

BIOD59 / EEB1420 – News Summary or your research paper

Fall 2019

Deadline: Thursday, November 28, 2019, 11:59pm

Communicating science in an accurate and understandable manner is now more critical than ever. Most scientific journals offer the option of providing a news summary of your article, intended to summarize the main messages of your work to journalists and/or the general public. As part of your term project, you are asked to provide such a news summary.

General

Although some journals publish your news summary alongside your manuscript on their website, most news summaries are intended for science journalists who may want to write a story about your work. As such, the summary should convey the main messages of your work in language that is understandable by anybody with an undergraduate university degree (science or humanities), not just scientists. It should be written without any but the most crucial technical details. Concepts that you require for explaining your results should all be explained to the same level. For example, if you were to mention an Allee effect, do not assume that people know what an Allee effect is – you would have to explain to the reader what you mean. Due to the limited number of words at your disposal, it is preferable to avoid technical jargon that you would have to explain wherever possible.

You should focus on

- Why was the study done?
 - o (i.e. the biological or social significance of the problem that you addressed)
- How did you approach the problem?
 - o (summarize the approach for the reader; this is often the hardest part because you need to explain a rather sophisticated methodology in an understandable way; as a rule of thumb, to keep things accurate yet approachable, focus on **why** you used a model and **what** it does, **but not on how** it does it).
- What did you find?
- What is the biological significance of your findings?
- What are the caveats to your findings?

Word limit: 1 paragraph of 300 words or less.

Reminder: While you co-author the research report with your group, you are required to submit an individual news summary (cf. syllabus).