# HPSC0036 Engaging the Public with Science

# Course Syllabus Spring 2024

This module focuses on the many different ways in which publics engage with science in face-to-face contexts. Reading will particularly focus on how scientists engage members of the public through direct interactions such as science festivals and museums, and on how specific public groups, such as patient and citizen groups get involved, and engage with, scientific and medical research. In light of this reading, students will develop a practical understanding of how to organize such activities. Students will also critically reflect on the theory and context that underpins such activities such as models of publics and audiences, rationales for engagement in different contexts and the wider policy contexts and historical trends.

## Basic course information

| | |
|---|---|
| Moodle Web site: | https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=28053 |
| Assessment: | One piece of coursework, 2,500 words for STS students and 3000 words for iBScs |
| Timetable: | www.ucl.ac.uk/timetable |
| Prerequisites: | No prerequisites |
| Required texts: | See reading list below and Moodle. |
| Course tutor(s): | Course convenor: Professor Charlotte Sleigh |
| Contact: | c.sleigh@ucl.ac.uk |
| Web: | http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/sleigh |
| Office location: | 22 Gordon Square, Room 3.2 |
| Office hours | Email for appointment |

## Schedule

| UCL Week | Lecture / Seminar | Lecture Date | Lecture Topic | Activity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | 1 | 11th Jan | Introduction to module, context to public engagement, | Key concepts, terms and identities |
| 21 | 2 | 18th Jan | | Choosing projects, scouting for relevant literature |
| 22 | 3 | 25th Jan | Where? Engagement in policy and museum contexts | Developing projects |
| 23 | 4 | 1st Feb | Who?: Citizens engaging with science | Developing projects |
| 24 | 5 | 8th Feb | When engagement gets tricky | Developing projects |
| 25 | | | Reading Week | |
| 26 | 6 | 22nd Feb | | Groups 1-3 present 2 readings |
| 27 | 7 | 29thFeb | | Groups 4-6 present 2 readings |
| 28 | 8 | 7th Mar | | Groups 1-3 present pitches |
| 29 | 9 | 14th Mar | | Groups 4-6 present pitches |
| 30 | 10 | 21st Mar | | Final assessment clinic |
| 25th March 2024 | | | | |

Engagement in a policy context, Scientists doing engagement, Citizens engaging with science, Engagement in the museum setting

## Assessments

**Summative assessed coursework (i.e. for marks)**

One piece of coursework, 2,500 words for STS students and 3,000 words for iBScs.

- Approx 1500 words will be about the group project, and should be jointly written. This will account for 50% of the mark. The account should explain the how, where, who and why of the project.
- The balance of 1000 words (or 1500 for iBScs) should be written individually. This will account for 50% of the mark. The account should explain the relevance of approx. 5 pieces of academic writing for the project. These may include giving a rationale for doing the project in a particular way, or even reasons why the project is unsatisfactory in its described form. The account should contextualise the project in the evolution and relevance of public engagement, and the various forms in which it takes place, whilst considering the varying effectiveness of approaches to more deliberative democracy and policy development.

**Formative assessment (not marked: qualitative feedback only)**
Oral project pitch – each group will have 15 minutes to pitch their proposed activity to the 'client'. Each member of the group must contribute to a part of the presentation.

**General criteria for assessment**
The departmental marking guidelines can be found in the STS Student Handbook. Criteria for specific pieces of assessment will be available via the Moodle page and discussed in class.

## Aims & Objectives

**Aims**

This course aims to engage students with the theory and practice of engaging the public with science via face-to-face activities in multiple public contexts.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this course students should be able to:
1. Demonstrate a practical understanding of face-to-face engagement with science activities in a range of public contexts
2. Offer analysis of the theoretical underpinnings of practical activity in this area.
3. Understand the historical and policy context within which public engagement has developed
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of public engagement processes in particular social contexts
5. Reflect on the purpose, relevance and effectiveness of public engagement via face-to-face activities.

In addition, by the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. Demonstrate research skills appropriate to Year 2 STS modules
2. Demonstrate time and project management, working to tight deadlines
3. Demonstrate independence and initiative in project work

## Reading List

*Core readings include:*

Bennett, D.J. and Jennings, R.C. eds., 2011. *Successful Science Communication: Telling It Like It Is*. Cambridge University Press.

Gregory, J. and Miller, S., 2000. *Science in public*. Basic Books.

Holliman, R., Whitelegg, L., Scanlon, E., Smidt, S. and Thomas, J., 2009. *Investigating science communication in the information age: Implications for public engagement and popular media*. Oxford University Press.

Irwin, A., 1995. *Citizen science: A study of people, expertise and sustainable development*. Psychology Press.

Public Understanding of Science, Special issue. See http://pus.sagepub.com/content/23/1.toc
Stilgoe, J., Lock, S.J. and Wilsdon, J., 2014. Why should we promote public engagement with science?. *Public Understanding of Science*, *23*(1), pp.4-15.
*Other books of interest:*

Bauer, M.W. and Bucchi, M. eds., 2008. *Journalism, science and society: Science communication between news and public relations*. Routledge.
Brake, M.L. and Weitkamp, E. eds., 2009. *Introducing science communication: A practical guide*. Palgrave Macmillan

Cheng, D., Claessens, M., Gascoigne, T., Metcalfe, J., Schiele, B. and Shi, S., 2008. Communicating science in social contexts. *New Models, new Practices (Berlin, 2008)*.

Gilbert, J.K., Lewenstein, B.V. and Stocklmayer, S.M., 2013. *Communication and Engagement with Science and Technology: Issues and Dilemmas: a Reader in Science Communication*. Routledge.

Hecker, S., Haklay, M., Bowser, A., Makuch, Z., & Vogel, J. (Eds.). (2018). *Citizen Science: Innovation Open Scien*. UCL Press. See ebook open access at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press/browse-books/citizen-science

Holliman, R., Thomas, J., Smidt, S., Scanlon, E. and Whitelegg, L., 2009. *Practising science communication in the information age: Theorising professional practices*. Oxford University Press.

Epstein, Steven. "The Rise of Recruitmentology' Clinical Research, Racial Knowledge, and the Politics of Inclusion and Difference." *Social Studies of Science* 38.5 (2008): 801-832.

*Essential and other readings:*

All essential readings will be listed on and available via Moodle, unless specified. Further details on readings for the module and assessments will be posted on Moodle.

You are encouraged to start your own research to find readings and sources that relate to the module materials, and to take a general interest in key public engagement debates, controversies, and breakthroughs throughout the module. Here are some useful sources to start with:

Online Journals:
Public Understanding of Science: http://pus.sagepub.com
Science, technology & human values: http://sth.sagepub.com
Science Communication: http://scx.sagepub.com
Journal of Science Communication http://jcom.sissa.it

Useful websites:
- Sciencewise: http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk
- Involve https://involve.org.uk/
- Zooniverse: https://www.zooniverse.org
- Beacons for Public Engagement: http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/work-with-us/completed-projects/beacons
- British Science Association: http://www.britishscienceassociation.org
- Science Grrl: http://sciencegrrl.co.uk

- The UCL Public Engagement Unit: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement
- National Co-coordinating Centre for Public Engagement: http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/explore-it
- UCL Public and Cultural Engagement (PACE): http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pace
- Wellcome trust: http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/funding/public-engagement
- RCUK Public Engagement: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/pe/
- Center for Public Engagement with Science & Technology: http://www.aaas.org/pes
- The Royal Institution: http://www.rigb.org/about/mission-and-vision
- The Times Cheltenham Science Festival: http://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/science
- Think Lab: http://www.think-lab-web.co.uk
- Newton's Apple: http://www.newtons-apple.org.uk

Do not forget to read and follow relevant blogs, news stories, and twitter feeds of relevant institutions and scientific figures in the public domain (such as Brian Cox and UCL's own Hannah Fry), and relevant TV and Radio programmes.

## Important policy information

Details of college and departmental policies relating to modules and assessments can be found in the STS Student Handbook www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/handbook

All students taking modules in the STS department are expected to read these policies.