Effective Scientific Presentation and Public Speaking

Everyone will come away a more skilled and confident speaker than they were before

Geophys. 205 / Geol. Sci. 306 / Earth Sys. Sci. 204  Fall | T Th 9:30 -11:20 am
in 211 Thornton Center  | 2 units | <14 grad students

The ability to present your research in a compelling, concise, and engaging manner will enhance your professional career. I will work to convince you that the best way to capture an audience and leave a lasting impression is to tell a story, do a demo, or pick a fight. Virtual presentations are now here to stay, and so demand new skills including video, sound, lighting, virtual posters, live vs. pre-recorded content, and so the class will be ~2/3 in-person classes and ~1/3 via Zoom.

The course is taught as a series of stand-and-deliver exercises with class feedback and revision on the fly, supplemented by one-on-one coaching. We focus on conference presentations, job interviews and job talks, departmental seminars, press interviews, and funding pitches. Guest reporters, head hunters, and venture capitalists will join us for some exercises. It’s best to take this course when you have research to present. Grades are completely optional, and are based on in-class exercises (70%), and your final presentation (30%). The syllabus and class topic schedule is in Canvas and http://syllabus.stanford.edu

2020-2021 Course Evaluation Comments

“This class is a fantastic way to improve your skills and confidence in public speaking. I think every student could benefit from this course, taught by such a talented and caring professor. 10/10 would recommend.”

“Take it! This course will teach you loads of strategies to improve your scientific presentations. I loved the format: each student would give a short section of a talk, then everyone would give feedback, then you would give that section again trying to incorporate the feedback on the fly.”

“You will get good exposure to giving several different types of presentations. It’s awesome to have the opportunity to practice and get feedback in a safe space.”

“Take it! One of the best experiences to boost your confidence in public speaking.”

Given by Ross Stein, Lecturer in Geophysics, Temblor, Inc. CEO & cofounder

2022 American Geophysical Union College of Fellows Distinguished Lecturer,
2020 Seismological Society of America Distinguished Lecturer, 2018 Geological Society of America Distinguished International Lecturer, 2014 TEDx talk, “Defeating Earthquakes”

Ask me questions: ross@temblor.net