

## Session 1: Introduction to Communicating Ocean Sciences

### Session Overview

This introductory session of the course begins with participants sharing and discussing their ideas about learning and where learning takes place. The participants then experience different inquiry-based, hands-on activities, as examples of the kinds of activities they will present on the floor of the informal science setting later in the course. A short presentation on what constitutes “learning in informal environments” provides the participants with a context for the next 10–15 weeks of the course and presents an overview of learning in informal science education institutions (ISEI) and their important role in helping people learn science content and practices. The goals, syllabus and requirements of the course are reviewed. The rationale for teaching ocean science, including its interdisciplinary nature, is discussed with an overview of the science content that will be covered in the course, kicked-off by an introduction to ocean biomes. The session concludes with a discussion about the homework.

### Session Objectives

In this introductory session, participants:

- . Learn about the goals, design and requirements of the course;
- . Discuss the interdisciplinary nature of the ocean sciences;
- . Brainstorm ideas about what constitutes “learning”;
- . Introduction to learning in informal environments and how these settings can increase the public’s knowledge about science;
- . Experience inquiry-based, hands-on ocean sciences activities that can be used at informal institutions, e.g., museums, aquariums and science centers.

### Session Activities at a Glance

**Welcome.** Participants are welcomed to the course. Instructors introduce themselves.

**Quick Write.** Participants reflect on and write about how they think people learn.

**Thought Swap.** Participants share their ideas about what they want to gain from the course, their experience teaching, why the ocean is important to learn about, and their experiences in informal environments. They share first with a partner, then as a whole group.

**Activity: Modeling COSIA Exemplar Activities.** Participants experience four to five different interactive ocean sciences activities, and participate in

learning as it occurs in an informal environment.

**Discussion: Debrief Activity.** Participants talk in small table groups to reflect on their experiences observing and doing activities in the informal environment.

**Think-Pair-Share: Learning in informal environments.** Participants are introduced to research on learning, and learning in informal environments. They revisit their ideas from the Quick Write.

**Introduce: COS Courses.** The goals and background of the course are introduced.

**Science Briefing: Biomes.** Participants are introduced to an overview of the science content included in this semester's course.

**Overview of Course Mechanics.** The course goals, requirements, schedules, syllabus, online discussions, course reader and an overview of the sessions are shared with the class.

**Homework.** Reading and tasks due next week are assigned.