



Communicating Research to Non-Specialists - Module Outline – *[Subject to change]*

Co-ordinator	Name Dr. Brian Hughes, <i>Centre for Research on Occupational and Life Stress</i>	Office Room 216 Cairnes Building NUI Galway	Ext 3568	E-mail brian.hughes@nuigalway.ie
Times	Classes:	Day 28/04/10 29/04/10 30/04/10	Time 09:30-17:00 09:30-17:00 09:30-13:30	Venue TBA TBA TBA
Overall Learning Outcomes	<p>Despite the fact that the whole of society are stakeholders in academic research, most researchers are poorly skilled at communicating their findings to audiences outside their own discipline. This can impede the dissemination of research knowledge, the development of applications or interventions based on research, the education of students and the public at large, and the career progression of individual researchers. On the other hand, the successful communication of research to broad audiences helps enhance public empirical literacy and the appreciation of knowledge, which in turn contributes positively to the social, political, and economic wellbeing of the population.</p> <p>The module aims to give students the opportunity to examine the consequences of population-level scientific and research literacy, to appreciate the principles of communication as they pertain to empirical research findings, to acquire skills in communicating research to non-specialists, and to evaluate how their own research might best be communicated. The module will involve practical skills training in both oral and written presentation of research.</p> <p>The module is oriented to researchers in social sciences areas, but is of relevance to all empirical disciplines, including physical and life sciences. The module is organised by the Centre for Research on Occupational and Life Stress in conjunction with the other member-centres of the Irish Social Sciences Platform at NUI Galway.</p> <p>Indicative Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this module, students should be able:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to critique the role of empirical research in contexts beyond their own academic discipline • to appreciate the differences among audiences, such as policy-making audiences, general popular audiences, and population audiences • to evaluate published research for clarity 			

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- to articulate technical research findings to a variety of audiences in oral presentations
- to articulate technical research findings to a variety of audiences in written presentations

The module comprises multiple themes covered over 2½ days in block release, as follows:

Day	Time	Session Title
Day 1	09:30-11:30	Communicating Research to Non-Specialists: Whys and wherefores
	11:30-12:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
	12:00-13:00	Rudiments of Communication: Theory and Practice
	13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
	14:00-15:30	Workshop: Writing about Research (Part 1)
	15:30-16:00	<i>Coffee</i>
	16:00-17:00	Workshop: Writing about Research (Part 2)
Day 2	09:30-11:00	The Public as Audience: Contributing to Popular Empirical Literacy
	11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee</i>
	11:30-13:00	Government as Audience: Communicating with Decision-Makers
	13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
	14:00-15:30	Workshop: Talking about Research (Part 1)
	15:30-16:00	<i>Coffee</i>
	16:00-17:00	Workshop: Talking about Research (Part 2)
Day 3	09:30-11:00	Media as Audience: Presentation by the University Press & Information Office
	11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee</i>
	11:30-13:00	Orientation on Assignment
	13:00-13:30	Close of Module

Format

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Contributors	<p>Lead Contributors:</p> <p>Dr Brian Hughes, <i>Centre for Research on Occupational and Life Stress</i></p> <p>Dr Siobhán Howard, <i>Centre for Research on Occupational and Life Stress</i></p> <p>Other contributing Research Centres and University units will include:</p> <p><i>Irish Centre for Social Gerontology</i></p> <p><i>Child and Family Research Centre</i></p> <p><i>Press & Information Office, NUI Galway</i></p>
Primary programme	ISSP Structured PhD in Social Sciences
Course Material	<p>A module website will be available at http://blackboard.nuigalway.ie.</p> <p>This facility will be used to download module materials and speaker presentations, as well as provide links to suitable online resources.</p>
Reading	To be assigned.
Assessment	<p>Preparation of a portfolio containing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A brief summary document suitable for a general audience based on an academic research paper pertaining to own PhD research area. 2. An academic critique of a published news report or website covering a piece of research related to own PhD research area. 3. A brief PowerPoint presentation, with speaker notes or recorded voice-track, describing a work package from own PhD research activities. <p>Pending student agreement, all submissions will be posted to a module-dedicated blog, which will be accessible to the general public as a resource on communicating research to non-specialists.</p> <p>Marking format: Categorical (Pass/Fail)</p>
Workload	Credit weighting: 5 ECTS credits