

# Science Communication & Environmental Media

ENVIRONMENT 242 | SPRING 2019

Professor Allison Carruth | [acarruth@english.ucla.edu](mailto:acarruth@english.ucla.edu)



## SEMINAR

W 2:00-4:00 PM | La Kretz Garden Pavilion (LKGP)–Room 101

## OFFICE HOURS

**Drop-in Wednesdays 4:30-6:00 in Kaplan, 262 (none on 5/8 or 6/5)**

Or by appointment–please sign up at [acarruth.youcanbook.me](http://acarruth.youcanbook.me)

## TEACHING FELLOW

Spencer Robins | PhD student in English | [spencersrobins@gmail.com](mailto:spencersrobins@gmail.com)  
Office hours: Mondays 2:30-4:30

## MEDIA CONSULTANT

Stefan Wanigatunga | MFA student in Film  
[stefan.wanigatunga@gmail.com](mailto:stefan.wanigatunga@gmail.com)

## COURSE SCOPE & LEARNING OUTCOMES

A weekly seminar for graduate students in UCLA's NSF-funded INFEWS program, this course introduces you to the methods and materials of science communication and environmental media. It examines a variety of new and old media—including popular science writing, documentary film, creative nonfiction, the op-ed, data visualization, and multimedia narrative / art. These primary materials serve as models for your individual and collaborative experiments in communicating environmental research to diverse audiences. We'll also discuss environmental concepts and methods drawn from the humanities and social sciences in order to put the sciences into conversation with other forms of knowledge and to illuminate both challenges to and strategies for articulating effectively the science of contemporary environmental challenges.

Students will gain expertise in strategic science communications and will learn how to transform data into multimedia narrative. You'll have the opportunity to test out multiple genres of writing and media making: among them, the project pitch, the interview, the visual essay, and the popular science article. Finally, you'll hone your ability to collaborate on cross-disciplinary projects that involve diverse disciplines and communities of practice.

## REQUIREMENTS

Description	Deadline/Date	% of Grade
<b>Seminar attendance &amp; participation</b>	Ongoing	15%
<b>"Lightning talk"</b> Very brief presentation designed for a cross-disciplinary audience with <i>no more than 6</i> visually compelling slides, 4 minutes exactly	<u>Rehearsal</u> Week of 4/22  <u>In seminar</u> 5/1 or 5/8	15%
<b>Collaborative environmental media experiment and 10-minute team presentation in final seminar meeting</b>  (1) <u>Visual environmental story</u> : identify a local community group that is tackling a specific environmental challenge in Southern California; gather 8-10 images/figures that help to tell a story of the community's experience of and efforts to address that challenge; develop a visual essay that tell this story in a nuanced, multi-perspective way; the text should take the form of a headline, a lead paragraph (125 words) and long captions for each image (50-75 words each plus image credit).  (2) <u>"Day in the life" of a UCLA scientist or lab</u> : research, develop and collaboratively craft a multimedia essay about an INFEWS-affiliated faculty member or lab; the final essay should have 1,000-1,200 words of text, 4-8 images/figures, and 1-2 very short videos.	(1) 5/12          (2) 6/2	30%
<b>Individual science writing experiments</b>  (1) <u>Popular science article</u> : identify an INFEWS topic related to your current research and then develop a nonfiction essay that tells the story of that research and its social context / implications. Imagine a diverse Los Angeles audience. Include ideas/expertise from outside your own field and from one or more community groups; final article should be 1,000-1,200 words and can include images/figures.  (2) <u>Mock interview transcript</u> : imagine an interview of you about your research by a journalist or media outlet; write a set of 3-5 hypothetical interview questions along with your responses, 600-800 words.	(1) 4/21 (Draft) (2) 6/12 (Final)          (2) 5/19	40%

## KEY POLICY NOTE

*All requirements must be completed to receive credit for the seminar. Assignments due on deadline unless extension is granted—request extensions at least 3-days in advance of deadline.*

## SCHEDULE *(all assigned materials are on CCLE course site)*

Date	Assigned Materials & Deadlines (Complete in advance of the seminar each week)
W 4/3	<p><i>Introduction   environmental history &amp; “varieties of environmentalism” today</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ Constitution of Ecuador, “Chapter 7: Rights of Nature” (2008)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH “Keeping the River,” <i>Tending the Wild</i> TV series, KCET (2017)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ K. Whyte, “Our Ancestors’ Dystopia Now” (2017)</li> </ul>
W 4/10	<p><i>Narrating environmental science–biodiversity &amp; extinction stories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ C. Darwin, “Galapagos Archipelago,” <i>Voyage of the Beagle</i> (1839)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ T. van Dooren, “Urban Penguins: Stories for Lost Places” (2014)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORE IUCN Red List, “Ivory-Billed Woodpecker” (2019)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH LENS   KCET, “Urban Ark Los Angeles” (2019)</li> </ul>
W 4/17	<p><i>Guest workshop–Penn Environmental Humanities Initiative, Data Refuge Storybank project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore Data Refuge &amp; Data Refuge Storybank websites (2016-present)</li> </ul>
<b>Su 4/21</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL DEADLINE</b> <b>Draft of popular science article</b>
W 4/24	<p><i>Narrating environmental science–pollution &amp; toxicity stories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ R. Carson, Chs. 1 &amp; 3, <i>Silent Spring</i> (1962)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ A. Lowenhaupt Tsing, “Blasted Landscapes” (2014)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> VIEW M. Zurkow, “Mesocosm (Wink, TX)”–animation artwork (2012)</li> </ul>
W 5/1	<p><i>Multimedia environmental narrative–images, video, data visualization</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORE “The Emissions Gap,” UN Environment (2018)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ “The Vertical Farm,” <i>New Yorker</i> (2017)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ/VIEW “Where Chinatown Began: Flying Over Owens Lake During California’s Drought,” <i>Vanity Fair</i> (2015)</li> </ul>
<b>W 5/8</b>	<b>DEADLINE “Lightning talks” in seminar (group A)</b>
W 5/8	<p><i>Engaging with communities of practice &amp; environmental justice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, “... Environmental Justice” (1991)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ R. Guha &amp; J. Martínez-Alier, “Environmentalism of the Poor” (1998)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH W. Muta Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Lecture–video (2004)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH Z. Kunuk &amp; I. Mauro (dir.), <i>Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change</i>–film (2010)</li> </ul>
<b>Su 5/12</b>	<b>COLLABORATIVE DEADLINE</b> <b>Visual environmental story of a local community</b>

<b>W 5/15</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL DEADLINE</b> <b>"Lightning talks" in seminar (group B)</b>
W 5/15	<p><i>Presenting specialized research in/for public audiences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ "Ingenious: Hope Jahren–Meet the Lab Girl," Nautilus (2016)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH "The secret life of plants – and 'Lab Girl' author Hope Jahren," PBS News Hour (2016)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> LISTEN Hope Jahren, "The Lab Girl," WBUR <i>On Point</i> radio show (2016)</li> </ul>
<b>Su 5/19</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL DEADLINE</b> <b>Mock interview transcript</b>
W 5/22	<p><i>Popular science–old &amp; new media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ G. Manaugh &amp; N. Twilley, "Touring the Largest Active Landfill in America" (2013)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH J. Konner (dir.), <i>The Majestic Plastic Bag</i>–film short (2010)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORE <i>Play the LA River</i> project</li> </ul>
W 5/29	<p><i>Stories for a changing planet</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ Charlie Jane Anders, "The Day It All Ended," from <i>Hieroglyph: Stories &amp; Visions for a Better Future</i> (2014)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ Arundhati Roy, "The Briefing" (2008)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> READ Mike Hulme, "Why We Disagree about Climate Change" (2009)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> WATCH UCLA Climate Lab, "Episodes #1 &amp; #6–short videos (2017)</li> </ul>
<b>Su 6/2</b>	<b>COLLABORATIVE DEADLINE</b> <b>A day in the life of a UCLA scientist or lab</b>
W 6/5	<i>Collaborative project presentations &amp; seminar wrap-up</i>
<b>W 6/12</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL DEADLINE</b> <b>Final version of popular science article</b>