Preparing Graduate Students in Agriculture and Natural Resources to Communicate about Science and Research

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“A common assumption is that a lack of information or understanding of science fully explains why more people do not appear to accept scientific claims or engage in behaviors or support policies that are consistent with scientific evidence.”

New online class for Spring 2018

AEC 6932 Communicating about Agricultural and Natural Resources Research

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Class Description

• Rationale for online format

• Modules
Class Description

Assignments
• Discussion posts
• Elevator pitch
• Environmental assessment
• Video storyboard
• Social media plan
• Media interview
• Community engagement plan
• Extension plan
• Research poster
• Outreach plan
Students

- 23 students
- Majors
  - Agricultural Education and Communication (5 MS, 7 PhD)
  - Wildlife Ecology and Conservation (3 MS, 1 PhD)
  - Horticultural Sciences (1 PhD)
  - Entomology (1 PhD)
  - Environmental Horticulture (1 PhD)
  - Animal Science (1 MS)
  - Forest Resources and Conservation (1 PhD)
  - Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences (1 PhD)
  - Agronomy (1 PhD)
Observations

Many of the students were engaged in citizen science – apart from their degree program.

Students had emotional responses to some of the assignments/experiences.
Feedback

“My idea of what science communication is has expanded.”

“You have to learn to speak the language of your audience.”

“This class shifted my perspective from just expecting all scientists to engage in communication to realize the importance of supporting scientists with training opportunities.”

“I totally didn’t understand Extension before this class. This class helped me understand what Extension is and its role in science communication.”

“This class has helped me learn to be intentional with my communication.”
Future Plans & Questions

Follow up - @lisalundy or lisalundy@ufl.edu