ENVS 4100/STPR 4100
HOW TO EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT CLIMATE CHANGE IN A 21ST CENTURY MULTI-MEDIA WORLD

Bienvenido León

Course basics

Class Time: Monday-Friday, 12:45 PM-2:20 PM

Contact Information

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Biography

Bienvenido León is associate professor of science journalism and television production at the University of Navarra (Spain). He has also worked as a documentary film director, scriptwriter and producer for over 30 years. He teaches regularly in other universities of Spain and other countries, and has been a visiting scholar at the University of North Carolina and the University of Otago. His research has mainly focused on audio-visual science and environment communication. He is the founding director of the Research Group on Science Communication at this university, and currently the director of the international research project "Online video as a tool for communicating science". He has published 21 books as author or editor and over 60 peer-reviewed papers or book chapters. Before joining the academic field, he worked as a TV journalist for a decade. He has founded and directed two environmental film festivals: Telenatura (2001-2013) and Urban TV (2002-2014).

Course description

The internet "tsunami" has provoked a profound change in the way the environment is communicated, offering an invaluable set of new opportunities to promote public awareness and engagement. This course focuses on some new communication trends and formats that are currently being developed within the field of audiovisual communication, in the specific area of climate change and the environment.

The class sessions will combine the following main elements:

-Introduction to online video
-New audio-visual trends and formats: proximity journalism, infotainment, participative journalism, immersive journalism, interactive formats, etc.
-Science communication techniques that provide narrative the narrative basis for the new trends and formats: simplification, approaching the viewer's interest,

storytelling, etc.
-A practical assignment. Students will develop and produce a video (3 to 5 minutes) about climate change, based on trends and formats previously explored in the course.

Class sessions include many examples of effective audio-visual communication of climate change and the environment, from different countries and styles.

Based on these elements, the objective of this course is to explore and critically analyze the new forms in which climate change and the environment are communicated to the general public, and how the online environment provides new opportunities for a more effective communication and engagement. In addition, students will understand the narrative mechanisms that allow for an effective environmental communication and will learn some useful techniques in audio-visual production.

Table of contents

Course materials

Class discussions will require reading the following books and articles:

-Painter, James *et al*. (2016) *Something Old, Something New*. *Digital Media and the Coverage of Climate Change*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University: Oxford.

-León, Bienvenido (2007) *Science on Television. The Narrative of Scientific Documentary*, The Pantaneto Press: Luton.

- Welbourne, D. J., & Grant, W. J. (2016) "Science communication on YouTube: Factors that affect channel and video popularity", *Public Understanding of Science*, 25(6), 706-718.

-León, B. & Erviti, M. C. (2015) "Science in pictures: Visual representation of climate change in Spain's television news", *Public Understanding of Science*, 24(2), 183-199.

Some discussions will focus on news reports and documentaries previously watched in the class sessions.

Course requirements

Overview

Attendance & participation: 10 points
Individual video proposal: 20 points
Group video production: 50 points
Video evaluation: 20 points
Total: 100 points

Attendance & Class Participation (10 points)

Everyone is expected to attend all sessions and engage critically with the class discussions. Please note that if you accumulate more than 3 unexcused absences during the summer session, you will not be able to pass the course.

Readings provide the basis for informed discussions and must be completed before the class for which they are assigned. Participation is very important.

Video proposal (20 points)

Each student must develop a proposal for the production of a short video (3 to 5 minutes) on climate change, based on the trends and formats

previously explored in the course. Originality is valued and the ideas must be feasible.

Video production (50 points)

Working in groups of three people, students must produce a video (3 to 5 minutes), based on one of the individual proposals previously formulated. The production process will follow the typical stages: pre-production, filming and postproduction. No previous technical knowledge is required, since basic camerawork and editing training will be provided if necessary. Prof. León will provide close guidance and technical assistance.

Video evaluation (20 points)

After a final screening session, each student must do a written evaluation of the videos, including a mark and a justification.

Course schedule

Class discussion and production schedule

Subject to change in response to class needs that arise as we progress through the summer session.

Week 1
July 11-July 14

Tuesday, July 11
-Introductions & review schedule, objectives, logistics, expectations, plans for the course
-Science and environmental online video

Wednesday, July 12
-Popularity of science and environmental online video
-Typology

Discussion of this reading:
Welbourne, D. J., & Grant, W. J. (2016) “Science communication on YouTube: Factors that affect channel and video popularity”, *Public Understanding of Science*, 25(6), 706-718.

Thursday, July 13
-Scientific rigor
-Audience perception

Discussion of this reading:
León, B. & Erviti, M. C. (2015) “Science in pictures: Visual representation of climate change in Spain’s television news”, *Public Understanding of Science*, 24(2), 183-199.

Friday, July 14
- New journalistic formats
- New trends in TV news on climate change

Discussion of this reading:
Painter, James *et al*. (2016) *Something Old, Something New*. *Digital Media and the Coverage of Climate Change*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University: Oxford (pp. 1-47).

Week 2
July 17-July 21

Monday, July 17
-Proximity journalism
-Reaching out to the audience’s interests

Discussion of this reading:
León, Bienvenido (2007) *Science on Television. The Narrative of Scientific Documentary*, The Pantaneto Press: Luton (pp. 1-72).

Tuesday, July 18

- The impact of infotainment

Wednesday, July 19

- Transmedia information

Thursday, July 20

- Participative journalism

Discussion of this reading:
Painter, James *et al*. (2016) *Something Old, Something New*. *Digital Media and the Coverage of Climate Change*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University: Oxford (pp. 73-83).

Friday, July 21

-Immersive journalism and smartphone journalism

Discussion of this reading:
Painter, James *et al*. (2016) *Something Old, Something New*. *Digital Media and the Coverage of Climate Change*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University: Oxford (pp. 63-72).

Week 3
July 24-July 28

Monday, July 24
-Slow journalism and data journalism
-Simplification of scientific content

Discussion of this reading:
León, Bienvenido (2007) *Science on Television. The Narrative of Scientific Documentary*, The Pantaneto Press: Luton (pp. 73-79).

Tuesday, July 25
- New documentary formats
- New coordinates for a genre

Wednesday, July 26
-Hybridization
-The power of stories and fiction

Discussion of this reading:
León, Bienvenido (2007) *Science on Television. The Narrative of Scientific Documentary*, The Pantaneto Press: Luton (pp. 85-100).

Thursday, July 27
-Participative formats
-Video Blogs
-Animation and new production tools

Friday, July 28
-Slow TV
-Webdocs and interactivity

Week 4
July 31-August 4

Monday, July 31
Discussion of video proposals

Tuesday, August 1
Video preproduction

Wednesday, August 2
Video shooting

Thursday, August 3
Video shooting

Friday, August 4
Video shooting

Week 5
August 7-August 11

Monday, August 7
Video post-production

Tuesday, August 8
Video post-production

Wednesday, August 8
Video post-production

Thursday, August 10
Video post-production

Friday, August 11
Final video screening and evaluation