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The History of Life film project

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The *History of Life* film project is deeply rooted in the area of science communication, education and public engagement. Every year since 2011, NUI Galway final-year undergraduate science students taking the module *History of Life* have been tasked with researching a significant theme related to the evolution of life on Earth, and then producing a short documentary-style film on their chosen topic. The students work in small teams and have no prior training in film-making. Their finished films are uploaded to a specially created channel on YouTube, where they have amassed large viewing figures. The value of this multimodal teaching approach is that it engages all of the major learning domains. Cognitive skills are enhanced through acquisition, analysis and communication of knowledge, and practical skills are honed through deployment and use of technology. The students also develop their team-working skills and they find the overall learning experience both novel and rewarding: positively impacting on the affective domain. The strong temporal narrative which underpins palaeontology makes it well suited for film and in the ten years that the *History of Life* film project has been running, many inspiring moments have been captured by the various student teams. This presentation draws upon student feedback, along with instructor and media developer insights, to highlight key takeaways from the project and makes recommendations for optimising best practice in media-based science communication/educational initiatives.

For more information please see the following highlights compilation:
<https://youtu.be/OYORmQFb628>