

Course Syllabus (Summer 2016)

**Stanford Environmental and Water Studies Summer Program
Stanford University School of Engineering**

CEE 175P/275P (1 unit):

***Persuasive Communication
for Environmental Scientists, Practitioners, and Entrepreneurs***

Instructors:

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Course Overview:

Achieving your environmental goals will depend not only on how innovative your ideas are and how rigorous your science is but also how persuasive you are in communicating your ideas and science. What makes you persuasive? Your ability to create value for your audience. This course will teach you how to: 1) focus on your audience and 2) create value for your audience using research-proven communication techniques. The specific techniques you will learn are: Problem/Solution, Standard, Benefit, Contrast, Create Visibility, Credibility, and Same Team. You will master these techniques through oral and written exercises so that, after taking this course, you speak and write more persuasively. The course is geared towards undergraduate and graduate students¹ interested in environmental science, practice, or entrepreneurship who wish to master the science of persuasive communication to achieve your personal and professional goals.

¹ High school students may register with the consent of the instructors.

Enrollment:

Course enrollment is capped at 16 students to ensure vigorous interaction among students and between the instructors and students.

Format:

One 70-minute seminar/lab per week with an emphasis on hands-on exercises that enable students to apply persuasive communication techniques in real life. Each seminar/lab will include approximately 30 minutes of lecture and examples of 1-2 communication techniques presented by the instructors and 40 minutes of facilitated practice, in which students apply the techniques to situations prepared by the instructors.

Preliminary Sequence and Schedule:

| Week | Topic |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | Audience focus: The Importance of Creating Value for Your Audience |
| 2 | Technique: Problem/Solution |
| 3 | Technique: Standard |
| 4 | Technique: Benefit |
| 5 | Technique: Contrast |
| 6 | Techniques: Create Visibility and Credibility |
| 7 | Technique: Same Team |
| 8 | Student Presentations |

Assignments:

The following 3 written and oral assignments will help students further master the communication techniques they practice in class.

- 200-word abstract for a scientific journal, letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, or product pitch (students are welcome to suggest alternative formats).
- 1-minute self-recorded “elevator pitch” about an environmental topic of interest to the student.
- 5-minute class presentation about an environmental topic of interest to the student.

Grading Basis:

Satisfactory/No Credit.

Required Textbook:

“Why People Listen” by Chris Lipp and Antoine de Morree, Ph.D. (expected publication in May 2015).

Pre-requisites:

None.

Honor Code

The Honor Code is the University's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work. In the context of this course, adhering to the Stanford Honor Code implies that all homework assignments must be done individually. Students may consult with TAs and with other students, but must prepare the assignments independently based on their own understanding. More details regarding the Honor Code can be found [here](#).

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. More details regarding the OAE may be found [here](#).