

Demystifying Scientific Communication at USU

Thursday, Sep. 29, 2016



A USU researcher presents his work. The plenary session is offered to USU and Logan community members to help them comfortably communicate scientific concepts to public audiences.

In collaboration with iUTAH and the University of Utah's Vice President of Research Office, Utah State University's Office of Research and Graduate Studies, the organizations will bring members of the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science to campus next week for an interactive community plenary session.

The session's goal is to train researchers from all disciplines to more effectively communicate scientific concepts to public audiences. All members of the USU and Logan communities are invited to attend the plenary session in the auditorium of the university's Eccles Conference Center from 8:30 to 10 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 3.

Christy Glass, a professor in USU's sociology program and last year's Researcher of the Year in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, said she is "thrilled" to participate.

"I hope that my participation will hone my skills in clearly and effectively communicating the implications of my work on bias in the workplace to a range of stakeholders," Glass said.

"People across campus and across the state are doing exciting research," said Jeannine Huenemann, iUTAH's communications specialist and one of the event's main organizers. "By becoming comfortable talking about what they are doing, they can excite public groups and people will start to realize that Utah is a place where people are solving future problems."

iUTAH, which stands for innovative urban transitions and arid-region hydro-sustainability, is a multi-institutional research and training program aimed at strengthening science for Utah's water future.

The Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, part of the Stony Brook University in New York, believes that "scientists have a responsibility to share the meaning and implications of their work" and that "an engaged public encourages sound public decision-making."

Alexa Sand, an executive member of USU's Office of Research and Graduate Studies and another main event organizer, said this vision is what drove the office to get involved in the event.

"We jumped on the opportunity to collaborate on bringing the Alda Center to campus," Sand said. "They are doing amazing things for scientists seeking to communicate complex ideas to a broad public. This workshop offers a valuable opportunity for researchers to develop and hone their skills."

Monday's plenary session will create a venue for attendees to practice research communication in interactive and improvised settings. The session is open to the community and may be attended free of charge. Those interested in attending are invited to [RSVP online](#). Participants will be provided with light refreshments.

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