

Café Salon Notetakers' Template for Café Salon #5 - Note-taker Matt Bodah
#5 Science communication: The politicization and censorship of scientific information - Facilitators: Sunshine Menendez, Jeremiah Dyehouse— 193 Degrees Coffeehouse, Main floor at end of hallway

Summary Notes

1. *What would it look like for URI to take leadership in this area?*

A coordinated, high-level messaging campaign that highlights science communication accomplishments on the parts of faculty members

Coordination of lab- to college-level efforts to demonstrate URI's resources, achievements, outcomes, etc. in science communication

We need to make key hires in this area. Need to create incentives. Maybe an "internal" sabbatical to allow people to work in new areas.

Need to support unique platforms (e.g., conferences, exhibit space) for people to incubate and implement novel science communication collaborations.

Regional entities will look to us to be a leader in this area.

We already are taking a lead in this area in many ways. Some of the national leaders are Wisconsin and Oregon but we have significant capacity already. We would need some key investments and an institutional commitment, building on existing capacity, to excel in this area.

Dovetailing academics and out-of-classroom experiences

2. *How does work in this topic open up research/scholarly activity across disciplines? - Who is already working on this topic?*

Leads with research but is very pedagogical. Science writing and communications spans colleges: CELS, GSO, and A&S, engineering, etc

The library has a strong interest in issues of censorship and politicization.

People already doing this: Sunshine Menezes, Brian Dewsbury, Kendall Moore, Susanne Menden-Deuer, Andrea Rusnock, Jeremiah Dyehouse, Stephanie West Puckett, Austin Becker, James Prochaska and many others.

Programs already doing this:

- *Metcalf Institute*
- *SciWrite @ URI*
- *Inner Space Center*
- *Cooperative Extension (Land Grant and Sea Grant)*
- *Roy bergstrom's Data Production Ctr.*
- *Lots of others!*

3. What is the right breadth of areas to be covered?

Could identify a range of categories in which people are already doing this at URI:

- *Community and public engagement*
- *Pedagogical leadership and educational training models*
- *Inclusion and equity*

All can benefit from M/I/T approaches. Recognize that "science communication" can be viewed as excluding humanities, though that doesn't need to be the case. We need to bridge academic cultures to make communication more effective and inclusive

Science communication could be a meta-level activity at URI. An integrated, institution-wide effort that demonstrates a focus on and prioritization of effective and inclusive science communication would benefit URI and attract students, faculty. We need to think about opportunities. We need to engage more people here at URI.

Disseminate science communications news.

4. What are the University's strengths that would build out this topic well?

We currently have a number of faculty who are engaged in science communications. We have a graduate certificate in science writing and rhetoric which is becoming increasingly popular. This certificate came out of the SciWrite program.

Ocean Bites blog has become popular with students. Society of Women and Marine Science. Students are really getting engaged in scicomm activities. They are self-organizing. They are interested in careers in science communication. But many students need a lot more training and practice in writing, as well as other aspects of communication.

Metcalf Institute organized a national-level Inclusive science communications symposium in fall 2018, the first of its kind. That symposium will be held again in 2019. VPR Snyder has tapped Metcalf to lead organization of a scicomm symposium on politicization of science in 2020.

We have people who have experience with various media and data visualization. (Inner Space Center, Roy Bergstrom's Data Visualization Center, Austin Becker's lab)

First job is to have scientific expertise to benefit RI. E.g. scientific community engaging with fishing community. Help our local stakeholders. Coastal Resources Center, RI Sea Grant do this.

Senator Whitehouse has taken a lead in this area. We're lucky in RI to have a very scicomm-focused senator

The Innerspace Center is a leader in this area. Metcalf has been doing this for many years. Sunshine is internationally known in this area.

5. What areas of the topic would be a main focus for URI?

Serving the state. Local/state issues are very important: sea level rise, agriculture, alternative energy, biomedical and health issues. These can catalyze national-level issues.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be a focus.

URI commitment to effective and inclusive science communication as an overarching objective across all scholarly and creative work. how do we get there? reaffirming the land grant mission, taking advantage of many existing areas of statewide, national, and international leadership

In each college, embed someone who does scicomm and someone who works on inclusion/equity.

Start with a website that lists all the programs, projects, and people at URI who are working on scicomm-related work. Make this a tool for URI folks to find collaborators and for external people to see what we have to offer.

How do we make collaborations effective? There are a lot of things to be studied: how do people interpret information? How public opinion is formed. The ethics and politics of science are important to recognize.

Need to hire faculty who bridge disciplines related to science communication. People who can have dual appointments and attract students from across colleges. Key hires would exponentially augment our outcomes and reach.

Develop incentives and collaboration opportunities for faculty, especially mid-career faculty. An “internal instructional sabbatical” to offer training at URI for faculty to help them develop the skills and practice to build their scicomm collaborations.

Co-teaching is a great way for faculty to build these skills, too. Grand Challenge courses serve as a catalyst for this. We need more opportunities for dialogue across disciplines.

Provide more opportunities for out of classroom learning related to science communication, such as in residence halls or experiential opportunities.