

HPSC0127 – Engaging the Public with Science Course Syllabus

2021-2022 Session | Dr Stephen Hughes & Dr Simon Lock |
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Course Information

This module critically explores the theory and practice of public engagement practices across a range of contexts. Alongside gaining a practical understanding of how to organize engagement activities, students will critically reflect on the theory and context that underpin them. Students will examine theories of imagined publics, unruly engagement, and the interplay of reason and emotion within contexts such as governance, research, citizen science to better understand public engagement and to design better engagement activities.

Engaging the Public with Science will take place both online and face to face sessions. Students will experience a blended learning experience with a combination of asynchronous (on your own) and synchronous (in the presence of the course tutor) activities.

Basic Course Information

Moodle website	Search “HPSC0127”
Assessment	Individual: 2000-word essay (40%) Group: Oral presentation (30%) Group report (30%)
Timetable	See www.ucl.ac.uk/timetable
Prerequisites	None
Required Texts	None
Course tutor(s)	Dr Stephen Hughes Dr Simon Lock
Contact	stephen.hughes@ucl.ac.uk simon.lock@ucl.ac.uk
Office Location	B14 2.2, 22 Gordon Square

Schedule

This course will be delivered online and in-person group activities. Students will be expected to engage with the Moodle resources and activities assigned to each week and to attend seminars.

UCL Week	Topic	Date	Activity
6	What Does it Mean to Engage the Public with Science?	-	Online Material
		10/01/22	Face to Face Seminar
7	Theorising and Critiquing Public Engagement	-	Literature Survey and Presentation
		17/01/22	
8	Governance, Justice, Power: Engaging Communities and Citizens	-	Online Material
		24/01/22	Face to Face Seminar
9	Science Communication: Public Engagement in a Research Context	-	Online Material
		31/01/22	Face to Face Seminar
10	Passionate Engagement: Informal and Unruly Engagement	-	Online Material
		07/02/22	Face to Face Seminar
11	READING WEEK	14/02/22	Reading! Reading!
12	Engagement Practice: Group work Assessment preparation and Aims & Objectives	-	Online Material
		21/02/22	Face to Face Seminar
13	Engagement Practice: Why do Engagement? **Individual essay due Friday 4 th March at 5pm**	-	Online Material
		28/02/22	Face to Face Seminar
14	Engagement Practice: Audiences	-	Online Material
		07/03/22	Face to Face Seminar
15	Engagement Practice: Activities	-	Online Material

		14/03/22	Face to Face Seminar
16	Engagement Practice: Evaluation	-	Online Material
		21/03/22	Face to Face Seminar
	Group video pitches and reports due Friday 8 th April at 5pm		

Assessments

%	Description	Deadline	Word Limit	Deadline for Tutors to Provide Feedback
40%	Essay	04/03/22	2000 words	
30%	Group presentation – video pitch	04/04/22	15 minutes	
30%	Group presentation - report	04/04/22	2000 words	

Individual Critical Review Essay

Each student must write a critical review essay analysing a public engagement activity within the context of relevant theory covered during the course of the module. The review must be on a project or activity that has not explicitly been discussed in class. It must also be on a different type of activity to a student's group scenario. More information, including a marking rubric is available on Moodle.

This essay is worth 40% of the final mark for this module.

Group Presentation – Video Pitch

Students will, as a group, choose a scenario from those provided in class, and work together to design a public engagement activity which they will then be assessed on by an oral pitch and a report.

Each group will submit a 15 minute video pitching their proposed activity to a 'funding panel'. Students will be assessed largely on the content, but marks will also be awarded for the presentation itself. Each member of the group must contribute to a part of the presentation. The format is flexible and can be for example a narrated presentation, or a filmed to camera presentation. All members of the group **MUST** contribute to the content. This is worth 30% of the final mark. Further details on this assignment will be provided on Moodle.

Group Presentation – Report

Each group will also provide a written rationale for their chosen activity, which will incorporate academic perspectives, justifying their approach. This is worth 30% of the final mark. Further details will be provided on Moodle. Specific criteria and rubrics for assessments will be provided on Moodle.

Course Aims and Learning 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 Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- demonstrate a practical understanding of public engagement with science activities in a range of public contexts
- offer analysis of the theoretical underpinnings of practical activity in this area.
- understand the historical and policy context within which public engagement has developed
- recognise the needs, priorities and motivations of specific stakeholder communities and be able to work in partnership to develop appropriate project ideas suitable for those contexts
- evaluate the effectiveness of public engagement processes in particular social contexts
- reflect on the purpose, relevance and effectiveness of public engagement.

By the end of the course, students should also be able to demonstrate:

- research skills appropriate to post-graduate taught modules
- time and project management, working to tight deadlines
- independence and initiative in project work
- sensitivity and aptitude for working in partnership with wider community groups and/or relevant stakeholders
- effective oral and written communication skills with a wide range of audiences

Reading List

See 'Library Resources' block on Moodle.