

Spoken Science Communication Training Seminars

University of Southern California

December 6th and 7th, 2012

Agenda

Thursday, December 6th, 2012 :

9:00 am – 9:30 am – Workshop: Introductions and Icebreakers – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only. [The following sessions are best in a classroom or small conference room].*

The beginning of an intensive three-hour workshop, we spent the first thirty minutes introducing one another and warming up our mouths and minds.

9:30 am – 10:15 am – Workshop: The Nature of Communication – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only.*

Together with the facilitator, students discuss some basic principles of human communication, and the unique role of communication in scientific research.

10:15 am – 12:00 pm – Workshop: Practice Presentations – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only.*

Student volunteers give short presentations to the group, using material they have prepared in advance. These presentations are followed by a group critique aimed to highlight both the speaker's strengths and weaknesses.

Wednesday, December 7th, 2012 :

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm – Seminar: Mastering Public Presentations – *Open to All.*

This lecture-style seminar addresses some of the unique challenges that scientists and engineers face when called upon to speak publicly. It covers topics including use of voice, movement, finding an audience, proper use of graphs and figures, the importance of critique, and tips for speakers of English as a second language. The lecture portion last approximately 80 minutes, followed by a Q&A.

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm – Workshop: Introductions and Icebreakers – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only.*

The beginning of an intensive three-hour workshop, we spend the first thirty minutes introducing one another and warming up our mouths and minds.

2:30 pm – 3:15 pm – Workshop: The Nature of Communication – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only.*

Together with the facilitator, students discuss some basic principles of human communication, and the unique role of communication in scientific research.

3:15 pm – 5:00 pm – Workshop: Practice Presentations – *Pre-registered Graduate/Post-Doctoral Students Only.*

Student volunteers give short presentations to the group, using material they have prepared in advance. These presentations are followed by a group critique aimed to highlight both the speaker's strengths and weaknesses.

About the Speaker:

Tim Miller is a communications expert who works exclusively in the field of scientific and technical communication. He has appeared at museums, universities, and professional societies from coast to coast. He holds degrees in physics and engineering, and his diverse background includes training in theater and filmmaking. He has appeared on radio and television, and has been a consultant to the National Science Foundation. He is currently based in Los Angeles.

About the Seminar:

Mastering Public Presentations:

The scientific process is not just about generating ideas; it is about freely sharing those ideas with the broader world. Now, more than ever, the ability to recruit students, attract colleagues, garner attention, and secure funding is tied to your ability to successfully communicate the results of your work, both to peers and to the general public. In this session, you will learn some fundamental tips and tricks for speaking publicly, obtain some valuable tools for crafting and delivering powerful presentations, and be introduced to a method of critique that will help you in giving and receiving constructive feedback from your colleagues.

Graduate Student Preparation:

In advance of our workshop, each of the graduate student participants should prepare a brief talk summarizing a current or future research project. These talks should include the use of visual aids, but should not exceed 8 minutes in length. This material should focus on the aims and methods of the proposed research, and should clearly highlight why such work is important.