

Innovative Storytelling Techniques

JOUR 4530-001; 6530-001

Spring 2020

Robby Byrd, Ph.D.

Office: 328 Meeman Journalism Building

Office Hours: TR 2:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment

Mobile number: 901-258-5965

Email: rbyrd@memphis.edu

Twitter: @rbyrd80

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

The course offers instruction, training, practice and analysis in journalistic podcasting, including research, organization, branding, and content presentation skills. The course will also focus on effective interviewing with emphasis on developing and delivering interesting and compelling content audio storytelling.

Prerequisites

JRSM 2121 and JOUR 3526

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Required:

Abel, Jessica (2015). *Out on the Wire: The Storytelling Secrets of the New Masters of Radio*. Broadway Books. ISBN-10: 0385348436

Suggested Reading:

Dumas, John Lee (2015). *Podcast Launch: A complete guide to launching your Podcast with 15 Video Tutorials!: How to create, launch, grow & monetize a Podcast*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. ISBN-10: 1508418594

Kern, Jonathan (2008). *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN-10: 0226431789

REQUIRED SOFTWARE:

Adobe Photoshop CC

Adobe Premiere Pro

Audacity

Note: You can purchase the Adobe Creative Cloud on a month-to-month basis from Adobe.com.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

One Flash Drive (At least 2GB capacity)

Classroom format

This course is designed to give students advanced experience with audio journalism through journalistic podcasting, an increasingly popular medium for journalistic storytelling. Students will conceptualize, pitch, and produce journalistic podcast during the semester, culminating in the release of a pilot episode that will be made available to the public via a podcast application like iTunes or Stitcher.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 4530-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

COMPUTER USAGE:

Students are expected to use a computer in this course. Students will use Apple computers running the Macintosh operating system in class, but may use Windows computers at their own discretion. Students will work with the design software standard in the professional world. At this time, the professional standard is the Adobe Creative Cloud, particularly Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. Extensive instruction about how to use these programs will be offered in this course.

WRITING STYLE:

Although this is not specifically a writing course, students will be required to adhere to the Associated Press style guide and other journalistic writing standards. Additionally, students will write short journalistic stories for each podcast episode, which will be featured on the final podcast site.

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT:

- Podcast analyses will be assigned five times during the semester. Students will be required to listen to multiple episodes of one podcast and report on their findings. These assignments are meant to increase student consumption of podcasts and their awareness of various podcasting styles and formats.
- Audio practice assignments: Students will be assigned five audio practice assignments during the semester. This is to help hone skills in voicing, audio recording, audio editing, script writing, and overall podcast structure.
- Podcast Pitch & Promo: Each student will be required to pitch a podcast and create a short promo for their pitch. Students will then vote on the top pitches to decide which podcasts will be produced. After the pitch and promo process, students will work in groups of two to produce the podcasts.
- Final Podcast Pilot: Students will produce one polished podcast episode, build a website to house and promote the podcast, and stream their podcast through one of the major podcasting apps.

Portfolio:

All Department of Journalism and Strategic Media undergraduate students are required to develop and maintain an active online portfolio of their work. More information about the final review of portfolios is

in the Assessment section later in the syllabus. You will need to incorporate work from this course in your online portfolio. We will take time in class for you to update your site.

Grading

Grading Philosophy: A=Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification; B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement, but would require revision to be used professionally; C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision; D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality; F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement. NOTE: Plusses and minuses may be given.

Grade Distribution:

Assignment	Number	Points
Podcast Analyses	5	75 (15 each)
Audio Practice	5	125 (25 each)
Podcast Pitch & Promo	1	225
Podcast Site	1	300
Final Podcast Pilot	1	500
Participation grade	1	50
Total Points		1,275

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%
B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%
C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%
D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%
F 0-59.4%

Other issues

Add what you wish as needed.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Jan. 21: Intro to Podcasting

What is podcasting

Readings: Article links on eCourseware

Assignments: Practice podcast review on eCourseware

Week 2, Jan. 28: Developing Your Podcast

Discuss how to develop podcast ideas with a discussion of logos and descriptions, the pitch and promo assignment. We'll listen to some of the intro to S-Town together.

Readings: Abel: Chapter 1 Amuse Yourself: Ideas

Assignments: Podcast Review 1

Week 3, Feb. 4: Finding Your Voice

We will talk about voicing your podcast this week, which includes some vocal excercises, practice reading

a script, recording and editing your voiceover.

Readings: Abel: Chapter 2 The of Their Breath: Character and Voice. Watch “Aerobic for Your Voice” before class on Tuesday.

Assignments: Audio Practice 1 & Podcast Review 2

Week 4, Feb. 11: Editing Your Audio

A refresher of Audacity as well as some new tips and tricks, and a brief introduction of Adobe Audition for those interested in using the application.

Readings: Watch the tutorial videos before class on Tuesday to be familiar with some of the concepts before class.

Assignments: Audio Practice 2 & Podcast Review 3

Week 5, Feb. 18: Pitching Your Podcast

This week you will pitch your podcast ideas to the class, the class will critique and rank each pitch. The presentation order will be determined in class and posted to eCourseware.

Readings: No readings this week.

Assignments: Podcast Review 4 & Pitches and Promos

Week 6, Feb. 25: Structuring Your Podcast

We will talk about how to begin conceptualizing your podcast from a structural and formatting standpoint.

Readings: Abel: Chapter 3 Keep or Kill: Story Structure, read NPR training links provided on eCourseware as well

Assignments: Audio Practice 3 & Podcast Review 5

Week 7, March 3: Scoring Your Podcast

We will talk about scoring and sounding your podcast this week. Possibly partner with some music students on helping with scoring.

Readings: Abel: Chapter 4 The Deep Sea: Sound

Assignments: Audio Practice 4

Week 8, March 10: Spring Break

No assignments or readings this week. Have a safe Spring Break!

Week 9, March 17: Recording Your Sound

We will discuss planning, recording and editing your sounds—music, sound effects, NAT sound etc . . .

Readings: NPR training articles

Assignments: Audio Practice 5

Week 10, March 24: Outlining Your Podcast

You and your partner will spend the week developing a comprehensive and detailed outline and social media plan for your podcast. We will discuss social media during the Tuesday class.

Readings: NPR training articles on eCourseware

Assignments: Detailed Outline and Social Media Plan

Week 11, March 31: Planning Your Website

This week you’ll work on your website wireframe, planning the site features and functionality.

Readings: NPR training articles on eCourseware
Assignments: Website Wireframe

Week 12, April 7: Working on Your Podcast

This field work week. You should be out recording pieces of your pilot. Remember this is just the beginning, but it still needs to be solid. We will also do individual meetings with the instructor.

Readings: No readings

Assignments: No assignments

Week 13, April 14: Edits for Your Podcast

We're going to talk about all fine tuning your podcast this week—cutting the fat.

Readings: Abel: Chapter 5 Your Baby's Ugly: The Edit, NPR training articles on eCourseware.

Assignments: Pilot Script

Week 14, April 21: Critiquing Your Work

You will play your pilot roughs for classmates and give each other edit notes.

Readings: No readings.

Assignments: Rough Cut

Week 15, April 28: Presenting Your Podcast

Each group will give their final presentations to the class, you'll receive last-minute feedback, final pilots will be due on Tuesday, May 5 by 2:25 p.m.

Readings: No readings

Assignments: Final presentation & Final pilot

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Five Pillars in JOUR 4530/6530

- *Critical Thinking:* Students must demonstrate an understanding of the audience that will consume multi-platform work, and explain this connection in project pitches.
- *Media Literacy:* Students learn how multimedia projects are researched, planned, and created through class assignments and projects.
- *Multimedia:* Students will prepare materials for multiple media platforms including: audio, video, social media, photography, and data visualization.
- *Professionalism:* Students learn the professional standards and routines of multimedia journalism by discussing and producing multimedia projects, using audio and/or video recording equipment and software to produce and distribute multimedia projects. Students learn the ethical guidelines for producing multimedia projects. Students learn legal issues associated with producing multimedia projects. Finally, students will distribute their work through appropriate journalistic channels based on the projects scope and platform.
- *Writing:* Journalistic writing skills will be reinforced in the class. Students will be required to write stories, scripts, social media content, and promotional materials for all projects produced.

Professional Values and Competencies in JOUR 4530/6530

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the

world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications,
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Learn intermediate to advance techniques with digital cameras and audio recording equipment
- Apply sound news judgement in a multi-platform environment and communicate using the most effective platform for each project
- Execute in-depth, meaningful interviews with subjects on topics relating to students' projects.
- To produce professional grade content that can be distributed to the public via appropriate media channels.
- To work within the digital computer framework and process images, video and audio to its maximum potential while taking care not to alter fact or otherwise create unethical representations

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Complete a large-scale project that relies heavily on the skills presented in the class.
- Demonstrate an advanced ability to capture and edit content with the appropriate, industry-standard equipment to make it suitable for presentation
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the software required for the course (image, video and audio editing software)

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Become aware of storytelling trends in the media industry, including the ethical issues that accompany such trends.

Understanding

- Develop an understanding of advanced multimedia storytelling process from development to editing to final presentation in multiple media outlets.

Application

- Creation of large-scale multimedia projects addressing different platforms, photography, video, audio, audio-visual and data visualization, which are edited using a combination of Adobe Photoshop and Premiere Pro, Audacity, and data visualizations applications.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or Squarespace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as

Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow

may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

Weather policy

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

Student support

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their

performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.