Welcome to Science Communication

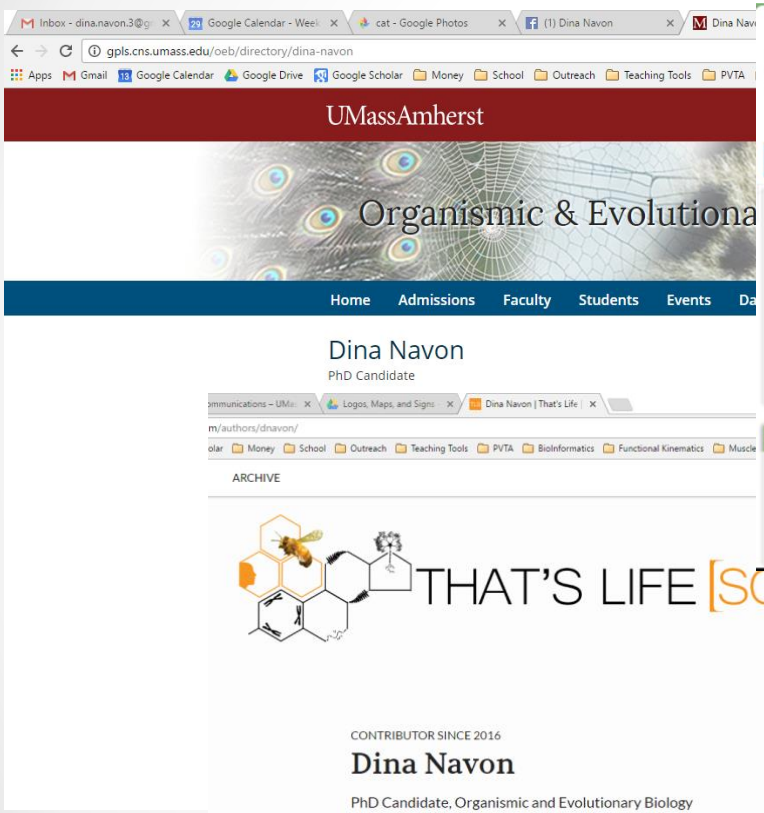
Instructor: Dina Navon
Mondays at 1:25
French Hall 209, unless otherwise specified

Introduce Yourself!

- Pick a partner and get to know them a little better! Ask:
  - Who are you?
  - What program/department do you hail from?
  - Why are you interested in science communication?
  - What do you like to do for fun?
  - …?
- Be ready to share with the class everything you learned about your partner
- You have 5 minutes

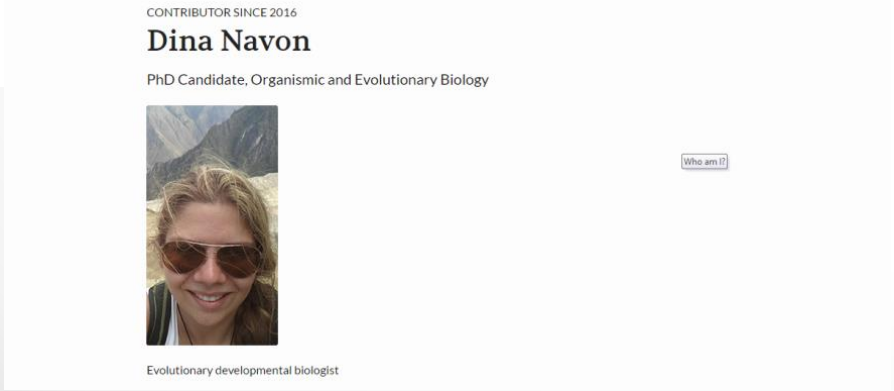
Who am I?

Who am I?


gpls.cns.umass.edu/oeb/directory/dina-navon
UMassAmherst
Organismic & Evolutiona
Home
Admissions
Faculty
Students
Events
Dina Navon
PhD Candidate
ARCHIVE


The Society for Integrative & Comparative Biology
SICB
Home
About
Membership
Students
Meetings
Awards
Publications/Media
Divisions
Committees
Resources
SICB Apparel
Invertebrate Zoology
SICB Publications
Integrative & Comparative Biology, The SICB Journal
SICB Digital Library
SICB Newsletter
Rewinding the Tape with Jumping Spiders: How Predictable is Evolution?
By Dina Navon
In a classic thought experiment, evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould asked: if you rewound the tape of life, erasing everything that has happened, and stopped somewhere in the past to let life run anew, would the second iteration look anything like the original? In other words – just how predictable is evolution? New research on color vision in jumping spiders may shed light on the answer.
It's a research story that is itself "full of serendipity," admits Dr. Nathan Morehouse, the lead investigator on the project, who presented this work at the January 2017 meeting of the Society for Integrative & Comparative Biology. Morehouse, a researcher at the University of Pittsburgh, chatted animatedly with me about a week after the meeting. Quick to laughter, his demeanor consistently conveyed a youthful sense of wonder for the natural world and an enthusiasm for scientific practice.


THAT'S LIFE [SCIENCE]


CONTRIBUTOR SINCE 2016
Dina Navon
PhD Candidate, Organismic and Evolutionary Biology
Who am I?
Evolutionary developmental biologist


OEB
SCIENCE
CAFE

Pre-Survey

What do you know already and what do you want to learn?

Course Goals

Course Website

What is "science communication" anyways? Give me some examples.

Let's define science communication…

…

…as telling stories about your science!

Who is your favorite storyteller?

...

How To Develop an Elevator Pitch

- What is an elevator pitch?
  - If you got on an elevator, met someone, and only had the time between getting on and getting off…this pitch is what you'd say to them.
  - Short summary of your work
- What's the point of it?
  - Engage!
  - Inform!
  - **Start a conversation**
- When would we need an elevator pitch?
  - Meeting a new friend outside of UMass/academia
  - Talking to a journalist
  - Meeting a faculty member
  - Having lunch or dinner with a seminar speaker
  - Going home for the holidays and talking with family or old friends
  - …

Are they one size fits all?

…

How to Develop an Elevator Pitch

- What makes a bad pitch?
  - Too long
    - We know a lot about our research
    - We want to share that knowledge, which is good!
    - But make sure that you keep it relatively short
  - Jargon heavy
    - We sometimes assume that everyone speaks our language
    - Always explain your jargon!
  - Ignore the applications
    - We get caught up in the technical details because we have to know them
    - Try to incorporate your "broader impacts"
  - Non-verbal cues matter!
    - Posture
    - Eye contact
    - Handshake
    - Facial Expressions

How To Develop an Elevator Pitch

- What makes a good pitch?
  - Consider your **audience** and **objective** and rework your **message** to fit your needs
  - Practice
    - In front of the mirror
    - Record yourself
    - With different types of audiences and objectives
  - Plan your **message** by answering the following questions:
    - Who am I?
    - What do I do?
    - Why should my audience care?
      - What's the problem I'm trying to solve?
      - Why does it matter?
      - What are the potential solutions?
      - What are the benefits of fixing it?

My Elevator Pitch for You

My name is Dina Navon and I'm a fifth year PhD candidate in Organismic & Evolutionary Biology here at UMass. I work with Dr. Craig Albertson, and together we are looking at the genetic and environmental factors that underlie ecologically significant variation in fin shape in a group of fish called African cichlids. We hope to better understand the interplay between genes and the environment over the course of development because many diseases have their roots in this intricate process.

What could I have done better?

What did I do well?

Your Turn…

- For your first homework, plan out your "baseline" elevator pitch and practice it once or twice
  - Objective: Start a conversation with someone
  - Audience: broad, non-technical
- Next week, you will give your pitches to some special guests who will stand in as different types of audiences – you will need to adapt your pitch to each of them