Beyond the Lab: Podcasting, Interviewing and Communicating Research to Diverse Audiences

Organizer

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1 ECTS

Summary

Today's neuroscience researchers are increasingly expected to communicate their work beyond academic circles, through interviews, podcasts, public speaking, and digital platforms. However, many researchers are not trained in these formats or the persuasive techniques needed to adapt complex content to different audiences.

This hands-on course allows doctoral candidates to enhance their competencies in podcasting, interviewing, and persuasive communication, with the goal of making their research clear and engaging for diverse audiences. Combining podcast design, interviewing skills, and persuasion theory, students will learn to adapt complex ideas for journalists, funding bodies, the general public, or fellow academics. They will also build a basic online presence to support their professional visibility.

Throughout the course, students will work in fixed pairs to plan, conduct, and edit a peer interview, applying the tools covered in each session. Except for two sessions, in-person participation is required. The course includes 14 hours of in-class sessions, plus approximately 10-12 hours of individual and collaborative work.

By the end of the course, participants will have:

- A foundational understanding of podcast creation and strategic research communication
- A short, recorded peer interview segment in audio format
- Persuasive summaries of their own research tailored to two target audiences
- *Optional:* A one-page personal or professional website to support online research visibility

Course Schedule and Sessions

Lectures and workshops take place on Thursdays, 10:15am-12pm, on the dates indicated in the table below.

Date	Session and Content
Oct 16, 2025	**Session 1: Introduction to Podcasting and Scientific Storytelling (Part 1)** • *Part I:* Why scientists podcast: motivations, case studies, and impact of podcasting on public understanding of science.

	• *Part II:* Introduction to podcasting elements: concept, tone, audience, structure, and success criteria. • *Part III: Workshop*: Students complete worksheets and define their own communication project goal for the duration of this course, based on their research.
Oct 23, 2025	**Session 2: Podcast Concept Development and Swiss Communication Landscape (Part 2)** • *Part I:* Translating complex science into accessible content: matching message to target audience. • *Part II:* Multilingual communication in Switzerland and understanding the local public outreach ecosystem. • *Part III: Workshop:* In small groups, work on outlining a personal podcast/interview concept, with peer feedback exchange.
Oct 30, 2025	**Session 3: Sharing and Promoting Your Work and Podcast (Part 3)** • *Part I:* Legal, ethical, and copyright essentials for public-facing research communication. • *Part II:* Overview of podcast platforms and distribution tools; promotional strategies. • *Part III: Workshop*: Draft a short promotional post (social media or platform bio) related to your current research and/or podcast idea.
Nov 6, 2025	**Session 4: Persuasion in Scientific Communication** • *Part I:* Understanding audience psychology: laypeople, PhD defense jury, journalists. • *Part II:* Persuasive tools: storytelling, metaphors, structure, tone (with real-world science examples). • *Part III: Workshop*: Write two versions of your research abstract: one for academic peers, one for public platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, press releases, conference bios).
Nov 13, 2025	**Session 5: Interviewing and Being Interviewed** • *Part I:* Fundamentals of interviewing: how to ask meaningful, open-ended questions, foster dialogue, and remain curious when exploring unfamiliar topics. • *Part II:* How to be interviewed as a scientific expert: learning to communicate clearly, credibly, and persuasively across various formats (media, public talks, professional settings). • *Part III: Workshop:* Live interview simulation in pairs with rotating roles (interviewer/interviewee).

Nov. 20, 2025	**Session 6: No Class – Work from Home**
	• Students edit their interview and draft a 3–5-minute segment for presentation.
Nov 27, 2025	**Session 7: Creating or Refining a Professional Digital Presence** • *Part I:* Why scientists need an online presence: visibility, credibility, and outreach. • *Part II:* Overview of no-code tools (e.g., Wix, Squarespace, etc.) for building a personal site or professional portfolio. • *Part III:* **Optional Workshop:** Build a one-page personal/professional website (bio, research description, contact info) using a guided template and no-code platforms. Technical support will be provided for navigating tools, customizing templates, and troubleshooting, with independent work to finalize the site before Session 8. This time may also be used to finalize other work for this course.
Dec 4, 2025	**Session 8: Final Presentations and Course Debrief** (location TBC) • *Part I:* Present your edited peer interview (3–5 min) • *Part II: Optional:* Share your website or public bio • *Part III:* Group debrief and discussion on next steps for public communication

Course Materials

All course resources (including readings, toolkits, templates, and guides) will be made available on Moodle before or after each session. Students are encouraged to explore additional resources based on their project focus.

Location

Uni Dufour, Rue du Général-Dufour 24, 1204 Genève. Room U363.

Evaluation

Evaluation will focus on the completion of key course activities and active participation throughout the semester. Deliverables include:

- A short audio segment based on a peer interview
- A brief research summary tailored to a public audience
- Regular in-class engagement and workshop participation
- *Optional*: a personal/professional website or public-facing bio

Exact expectations may be adjusted depending on the final number of participants.

Registration

The course is limited to 10 students. Register before October 6th by writing an email to lndscourses@gmail.com (with your supervisor in copy) and stating the course title as subject.