



# Rhetorics of Science & Medicine

English 855: Topics in Theories of Business and Technical Writing

- What would it mean to understand science and medicine as modes of practice and *doing* rather than processes of discovering and *knowing*?
- What is the nature of theoretical and disciplinary *conflict*? How can it be *managed*?
- What is *expertise* and how does it figure into socio-political issues like climate change legislation, pharmaceuticals policy, and brain scan lie detectors?
- How can rhetoricians and technical communicators contribute to scientific/medical practice, policy, and criticism?

Science and medicine are each part of vastly complex cultural enterprises which include, but also extend far beyond what is done in the laboratory or what happens in scientific journal articles. Scientists, technologists, doctors, patients, regulators, policy makers, journalists, and the general public each interact with and participate in technical, scientific, and medical discourses in a wide variety of ways. English 855 will examine scientific, technical, and medical communication both in the contexts of research and dissemination and in terms of larger cultural and material concerns. The course will provide students with the foundation necessary to explore key problems in rhetorics of science and medicine and how those issues interface with rhetorical studies and technical communication more broadly. More specifically, students will investigate 1) the modes of communication which facilitate successful collaboration between scientific and technical disciplines, 2) different approaches to the management of technical information in science-policy debates, and 3) the discourses of scientific ideology and their impacts on the general public.