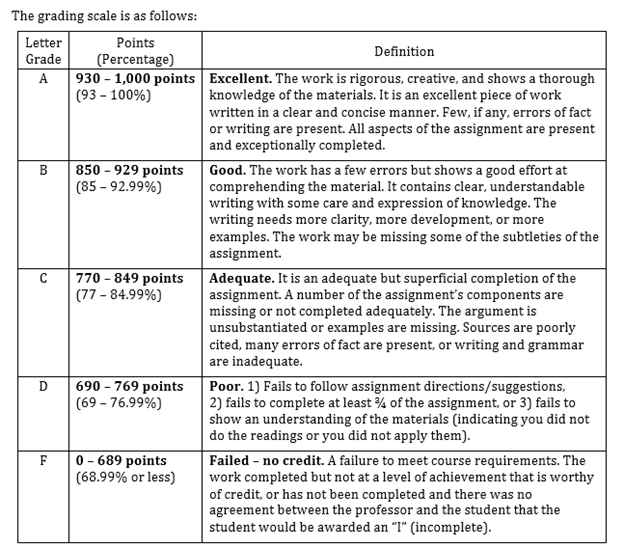
There are 1,000 total points possible in this course. We do not round grades up or down. Your point total is your final letter grade. An “A” in this class means you have demonstrated significant achievement. Please note that we will not discuss grades via e-mail or on the phone. If you have a question about a grade and would like to discuss it, you must meet with Zeynep or Paige in person within one week after you receive the assignment back with a grade. There is no exception to this policy that is designed to protect your privacy. Please not that under no circumstances will grades be rounded up.

# **Grading of Writing Assignments:**

Your writing will be evaluated on the quality of the finished product, with the criteria being organization; accuracy; completeness; fairness; clarity; conciseness; precision of language; and correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

**\*Tweeting Criques:**

For several weeks in this class, you will be assigned to read particular science blogs and critique the writers of those blogs via Twitter. You will be sending 3-5 tweets per day in critique of your assigned science bloggers. We will give you a guidesheet on how to critique the bloggers, using constructive criticism via tweets. At the end of each week, you will Storify all the tweets you sent and send your Storify to Paige Brown [[pbrow11@tigers.lsu.edu](mailto:pbrow11@tigers.lsu.edu)] for grading. Each Storify will be worth 10 points, and will go toward your class participation grade.



**Bonus: You will have the opportunity to earn up to 6 bonus points** with each credit worth 2 points of class credit for this class. You can earn these points as a research participant through the Manship School Media Effects lab. **Details will be announced through e-mail. You will be receiving e-mails from the MEL system DO NOT delete these e-mails.** Any bonus points you earn will be added to your final grade at the **end of the semester**. For example, if your final grade added to 895 points and you earned 6 bonus points, those 6 bonus points would be added for a final total of 901 points, which would be an A in the course. This will be the only bonus opportunity.

**Course Requirements and Format**

We will have discussions, in-class exercises, lectures and guest speakers. We expect you to be prepared for in-class assignments and projects. This means you will have to do your assigned readings BEFORE you come to class. You will also need to think about some real-life examples that relate to the weekly topic. This is to stimulate your intellectual curiosity and make the learning process more enjoyable and memorable.

**Moodle & Email** Moodle is an extension of the class syllabus. Other course reading and assignment materials along with class changes will be published on Moodle and/or I will use Moodle to email everyone. Moodle and email are the most effective ways for me to get in touch with you. Check Moodle and your LSU email AT LEAST ONCE every 24-hours for class updates and information.

**CLASS SCHEDULE Subject to change with in-class, email, or Moodle announcements. Additional in-class or out-of-class assignments may be given on any class day.**

**Grade appeals for any course work must be made in writing within two weeks after the grade is posted on MOODLE. The appeal must be typed and must include the assignment, due date, date it was turned in and the specific issue that warrants consideration of a grade change. A copy of the appeal must be provided to the instructor in person – NOT VIA E-MAIL- and in advance of an in-person meeting. All discussions of grades will take place in person – NOT VIA E-MAIL. Any appeals turned in late will not be considered. Any appeal of a final grade may be based only on assignment appeals. All appeals must be accompanied by the original graded assignment.**

The requirements for this class are broken down below:

**1.** **Reading and class participation (100 points, 10%)**

Class participation is required. You are expected to do all the readings for the course, attend classes regularly, complete reading(s) in advance of class, bring assigned readings to class (on your computers or in print), engage in in-class activities, ask guest speakers questions, and participate actively in class discussion when appropriate. Attendance is important to your learning in this class. You will earn participation points by completing in-class activities, engaging in in-class/ online discussions, and doing Twitter critiques of science bloggers we will assign to you. In addition to your 7 written assignments, you will also be contributing to a class blog about coastal environmental issues throughout the semester. At the end of the semester you are required to have at least 5 blog posts (each blog post is 10 points, for a total 5% of your grade or 50 points). One of these posts has to be related to *Toms River* by Dan Fagin. Write a story (no more than 750 words) that extends a topic, theme or event in the book.

Instead of [significance, the credentials of the author, his intentions, the contents of the book (with examples), and the value of the author’s arguments, information and insights. If explanatory style and exploratory techniques are important to the success, or lack of success, of the book, consider them too. To the extent that you can, offer enough good information so that even if your readers don’t read the book, they will come away with some knowledge and understanding.]

**2. Writing Assignments (700 points, 70%)**

**\****outlined in the course timeline & readings section*

### (\*Some of the assignments in this syllabus are adjusted from [The New York Times Reader: Science & Technology. For more information please contact the course instructors)](http://www.amazon.com/The-New-York-Times-Reader/dp/1604264810)

**3. Community Outreach Plan (200 points, 20%)**

This is a group project (no more than 4 students in each group). In real world, innovative outreach and engagement scholarships are given to those who can enhance partnerships between interdisciplinary teams; therefore for this project, we **strongly encourage** students to partner with students from other disciplines (i.e. journalism students partnering with science students).

Outreach is defined as two-way communication between the agency and the public to

establish and foster mutual understanding, promote public involvement, and influence

behaviors, attitudes and actions with the goal of improving the foundations for

stewardship. Environmental outreach disseminates information and sometimes asks audiences to take specific action, but doesn’t necessarily teach people how to analyze an issue. Outreach often presents a particular point of view, and often in pursuit of a particular goal. Examples may include a community meeting to inform residents about a toxic site in their area and where they can go for help, or a campaign to get volunteer participants for a beach or stream cleanup event.

In this assignment your goal is to develop an outreach strategy that is intended to ensure coastal communities in Louisiana are building relationships with its partners; providing timely and accurate information to constituents; maintaining a clear and consistent message; and increasing awareness and visibility of who we are, what we do, and how it benefits the region and nation as a whole. (\*Adopted from noaa.gov and epa.gov).

For a successful outreach plan, you need to (1) satisfy the definition of “environmental outreach,” and (2) address at least one EPA educational priorities listed below.

**EPA’s Educational Priorities are:**

(1) **EE Capacity Building:** Building the capacity of agencies and organizations to develop, deliver, and sustain comprehensive environmental education programs statewide. Capacity building applications may focus on one state, multiple states, or a region of the country.

(2) **Educational Advancement:** Using environmental education as a catalyst to advance state or local educational goals and to improve environmental literacy among students in formal education programs.

(3) **Community Projects:** Addressing environmental stewardship in a local formal or informal educational context, and using outdoor, place-based, experiential, service learning and/or community-focused stewardship activities as the primary teaching tool(s).

(4) **Human Health and the Environment:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and/or *training their educators* or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, in the outdoors and in classrooms, about human health threats from environmental pollution and how to minimize human exposure to preserve good health.

(5) **EE Teaching Skills:** Providing pre-service and in-service professional development for teachers, faculty, or non-formal educators to improve their environmental education teaching skills and/or knowledge about environmental issues and content, such as sustainability, water and air quality, chemical risks, hazardous wastes, climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

(6) **Career Development:** Educating students of any age group, from the very young through the elderly, and/or *training their educators* or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, about environmental issues, solutions and stewardship for the purpose of encouraging interest in careers in environmental fields. (\*Adopted from EPA).

**Timeline & Readings:**

**Week 1 [August 26 / 28] - Covering Scientific Research**

* What is science, How science works

(Process of Science further reading: <http://visionlearning.com/en/library/Process-of-Science/49>)

* How scientists do research
* How science publishing works (peer-review)
* Importance and Credibility of research publications
* How to find scientific papers online (hint\*: search Google Scholar)
* Public Understanding of Science

What is Science & Scientific Research [Lecture by Paige Brown]

Readings for August 26:

* How to Read a Scientific Article [[PDF](http://www.owlnet.rice.edu/~cainproj/courses/HowToReadSciArticle.pdf)] **\*Assignment 1 (due August 28): Read a peer-reviewed scientific article related to environmental science or environmental communication; take notes on the article according to the rubric in the reading. Explain the rationale of the study, the methods, the primary findings, any applications, and limitations of the study in lay language. 1-2 pages.**
* Huffington Post Blog: [How to Read and Understand a Scientific Paper: A Step-by-Step Guide for Non-Scientists](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-raff/how-to-read-and-understand-a-scientific-paper_b_5501628.html)
* Understanding scientific evidence: [Black Dog Syndrome Teaches Us a Crucial Lesson About Science](http://io9.com/black-dog-syndrome-teaches-us-something-very-important-1575185077) (online article)
* [Spotting Bad Science](https://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140429170349-3091133-can-you-spot-bad-science?trk=mp-reader-card) (blog post and infographic guide)
* Listen: NPR: [Why Reporting On Scientific Research May Warp Findings](http://www.npr.org/2014/05/19/313844261/why-reporting-on-scientific-research-may-warp-findings)

Public Understanding of Science [Lecture by Paige Brown + Zeynep Altinay]

Readings for August 28:

* [What's Next for Science Communication? Promising Directions and Emerging Best Practices](http://climateshiftproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NisbetScheufele2009_WhatsNextforScienceCommunication_PromisingDirectionsLingeringDistractions_AmericanJournalBotany.pdf) [[PDF](http://climateshiftproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/NisbetScheufele2009_WhatsNextforScienceCommunication_PromisingDirectionsLingeringDistractions_AmericanJournalBotany.pdf)]
* New Media: [Postpublication peer review on social media](http://blogs.egu.eu/palaeoblog/2014/05/12/social-media-and-the-seven-twitter-accounts/) (Blog post)
* National Science Foundation (2012). Public Attitudes Towards Science and Technology. Science and Engineering Indicators 2012. Washington, DC: National Science Foundation. [[PDF](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/pdf/c07.pdf)]
* What the public thinks it knows about science - EMBO Reports [[link](http://embor.embopress.org/content/4/12/1104)]

**SEJ Annual Conference, New Orleans, September 3-7 - Risk and Resilience**

**\****Field trip opportunity on Saturday, September 6th*

<http://www.sej.org/initiatives/sej-annual-conferences/AC2014-agenda-saturday>

**Week 2 [September 2 / 4] - Covering Scientific Research**

* How to be a good science writer
* Roles of science communicators
* Basics of communicating scientific research
* A topic is not a story
* Inverted Pyramid: How to write a journalistic story
* The 5 “W’s” of writing
* **Assignment 2: Translate a science research paper into story, 500-600 words. (Due Thursday September 11). *The science research paper itself is not a story - place the research in context, find the human element, talk to the scientists, etc. in order to FIND the story. Post your assignments on the class blog*** *(Note: blog post counts only toward writing assignment grade, not toward the 5 regular blog post requirement).*

Journalistic Writing and Communicating Science Research [Lecture by Zeynep]

Readings for September 2:

* The Guardian: [Should science journalists read the papers on which their stories are based? [](http://richannel.org/alok-jha-science-and-the-media--presentations)[link](http://www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2012/mar/28/science-jounalists-read-papers-stories)]
* How to read research and understand it. Paul Leedy (Chapter 3) (Moodle)
* A Science writer’s guide to reading research reports (Moodle)
* Watch: [Scientists and journalists need different things from science, a Debate](http://richannel.org/alok-jha-science-and-the-media--presentations).

Science Storytelling [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for September 4:

* Science Storytelling: [When Science Writes Itself](http://www.scilogs.com/super_terrestrial/when-science-writes-itself/%20) (blog post)
* [Telling science stories…wait, what’s a “story”?](http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/a-blog-around-the-clock/2011/07/13/telling-science-stories-wait-whats-a-story/) (blog post)
* How to deal with quotes (Moodle)
* [5 Secrets of Captivating Stories](http://web.stanford.edu/group/leopoldleadership/cgi-bin/wordpress/?p=3057) (blog post)
* [“A topic is not a story.”](http://www.thestoryboard.ca/a-topic-is-not-a-story-a-post-mortem-of-a-postmortem-on-columbia/) A post mortem of a postmortem on Columbia. (blog post)
* Spoof on writing about new papers: [“This is a news website article about a scientific paper”](http://www.theguardian.com/science/the-lay-scientist/2010/sep/24/1) (by [@mjrobbins](https://twitter.com/mjrobbins))
* How Can You Make Science News Better? Ask a Historian or Sociologist of Science. ([Drexel news blog](http://newsblog.drexel.edu/2014/06/05/how-can-you-make-science-news-better-ask-a-historian-or-sociologist-of-science/))

**Week 3 [September 9 / 11] - Covering Environmental Issues**

* Journalistic writing of environmental issues: norms and routines?
* Don’t fall for ‘false balance’
* How to interview
* **Assignment 3: Do a journalistic story on a local environmental issue, 750 words. (Due Tuesday October 23). *Find a story that is interesting or important enough to warrant full-length treatment for your campus newspaper or blog. Locate local and national experts with whom you can consult and interview to write your story. Find the human element and put the science in context. Post your assignments on the class blog.*** *(Note: blog post counts only toward writing assignment grade, not toward the 5 regular blog post requirement).*

Understanding controversy around science (Lecture by Zeynep)

Readings for September 9:

* Ideas in Science: Scientific Controversy: <http://visionlearning.com/en/library/Process+of+Science/49/Scientific-Controversy/181/reading>
* [Science controversies past and present](http://scitation.aip.org/content/aip/magazine/physicstoday/article/64/10/10.1063/PT.3.1295), Physics Today 2011 [[PDF](http://scitation.aip.org/docserver/fulltext/aip/magazine/physicstoday/64/10/PT.3.1295.pdf?expires=1403010643&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=1EC355E2E02080CB5B413509B5D6CBDD)]
* Kitcher, P. (2010). The Climate Change Debates. Science. 328. 4 June. 1230-1234. <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/328/5983/1230.1.full>
* Read & Listen: [This Is Why You Have No Business Challenging Scientific Experts](http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2014/05/harry-collins-inquiring-minds-science-studies-saves-scientific-expertise) (Mother Jones)

Journalistic norms and routines on science and environment [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for September 11:

* Boykoff, M. T., & Boykoff, J. M. (2007). Climate change and journalistic norms: A case-study of US mass-media coverage. Geoforum, 38(6), 1190-1204. [[PDF](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/222546638_Climate_change_and_journalistic_norms_A_case-study_of_US_mass-media_coverage/file/72e7e528bf12aa92b6.pdf)]
* Flogging a dead norm? Newspaper coverage of anthropogenic climate change in the United States and United Kingdom from 2003 to 2006 [[PDF](http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/2007.39.pdf)]
* Is journalism failing on climate? <http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/7/4/041003>
* [Should we talk about scientific uncertainty?](http://www.scilogs.com/from_the_lab_bench/should-we-talk-about-scientific-uncertainty/) (blog post)
* [Covering the environment beat (how environmental reporters are doing it)](http://www.theopennotebook.com/2014/06/03/covering-the-environment-beat/) (Blog post)

**Week 4-6 [September 16 / 18 / 23 / 25 / 30] - Environmental News, the News Ecosystem and Social Media**

* How the media covers environmental issues
* The science news media ecosystem in the digital age
* Science communication and Social Media
* Blogging, social networking sites
* How information spreads on social media; credibility of information
* Multi-media storytelling
* **Assignment 4: Go online and look up science bloggers’ sites. Compare and contrast them for content and form. Pick out the things you especially like and don’t like in these blogs. Whose blogs do you prefer, and why? What makes a good blog post? Based on your analysis, draw up a tip sheet, with examples, for what makes a good blog post. Include tips for telling a good story, getting people engaged, drawing people in, being scientifically accurate, being credible. If you read other blogs regularly, and they offer tips would be great for science writers to try, include them. Work individually and turn in your detailed response (word document) via Moodle before Thursday September 25.**
* **Assignment 5: Shadow a scientist at LSU (an environmental scientist or another scientist who does research on something environmental issue related) in the lab or in the field for a day, and write a story about the scientist’s research and daily routine in a way that humanizes the scientist and tells a story (Due Tuesday October 7). *Post the story to the class blog, no word limit. Include visuals or audio.*** *(Note: blog post counts only toward writing assignment grade, not toward the 5 regular blog post requirement).*

**Handouts:**

* + **Who makes a good subject?**
  + **Narrative checklist**

**Week 4**

The science news media ecosystem in the digital age [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for September 16:

* Fahy, J. & Nisbet, M.C. (2011). The Science Journalist Online: Shifting Roles and Emerging Practices. Journalism: Theory, Practice & Criticism. [[HTML](http://climateshiftproject.org/2011/09/28/the-science-journalist-online-shifting-roles-and-emerging-practices/)]
* An explosion of alternatives, exploring the future of science journalism (EMBO article by Paige Brown, [*http://embor.embopress.org/content/early/2014/06/26/embr.201439130*](http://embor.embopress.org/content/early/2014/06/26/embr.201439130))

Science, Environment and Social Media [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for September 18:

* O’neill & Boykoff. The Role of New Media in Engaging the Public with Climate Change [[PDF](http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/2011.04.pdf)]
* EMBO Reports: [Public communication of science 2.0](http://embor.embopress.org/content/early/2014/06/18/embr.201438979) [PDF to be available on Moodle or e-mailed to class by Paige]
* [Big Picture Lessons from an Unfortunate Tweet](http://www.scilogs.com/communication_breakdown/shepherd-climate-discussion/) (blog post)
* [Guidelines for Twitter… on Science](http://www.scilogs.com/from_the_lab_bench/how-i-reached-2000-twitter-followers-for-science/) (blog post)
* \*See this database of Scientists on Twitter: <http://tweetyourscience.com/database/> and this list of enviromental scientists to follow on Twitter: <http://www.mastersinenvironmentalscience.org/33-environmental-scientists-worth-following-on-twitter.html>

**Week 5**

Climate Literacy [Zeynep]

Readings for September 23:

* Climate Literacy: The basics of climate sciences [[PDF](http://www.c2es.org/docUploads/ClimateLiteracyBooklet.pdf)]
* A Reporter’s Field Notes on the Coverage of Climate Change: <http://e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2130>
* Climate Change in the American Mind April 2014: <http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication/article/climate-change-in-the-american-mind-april-2014/> [[PDF](http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication/files/Climate-Change-American-Mind-April-2014.pdf)]
* Additional resource: Climate Change 101 <http://www.c2es.org/science-impacts/climate-change-101>

How the media covers environmental issues: A Case Study [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for September 25:

* Read the original research article in PNAS: Female hurricanes are deadlier than male hurricanes [[PDF](http://www.columbia.edu/~dls2192/PNAS-2014-Jung-1402786111.pdf)]
* New York Times Opinion: [She Gets No Respect](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/12/opinion/nicholas-kristof-she-gets-no-respect.html?_r=0)
* The Economist: [Hurricanes with women’s names seem to kill more than do those with men’s](http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21603243-hurricanes-womens-names-seem-kill-more-do-those-mens-deadlier)
* Nat Geo blog post: [Why Have Female Hurricanes Killed More People Than Male Ones?](http://phenomena.nationalgeographic.com/2014/06/02/why-have-female-hurricanes-killed-more-people-than-male-ones/)
* Slate: [Hurricanes Named After Women Are More Dangerous? Not So Fast.](http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2014/06/03/are_hurricanes_named_after_women_more_dangerous_not_so_fast.html)
* IO9: [No, Female Hurricanes Are Not Deadlier Than Male Hurricanes](http://io9.com/no-female-hurricanes-are-not-deadlier-than-male-hurric-1585563258)
* Slate: [Falling for Familiar Narratives](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2014/06/stereotyped_social_science_reporting_the_new_york_times_washington_post.html)
* Reply from the original research article authors [[PDF](http://publish.illinois.edu/shavitt/files/2013/07/PNAS-Reply.pdf)]
* The press release: [Hurricanes with female names more deadly than male-named storms, study finds](http://www.news.illinois.edu/news/14/0602genderedhurricanes_SharonShavitt.html)
* KSJ Tracker: [Extraordinary claim of the week: Hurricanes with girly-girl names less respected and therefore, more deadly](https://ksj.mit.edu/tracker/2014/06/extraordinary-claim-week-hurricanes-girl/)
* \***In-class assignment: Based on what you have read, rewrite this study as a news article. Less than 500 words. Do not simply paraphrase or summarize the readings. Be creative. You can use the quotes and facts in the articles. Bring your laptops to class for this assignment.**

**Week 6**

Multi-media storytelling + visual communication on climate change - September 30 - **Tour to Mississippi River Model, Tour by Clint Wilson**

**October 2 - Fall Holiday (no class)**

**Week 7-8 [October 7 / 9 / 14 / 16] - Local and Global Environmental Issues**

* Science of environmental issues
* Policy and Societal Implications of Environmental Issues
* Readings related to environmental advocacy, etc.
* Uncertainty and Risk communication
* **Assignment 6: Write a feature story on a coastal environmental issue (Due Thursday November 6). Come up with a topic that gets a bum rap in the natural world and would, if science supports it, make a good explanatory feature for your campus paper, blog etc. Do background research about the issue and find expert sources. Be sure to include what most people think, with the evidence to support an alternate view. Include visuals if you think they could reinforce your explanation. Before you start this assignment compare and contrast various explanatory features with respect to their use of definitions, comparisons, transformative explanations and other explanatory techniques that will help your piece. Between 1000-1500 words plus visuals or multimedia. Submit via Moodle.**
* **Handout: Explanatory Feature Checklist**

Science of Global and Local Environmental Issues [Lecture by Zeynep]

Readings for October 7

* IPCC 2013 Report - Chapter 1 [[PDF](http://www.climatechange2013.org/images/report/WG1AR5_Chapter01_FINAL.pdf)]
* Video: <http://youtu.be/6yiTZm0y1YA>
* *Read introduction and brief history sections*: White House Roadmap for Restoring Ecosystem Resiliency and Sustainability [[PDF](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/100303-gulf-coast-roadmap.pdf)]
* Learning resources: Louisiana Coastal Area: <http://www.lca.gov/learn.aspx#>

Societal Implications of Environmental Issues [Discussion by Paige and Zeynep]

Reading for October 9

* Tom’s River, Dan Fagin (Read thoroughly, you will be asked to discuss this book in class)
* **Voluntary Blogging Assignment, to count toward your 5 blog posts**: *Write a blog post that is a reflection of Tom’s River, your thoughts on it, how the author used (or did not use) good science communication to tell his story, how it relates to you or environmental issues where you live. Due before class.*

Risk Communication [Lecture by Paige]

Readings for October 14

* Nisbet (2011) Communicating About Climate Risks While Avoiding Dire Messaging [[html](http://bigthink.com/age-of-engagement/communicating-about-climate-risks-while-avoiding-dire-messaging)]
* Pidgeon and Fischhoff. The role of social and decision sciences in communicating uncertain climate risks [[article online](http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v1/n1/full/nclimate1080.html#auth-2)]
* David Ropeik. The Importance of Risk Perception for Effective Climate Change Communication [[link](http://www.climatecentral.org/blogs/the-importance-of-risk-perception-for-effective-climate-change)]

Crisis Communication

***\*Guest Lecture, Dr. Andrea Miller*** *(be prepared to blog or Tweet about this lecture - can count towards your 5 regular blog posts requirement)*

**Week 9 [October 21 / 23] - Strategic Environmental Communication**

Best practices in environmental communication [Lecture by Zeynep]

Readings for October 21:

* Communicating Climate Change: Closing the Science-Action Gap (Moser and Dilling Ch 11) [[PDF](http://www.climateaccess.org/sites/default/files/Moser_Communicating%20Climate%20Change_0.pdf)]
* Hartings, MR and Fahy, D. (2011). Communicating Chemistry for Public Engagement. Nature Chemistry. Vol 3. September, pp 674-677. [[PDF](http://climateshiftproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HartingsFahy_NatureChemistry.pdf)]
* Nisbet. Communicating Climate Change: Why Frames Matter for Public Engagement [[online article](http://www.environmentmagazine.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/March-April%202009/Nisbet-full.html)]
* Environmental Interpretation: How to Communicate Persuasively [[online article](http://www.environmentmagazine.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/March-April%202009/Nisbet-full.html)]

October 23: Use class time to allow students to form groups for the outreach project. Please come to class with name tags that clearly communicate your field of study **(i.e. Zeynep; Environmental Science)**

**Week 10-11 [October 28 / 30, November 4 / 6] - Environmental Psychology**

**[Lectures by Paige]**

Covering Climate Change and Psychology [Watch Video during class]

* Watch: Revkin, A. (2011). Conveying the Climate Story. Presentation to the Google Science Communication Fellows Program. [[Watch the Online Video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lU_4OR3hOyo)]

Readings for October 28:

* The Nerd Loop: <http://thebenshi.com/?p=2632>
* Climate, Communication and [The Nerd Loop](http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/climate-communication-and-the-nerd-loop/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0) [read and watch the video]
* Chapter 1, Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]

Psychology of Environmental Issues

Readings for October 30:

* Psychology of Climate Change Communication [[PDF](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/_/pdf/CRED_Psychology_Climate_Change_Communication.pdf)]
* The Psychology of Global Warming: Improving the Fit between the Science and the Message [[PDF](http://www.rsmas.miami.edu/users/pzuidema/Newell10_climatechangepsych.pdf)]
* Chapter 2, Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]

Environmental Psychology applied to Communications

Readings for November 4:

* Mooney. The Science of Why We Don’t Believe Science. [[online article](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2011/03/denial-science-chris-mooney)]
* The Dragons of Inaction [[PDF](http://www.scp-knowledge.eu/sites/default/files/knowledge/attachments/The%20Dragons%20of%20Inaction.pdf)]
* Chapter 12 (“Hope”), Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]

Promoting Pro-Environmental Behavior

Readings for November 6:

* Expert Interviews with Environmental Psychologists: Best Practices in Environmental Communication (by Paige Brown and Zeynep Altinay: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1091455>)
* Chapters 4, 9 and 10, Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]

**Week 11-12 [November 11 / 13 / 18 / 20] - Environmental Education and Outreach [Lectures by Zeynep / Paige]**

Environmental Education

Readings for November 11:

* [Art of Communication](http://anyroadhome.wordpress.com/2014/05/31/art-of-communication/)
* Chapter 11, Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]
* Section II (“Interactions with Nature”), Clayton & Myers Conservation Psychology [book]

Coastal zone management & outreach

Readings for November 13:

* <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/tools/czm/>
* <http://resiliency.lsu.edu/>
* <http://www.lsu.edu/ur/ocur/lsunews/MediaCenter/News/2013/03/item59027.html>
* <http://design.lsu.edu/landscape/?cat=29>
* <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/>
* <http://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/0/Documents/what_we_do/focus_areas/hazard_resilient_coastal_communities/resources/Sea_Grant_Hurricane_Projects_2012.pdf>
* <http://coastalresilience.org/geographies/gulf-mexico/what-can-be-done/community-outreach>
* <http://masgc.org/climate-outreach-community-of-practice>
* <http://www.seagrantpr.org/outreach/community_development.html>
* <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/outreach/welcome.html>

Environmental Outreach (November 18 / 20)

\***Guest Speaker: Lauren, Sea Grant** (*Expect to blog or Tweet this guest lecture - can count towards your 5 regular blog posts requirement*)

* **Assignment: Come up with a community outreach plan (group assignment)**
* **Outreach Plan: data visualization component, education materials, social media plan, various stories / materials**

**Week 13-14 [November 25\*, December 2 / 4] - Science and Environmental Policy [Lectures by Zeynep Altinay]**

**\*November 27 - Thanksgiving Break (no class)**

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Margaret Reams** (*Expect to blog or Tweet about this guest lecture*)

Environmental Policy

Readings for November 25:

* (Vig & Kraft) Environmental policy over four decades
* (Rosenbaum, A) Science, politics, and policy at the EPA
* OTA report. Executive summary <http://www.princeton.edu/~ota/disk1/1995/9517/9517.PDF>
* Adger. Social and ecological resilience
* Adger et al. Social-Ecological Resilience to Coastal Disasters

“In the second decade of the twenty-first century, environmental policy is being challenged as never before. New demands worldwide for dealing with risks of climate change, threats to biological diversity, and meeting the rising aspirations of the planet’s 7 billion people will force governments everywhere to rethink policy strategies and find original ways to reconcile environmental and economic goals. In the United States this new decade has seen a stagnant economy and persistently high unemployment, which has encouraged policymakers to blame environmental policies and regulations for hindering economic growth and job creation” (Vig & Kraft).

**Assignment 7 (Due December 4):**

**1. Look at the evolution of coastal environmental policies from early 1900’s to the present try to identify several of the most apparent trends and discontinuities. What was happening to the relationship between the coastal U.S. population, the government, and the environment?**

**a. How would you divide that history into episodes? What were the driving issues and concerns?**

**b. Who were the most important players in setting the environmental agenda during those episodes? Write a 500-word response paper answering these questions.**

**2. Now, find a new development regarding the coastal environment that has raised public fears or concern; and research the issue and decide whether the concerns are warranted. Why? Why not? Write a 350-word editorial piece, using logic and evidence to persuade your audience of your opinion. Post your responses on our class blog under a single post.** *(Note: blog post counts only toward writing assignment grade, not toward the 5 regular blog post requirement).*

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# Course Policies

**Course Expectations:**

* Unless we state otherwise, individual assignments are due by noon on the due date. We will not accept late work under any circumstances. If you miss assignments or if you are unable to complete them due to tardiness, you will receive a zero.
* You should read, view and listen to media for topical environmental issues, either locally or globally
* Smart phone and laptop use is only allowed in class if students are using social media for class purposes, i.e. live-tweeting lectures, engaging in class discussion, etc. Social media use for personal purposes is not allowed, and students may be asked to leave class if they are not paying attention. Use of computers to surf the web, play computer games or check e-mail is prohibited. We may ask you to leave if we see this occurring.

**Class Absences:**

It is vital for you to attend class and to be on time. Your participation will be evaluated on your readiness for class discussion, familiarity with the readings, and weekly contributions in class as well as on social media (for example via our class Twitter hashtag).

Excused absences are those recognized by LSU: illness, family emergency, and special curricular/extracurricular requirements. Routine medical appointments, job interviews and research for an assignment for another course are not valid reasons for missing class. If you have an unanticipated absence from class, you must present documentation of the reason for the absence on the day your return. We will determine the validity of the absence. It is your responsibility to check with a classmate about upcoming assignments or missed information.

Make-up work for anticipated absences should be handled in the following way: If you are participating in a university-sponsored activity, let us know the reason for your absence in writing (e-mail is acceptable) as soon as you learn of the activity. If an assignment is due while you are away, you must turn it in early (or via e-mail by the due date) and provide a brief written note explaining why you will be absent. When you return, you must see us about making up the in-class assignments you missed. The best way to ensure being allowed to do makeups is to have a valid reason for missing class, documentation for that absence, and timely contact with us.

**Class Cancellation**

If class is cancelled for any reason (e.g., inclement weather, professor illness), We will make every effort to notify you via email. Get into the habit of checking your LSU email accounts before coming to class.

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a documented disability that may require academic adjustments or accommodations, please speak with us and contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. The office is located in 112 Johnston Hall and the telephone number is (225) 578-5919.

**LSU Statement on Diversity**:

Diversity is fundamental to Louisiana State University’s (LSU) mission. LSU is committed to creating and maintaining a living and learning environment that embraces individual difference. Cultural inclusion is of highest priority.

LSU recognizes that achieving national prominence depends on the human spirit, participation, and dedicated work of the entire University community. It further recognizes that the National Flagship Agenda: LSU 2010 will be realized by bringing together diverse ideas, perspectives, skills, and talents of the nation's pre-eminent scholars, brightest students, and leading higher education professionals.

Through its Commitment to Community, LSU strives to create an inclusive, respectful, intellectually challenging climate that embraces individual difference in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, spirituality, socioeconomic status, disability, family status, experiences, opinions, and ideas.

LSU proactively cultivates and sustains a campus environment that values open dialogue, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and cultural competence– the driving forces that enrich and enhance cutting edge research, first-rate teaching, and engaging community outreach activities. LSU reflects on its past and looks toward the future. Welcome to the Now, a time and place where diversity is on the move.

**Academic Pursuit**:

One of the goals of your college pursuit should be not only to obtain a career but an education. Based on that premise, we expect you to leave your stereotypes at the door. This is an inclusive course in which you are open to express your thoughts, ideas and feelings in a respectful manner in a relevant situation. Conversely, we expect you to be a respectful listener and a thoughtful colleague.

**Writing**:

All courses within the Manship School of Mass Communication focus on the importance of writing. **To be successful in today’s world, it is critical that you write well.** As such, your grade for each aspect of this course will be based on the quality of your thinking and writing. All assignments should be free of inaccuracies, weak thinking, typos, spelling errors and grammatical problems. Please consult the document titled **Manship School Writing Essentials**. In addition, all work for this course should be in AP style. Your writing for this course will be graded based on your adherence to the Writing Essentials handout and AP style.

**Personal Presentation**

The reality of this field is people judge you by how you look and by how you speak. Your use of language, the clarity of your speaking and your general appearance and professional bearing will shape the opinions of those who are listening to you. If you make a poor presentation, your grade will suffer. We will also grade you on the basis of the facts you assemble and the astuteness of your analysis of the problem.

**Academic Honesty**:

Students must adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. ***Unless otherwise noted***, you are expected to complete all homework, assignments, projects, and exams by yourself. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses punishable under the academic dishonesty provisions of the Code of Student Conduct. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's words, structure, ideas, or data, failure to identify any source (including interviews, surveys, etc.), published in any medium (including on the Internet) or unpublished, from which words, structure, ideas, or data have been taken” (LSU Code of Student Conduct). This course will be using ***Turnitin*** built in the class Moodle page as a form of detecting plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes presenting work created for another course as original work created during this course. Professors who suspect students of cheating or plagiarism are ***required*** to report such indiscretions to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students then determines the appropriate course of action, which may include failure on an exam, a paper, or a project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion from the university.

Please read the LSU Code of Conduct at http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument#5.1 for specific information.

**Digital Communication “Netiquette”:**

Our differences add richness to our learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued in digital interactions and generate unintended disruptions. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course ambience. This is especially important when interacting as a class on social media. It is so very hard to judge the “tone” of digital interactions. That said, we encourage all of you to interact with one another with respect, tact and appreciation when using social media, text messages and e-mail. These are your colleagues. Every one of us will make mistakes throughout this course, but we should be professional enough to deal with one another with consideration poise and class. Professionalism points will be reduced if you do not show respect to your classmates or professor in any and all course interactions.

Your professor and fellow students wish to foster a safe learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may seem, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea- but you are not to attack an individual. Personal attacks of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in an “F” and/or dismissal from the course. What constitutes a personal attack is solely up to the discretion of the professor.

**Deadlines:**

Deadlines will be given for all work. These deadlines will not be extended. Meeting deadlines is essential to be successful in this course and in the mass media field. Your work must be completed and handed in by the specified date and time. Incomplete work turned in by the deadline will receive partial credit. If you miss a deadline without having a valid excuse, you will receive zero points on the late work.

