



## Events

[Current Events](#)
[Lectures ▾](#)
[Events Archive ▾](#)


Other - Writing Science Series, Co-sponsored by Office of Research Advancement and The University Writing Program in the English Department

### Scientific Articles as Arguments

**Steve Katz, Clemson University**

Pearce Professor of Professional Communication

Digital Media Center Theatre  
November 08, 2017 - 03:30 pm

#### Abstract:

Scientists usually acknowledge the role persuasion plays in writing proposals for funding. Much less visible is the role persuasion plays in writing scientific articles. Yet in some ways, persuasion in scientific articles is even more pervasive and important than it is in proposals, for scientific articles purport to report the results of objective experiments, the purpose of which is validation by peers. But if simply reporting results were the case, one might begin by asking why scientific articles need Introductions, Methods, or Discussion (IMD) sections? It has been said that the "rhetoric of science" is the best rhetoric because it is almost invisible. This discussion will seek to make the rhetoric of the scientific article opaque by examining IMRaD, and its contexts and content, as argumentative structures.

#### Speaker's Bio:

Steven B. Katz is the Pearce Professor of Professional Communication, and a Fellow of the Rutland Institute for Ethics, at Clemson University. He is the co-author with Ann M. Penrose of *Writing in the Sciences: Exploring Conventions of Scientific Discourse*, and has written many articles on scientific and technical communication (including environmental, medical, and biotechnological communication, and most recently the Office of Research Integrity [ORI]). Some of this work has been reprinted, e.g., in *Central Works in Professional Communication* (Oxford UP 2004). He also has presented on the ethics of rhetoric and style at many conferences, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and has consulted nationally and internationally with the biotechnology and pesticide industries on ethically communicating science with the public (Crop Life-Canada, Crop Life-International the Max Planck Institute-Plön). He is the recipient of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Award for Best Article on the Theory of Scientific and Technical Communication.

