

Abstract Submitted  
for the DPP11 Meeting of  
The American Physical Society

**Engage: The Science Speaker Series - A novel approach to improving science outreach and communication** JENS VON DER LINDEN, ERIC HILTON, RACHEL MITCHELL, PHIL ROSENFELD, University of Washington — Communicating the results and significance of basic research to the general public is of critical importance. At present, very few programs exist to allow young scientists the opportunity to practice their public outreach skills. Although the need for science outreach is recognized, graduate programs often fail to provide any training in making science accessible. Engage represents a unique, graduate student-led effort to improve public outreach skills. Founded in 2009, Engage was created by three science graduate students at the University of Washington. The students developed an interdisciplinary curriculum to investigate why science outreach often fails, to improve graduate student communication skills, and to help students create a dynamic, public-friendly talk about their research. The course incorporates storytelling, improvisational arts, and development of analogy, all with a focus on clarity, brevity and accessibility. This free, public-friendly speaker series is hosted at the University of Washington and has substantial public attendance and participation.

Jens von der Linden  
University of Washington

Date submitted: 15 Jul 2011

Electronic form version 1.4