

Intro to Synthetic Biology
Syllabus
Summer HSSP 2020

Instructors

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Course Objectives

The intention of this course is for students to appreciate and understand how science is communicated with a wide audience of people. Students will work with tools that science journalists use to communicate and report their work. Students will also learn what types of science journalism are better than others.

Website

Course notes, documents, and assignments will be posted here:

https://esp.mit.edu/learn/HSSP/2020_Summer/class_docs/14006

Please let me know if you are unable to view materials.

Lectures

Lectures will be held each Saturday from July 11 to August 15 via Zoom. Classes run from 2:00pm – 3:00 pm EST. Although lectures cannot be recorded, associated notes and slides will be posted before lecture.

Weekly Schedule

A brief overview of what we will cover during the course:

- Week 1 – Introduction; What is Science Journalism?
- Week 2 – Spotting Studies
- Week 3 – Social Media Roles
- Week 4 – Ethics and Accuracy
- Week 5 – Journalism as a Business
- Week 6 – Ace Reporter

Grades and Assignments

No assignments or coursework are graded but are strongly encouraged. Assignments in this class include in-class activities and a written piece.

In-Class Activities

Students will participate in written and verbal activities in class in groups to reinforce lecture topics.

Ace Reporter (Written Piece)

To simulate writing for a science blog/news outlet, students will be split into groups and pick a recent scientific study to summarize in non-technical language. Groups will also create a social media post to publicize each piece. Students will present their work to the rest of the class and pose questions to other groups.