

# Syllabus

## GEO 4938 Communicating Science

**Instructor:** Stephen Mullens – email TBD

Office: Turlington Hall 3203

Office Hours by appointment, but most likely on Mondays and Wednesdays.

**Class times:**

Mondays, 1:55-4:55 am; Turlington Hall 3018

**Textbook:** None

**Course Objectives - What we're going to cover:**

- The basics of science communication and how to use storytelling on social media to increase science interest and literacy.
- What communications theory says it takes for people to react to a warning
- What it takes to empower people to act.
- What ethics might be involved in weather and science communication.
- How different members of the weather community might talk to different audiences.
- How to deal with folks who complain, criticize, and troll on social media.
- How to engage different audiences during quiet weather on social media.
- How managing a corporate social media account compares to managing your personal or individual professional account.

There is no textbook to purchase. Required reading will be assigned as the course progresses.

**Grading structure:** (Grades will be available on Canvas.)

30% Homework assignments

No late work accepted.

20% Story Circles

20% Midterm Exam

October 8th

30% Final Project

Due December 3<sup>rd</sup>; Will be announced October 8<sup>th</sup>

There will be no extra credit.

**Grades:**

A	90.0-100%	B+	86.7-89.9%	C+	76.7-79.9%	D+	66.7-69.9%
		B	80.0-86.6%	C	70.0-76.6%	D	60.0-66.6%

**No classes on:**

September 3<sup>rd</sup> – Labor Day

November 12<sup>th</sup> – Veterans Day

December 10<sup>th</sup> – Exam Week

## **UF POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

You are all bound by the student academic honor code.

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment”

### **ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES:**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

I appreciate that unexpected events occur in all of our lives. Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, court-imposed legal obligations, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. If such events occur, and it causes you to attend an event (e.g., funeral, job interview) or a facility (e.g., doctor's office, courthouse), then you will need to prove that you went to this event/facility on that date by providing some form of documentation of the event. An event program, a doctor's note, or similar paperwork will suffice. Upon producing this documentation, you will be able to make up the midterm exam or any graded class activities from that date.

A student should inform the instructor of the religious observances of his or her faith that will conflict with class attendance, tests or examinations, or other class activities prior to the class, test, or activity.

### **DISCLAIMER:**

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE:** (tentative)

27-Aug	Using storytelling
3-Sep	HOLIDAY - Labor Day
10-Sep	Hazards vs impacts
17-Sep	Special needs and impacts
24-Sep	Probabilities and confidence
1-Oct	Reducing jargon
8-Oct	<b>EXAM</b>
15-Oct	Communicating to the science deniers
22-Oct	ACTIVITY
29-Oct	Conducting media interviews
5-Nov	Either TV interviews, or reviewing interviews
12-Nov	HOLIDAY - Veterans Day
19-Nov	Engaging policymakers
26-Nov	ACTIVITY
3-Dec	<b>Project Presentations</b>
10-Dec	EXAM WEEK – But no exam