

SUMNER S. BROWN GIBBS

Science Communicator | Editor | Content Developer

Summary

Versatile science communicator with 9+ years at the US Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory, specializing in translating complex science and engineering into compelling, accessible content for diverse audiences. Experienced in stakeholder engagement, multimedia storytelling, and editorial leadership at international particle accelerator conferences. Proven ability to manage content, logistics, and cross-cultural collaboration. Passionate for language. Eager to help advance science through strategic communication and partnerships.

Education

- Master of Arts, English (Rhetoric and Writing), Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville, US, 2016
- Bachelor of Arts, Interdisciplinary Studies (2 yrs. Spanish), Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville, US, 2012
- Ulster University, Jordanstown, Northern Ireland, UK, 2001 to 2002 (year abroad)

Work Experience

Articles: [Example 1](#), [Example 2](#), [Example 3](#) | [ORCID](#)

Science Writer and Communications Specialist

Nov. 2022 to present

Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL)

- Developing feature articles, press releases, and social media strategies/content that spotlight innovation and discovery research at ORNL's Neutron Sciences Directorate, which houses the Spallation Neutron Source and High Flux Isotope Reactor.
- Coordinating multimedia content creation for communications projects and stories.
- Leading occasional tours of the lab's Spallation Neutron Source for congressional staffers, visiting scientists, and student groups.
- Mentoring early career team hires.
- Developed and managed internal and external newsletters in MailChimp (10k+ subscribers).
- Spearheaded the creation and installation of large-scale graphics that tell scalable stories about neutron scattering for protocol and public tours.
- Served on the Interactions Collaboration, a global physics organization, as ORNL's Neutron Sciences Directorate liaison.
- Served on the Joint Accelerator Collaboration Website (JACoW) editorial team for International Particle Accelerator Conferences (Venice '23, Nashville '24) and International Conference on Radio-Frequency Superconductivity (Grand Rapids '23). Manage JACoW web content (update in progress).
- Won first and second places for photography in internal photo walk with 450+ entries (fall '24).

Technical Writer/Editor

Jan. 2020 to Nov. 2022

ORNL

- Led communications and content strategy for two high-profile US national security science programs at ORNL by special request.
- Managed communications for teams of technical leads, graphic designers, web developers, editors.
- Produced content for and helped conduct cross-cultural international engagements (Kazakhstan, Romania, Malaysia, Argentina).
- Mentored leadership/staff to strengthen presentation tactics and techniques that create influence, build brand awareness, and motivate action from federal sponsors and international partners.
- Designed and developed highly visual, targeted presentations.

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Course Developer

Apr. 2017 to Dec. 2019

ORNL

- Coordinated and provided editorial project management for multi-organization collaborations for international US DOE National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) engagements.
- Collaborated with laboratory partners to integrate processes and develop and manage complete learning packages using the ADDIE model through a learning management system (Moodle).
- Advised communications for international stakeholder engagement to help build diplomacy.
- Prepared and edited sponsor reports, group highlights, proposals, technical articles, and marketing.

Course Developer/Technical Editor and Writer

May 2016 to Apr. 2017

Spectra Tech, Inc.

- Collaborated with subject matter experts to assure complex science and engineering were communicated with clarity and concision.
- Evaluated and revised technical training content from multiple national laboratories and international partners to conform with industry and international standards (DOE/NNSA, IAEA, ANSI).
- Led configuration management for NNSA's Office of International Nuclear Security course catalog.
- Designed, developed, and managed large documents (400+ pgs.), style guides, templates, analysis and design documentation, and procedures.

Assistant Editor/Developmental Editor

July 2015 to May 2016

Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs, University of Tennessee – Knoxville

International Journal of Nuclear Security

- Collaborated in the launch of an international journal for interdisciplinary work in nuclear security. Designed a ten-year vision with timelines and milestones. Managed interns.
- Led writing and editing for web, public relations, technical proposals, sponsor reports, white papers.
- Collaborated for the design and development of a writing course in Ghana for nuclear engineers.
- Provided web support to geographically dispersed board members, guest editors, peer reviewers.

Writing Tutor

Aug. 2013 to Mar. 2014

University of Tennessee Writing Center

- Worked one-on-one with undergraduate and graduate students (including nonnative speakers) on grammar, mechanics, and style.

Public Presentations

- Alternatives to Academia (invited university panelist), Apr. 2025
- Stick with Storytelling, Mar. 2022
- Strategies and Skills for Workplace Communication, Jan. 2019
- Write Simply, Jan. 2018
- (Re)Present Data Through Story, June 2017
- Building Effective Communication for Nuclear Security Culture, 2016

Professional Organizations

- National Association of Science Writers, Member, 2022 to 2024
- Association for Talent Development, Smoky Mountain Chapter, Member, 2017 to 2018
- Society for Technical Communication, East Tennessee Chapter
 - President, 2017 to 2019

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- Chair, Blakely Student Writing Competition, 2018 and 2019
- Vice President, 2015 to 2017
- Graduate Student Liaison, 2014

Further Education

- Learning Japanese
- AI Risk and Governance, Ascend AI Labs, 2025
- GPT Overview, Ascend AI Labs, 2025
- Practical Prompting, Ascend AI Labs, 2025
- ChatGPT Prompt Engineering for Developers, DeepLearning.AI, 2024

Distinctions

J. Paul Blakely Writing Competition, Award of Distinction, 2014 and 2015

Phi Beta Kappa, 2001

Community Service

- Deacon, New Providence Presbyterian Church, PCUSA, 2022 to present
- Lab Manager, STEM Scouts (co-ed), Boy Scouts of America, 2016 and 2017
- Lab Leader, STEM Scouts (co-ed), Boy Scouts of America, 2015 and 2016
- Society for Technical Communication Summit, Columbus, OH, 2015, and Orlando, FL, 2018
- Archive Assistant, East Tennessee Historical Society, Spring 2015