

INFORMATION RADIO 360
Representing Self Through Media FIG
September 2012

Instructor:

LARRY MEILLER: Life Sciences Communication
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OFFICE HOURS: I'm never in my office between 10:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m., but I'm willing to schedule appointments for mutually convenient times.

Teaching Assistant:

JILL HOPKE: Life Sciences Communication
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OFFICE HOURS: 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays

CLASS MEETS in ROOM 135 HIRAM SMITH HALL:

Mondays: 3:30 to 4:20 p.m.,

Wednesdays: 3:30 to 5:15 p.m.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course is designed to help students acquire the knowledge and skill they will need to:

Speak and write clearly and effectively for radio broadcasting.

Use radio broadcast equipment.

Learn what goes into an information-oriented radio program.

Produce an information radio program.

Critically evaluate information radio programs.

Learn how a radio station functions.

In this class you will learn the basics of audio production for information radio. These production fundamentals transfer to all sorts of technological platforms, from producing a podcast to integrating sound into a multimedia news story. Our first piece of advice on doing well is to listen to a lot of radio and audio news productions. In order to produce good work yourself, you need to have a feel for what makes for top-notch production and the best way to do that is by listening! We will do some group listening sessions as a class but you will be expected to augment that with outside of class "radio" listening.

Since this class also fulfills the university's Communication-B general education requirement, you will also be required to write a lot over the course of the semester.

STUDENT EVALUATION:

25% of the grade will be determined by exams.

30% of the grade will be determined by the final course project.

30% of the grade will be determined by the student's performance on written and recorded assignments.

15% of the grade will be determined by class participation, including attendance.

Required Textbook: *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*, by Jonathan Kern. First edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

There are also non-textbook readings that are available through Learn@UW.

A comment about the readings: You'll note that most of the textbook is to be read in the first half of the course. Most chapters are not very long, about 30 pages. Please keep up with them because they relate to the class lectures. Materials from the book and Learn@UW will be covered in exams, in addition to material covered in class lectures.

Policies and Expectations

Attendance and Lateness:

Your success in this course requires class participation, and attendance is required. We will be keeping track of attendance, as well as late students, throughout the semester.

The Classroom:

This is a small class, so all members will be encouraged and expected to participate in class discussion. To support this environment, we will not allow use of cell phones, ipods or other electronic devices in class, other than for class projects. (You may use a laptop to take notes).

Written Work:

All written work must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with numbered pages, and one-inch margins on all sides. Please staple your work in the upper left-hand corner. Get in the habit of giving your work a full heading, including: your name, course name, name of the assignment, and date.

Preparation:

The course syllabus tells you which texts you should read and assignments you should complete before coming to class. The readings listed under each date are to be completed IN ADVANCE of class that day.

Late assignments will reduce your grade on the assignment. We will need to receive a hard copy of all assignments you are required to turn in. If you have to miss class on the day an assignment is due, you will be expected to turn it in early (if this will not be possible due to illness or an emergency, you must let us know as soon as possible).

Writing and Research:

As a course that fulfills the university's Communication-B requirement, this is a writing intensive class. One of the course goals is to help you improve your research and writing skills that will serve you throughout your academic and professional careers. In order to get the most out of this experience, consider attending library or Writing Center workshops. For more information, visit:

- ⑦ Library workshops, classes, and tours:
<http://library.wisc.edu/workshops/>
- ⑦ Writing Center (for classes or individual help):
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/>

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:

Plagiarism is a serious offense and has serious consequences. If you are found guilty of academic misconduct, a letter will be forwarded to the Dean of Students. Please read the statement concerning academic misconduct and plagiarism on page 5 of SCR (see http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/academic_misconduct.html).

Accommodations:

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, please contact us early in the semester. Also, please contact the McBurney Center (www.mcburney.wisc.edu, 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104) to request accommodations.

Schedule

Week 1

Monday (9/3) NO CLASS: LABOR DAY

Wednesday (9/5)

Explain the content of the course including the impact of broadcast media on society and the uses students might make of this course. Discuss radio-writing techniques. Listen to radio news stories. Hand out radio facts for story due 9/10.

Readings:

Chapter 1 "Sound and Stories"

Chapter 3 "Writing for Broadcast"

Mini-assignment #1: Radio facts for story.

Week 2

Monday (9/10)

Radio delivery techniques. Discuss story in class.

Readings:

Chapter 8 "Reading on the Air"

****DUE** Mini-assignment #1: Radio facts for story.**

ASSIGNMENT #1 *Due September 12* - Prepare a one-minute (about 150 word) radio news story and be prepared to record the story in class on Wednesday. I'd like you to take a story from a newspaper or magazine and rewrite it to conform to radio style. You will turn in your script and the article you used.

Wednesday (9/12)

1st hour: Record radio story in class (Assignment #1). Turn in Assignment #1 script.

2nd hour: Go to Steenbock library basement computer lab by 4:30 to learn about advanced search techniques from Jessica Newman (jnewman@library.wisc.edu).

Reading:

Chapter 17 "Studio Directing"

****DUE** Assignment #1**

ASSIGNMENT # 2 *Due September 24* - Using the search techniques learned at Steenbock Library, select a topic in your major field of study. From it, write a two-minute radio feature and record it. Indicate the audience you're trying to reach, time of day, size and type of station. You will also use the same information for Assignment #4, so hang on to it!

NOTE: A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE ABOVE ASSIGNMENT IS DUE BY 11:00 a.m. MONDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 24. **PLEASE UPLOAD YOUR ASSIGNMENT TO LEARN@UW BY 11:00 A.M. MONDAY, September 24th.**

Week 3

Monday (9/17)

Critique tapes recorded in last class. Discuss audience analysis and newsworthy topics.

Reading:

Chapter 10 "Newscasting"

ASSIGNMENT #3. *Due September 26* - An analysis of information oriented radio programming. The class will be split into three groups to analyze small, medium and large stations. Analysis is on a minute-by-minute tally of content. Turn in the tally as well as a one to two page report in which you analyze the program. What did you like and dislike? Analyze the announcing, ads, PSA's, newscast, talk between personalities. Give your overall impressions and state who you believe is the station's target audience.

Wednesday (9/19)

1st hour: **MEET AT WSUM STUDIOS.** History of radio broadcasting in the United States.

2nd hour: Visit the studios of WSUM 91.7 FM Student Radio.

Reading:

Learn@UW:

"The Invasion from Mars: Radio Panics America"

Week 4**Monday (9/24)**

Critique stories in class. Demonstrate copy editing for reading aloud.

Readings:

Chapter 12 "Story Editing"

****DUE** Turn in Assignment #2 via Learn@UW by 11:00 AM.**

ASSIGNMENT #4. *Due October 3* - Write and record a one-minute feature from the same information you used for Assignment #2. Incorporate the ideas about writing that we discussed in class, as well as our comments from your Assignment #2. This is more difficult than the two-minute feature because you must focus on one main thought. Turn in both script and recording. Be sure to identify your audience, station size and format.

Wednesday (9/26)

1st hour: Students present analysis of current radio programming. Then we will listen to "This American Life" style programming and compare that to what you listened to.

2nd hour: Discuss and demonstrate the use of radio broadcasting equipment. Demonstrate equipment operations in LSC department. Sign up for radio lab exercise.

Readings:

Chapter 2 "Fairness"

Learn@UW:

"Thinking About Radio: Notes by Steve Wadhams"

****DUE** Assignment #3.**

ASSIGNMENT #5 *Due October 8* - This assignment involves the use of the equipment in our studios. You will make an appointment (in groups of two - four) with us to visit our recording studios. I'll explain and show how each piece of equipment works. It will be up to your group to take notes and then schedule studio time to go over your notes and practice with the equipment. You will be required (as a group) to do some recording and turn in an outline describing how the studio equipment functions. You will need to:

- 1) record with microphone
- 2) blend in music with microphone "voice over"
- 3) record a phone conversation via Skype
- 4) create your own digital music and use in a voice over
- 5) edit a sentence or two of my voice on the digital equipment. Turn in your outline and save the recordings of the above operations in digital file in the studio computer. Each team turns in one recorded file

We will listen to your digital file and grade if based on technical quality (not on content).

Week 5

Monday (10/1)

In-class sound walk activity (hope for good weather!).

Readings:

Chapter 5 "Field Producing"

Learn@UW:

"Yoga for the Ears: Why Radio Producers Need to Soundwalk"

"How to do a Soundwalk"

Wednesday (10/3)

1st hour: Discuss sound walk experience and how feature production went. What worked? What didn't work? What will you do differently next time?

2nd hour: Discuss how to write and produce radio advertisements. Play examples in class.

Readings:

No readings assigned. Work on feature story.

****DUE** Turn in assignment #4.**

ASSIGNMENT #6 *Due October 17* - Write a one-minute radio spot advertisement and a 30 second public service announcement (PSA). Make them appropriate to a specific audience. Indicate the audience you're trying to reach, your station size and location. The spots must be done in the studio and at least one of them must include music and /or sound effects. Record on digital and transfer to your flash drive. You will have the opportunity to rewrite and re-record this assignment. It will be incorporated differences into your next assignment.

Week 6

Monday (10/8)

Write and produce ads in class.

****DUE** Turn in assignment #5.**

Wednesday (10/10)

1st hour: Listen to ads produced in last class.

2nd hour: Discussion of *Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie*.

Reading:

Read the “Go Big Read” book *Radioactive*.

Learn@UW:

Radioactive news coverage selections.

Week 7

Monday (10/15)

News writing and news reporting. Schedule a one-on-one meeting with Larry or Jill to assess your progress in class.

Readings:

Chapter 4 “Reporting”

ASSIGNMENT #7 *Due October 22* - Write and record a five-minute newscast with advertising for a specific audience. Figure the ads in the total newscast time (so you only need 3 1/2 minutes of news copy). Record on digital and transfer to your flash drive. I’d like you to use the same ads/PSA’s you used for assignment #6. Turn in your news script and revised ads as well as the original scripts. Rewrite and record the ad/PSA according to the comments I made and incorporate them into the newscast.

Wednesday (10/17)

1st hour: What’s it like to produce magazine format programming? Steve Paulson of “To the Best of Our Knowledge” on Wisconsin Public Radio will be our guest speaker.

2nd hour: Reading/ad lib practice in class. Select final project teams and dates for projects.

Reading:

Chapter 14 “Program Producing”

Chapter 15 “Program Editing”

****DUE** Turn in Assignment #6.**

WEEK 8

Monday (10/22)

Review for exam.

****DUE** Turn in Assignment #7.**

Wednesday (10/24) EXAM

WEEK 9

Monday (10/29)

Review exam, discuss interviewing techniques and final project.

Reading:

Chapter 9: “Hosting”

Learn@UW:

“Radio Producing and Interviewing”

ASSIGNMENT #8 *Due 11/5* - Pair off and conduct an interview. Select a topic with which one of you is familiar and pick an appropriate audience and station for your topic. Some topic ideas: Big Brothers/Big Sisters, FFA, something from your major, i.e. an entomology major could discuss troublesome insects. Submit recording and keep track of problems encountered for class discussion. The interview should be between 3:30-4:00 minutes and should NOT exceed four minutes.

Wednesday (10/31)

1st hour: Creative documentary production.

2nd hour: Meet with teammates to discuss project and select topics.

Reading:

Lean@UW:

Teen Reporter Handbook: How to Make Your Own Radio Diary

DUE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR PROGRAM

Submit a rough outline with names of people outside of class who will participate.

Examples of guests you might choose include UW faculty, relatives, former teachers, or others that have influenced your personal identity.

Week 10

Monday (11/5)

Audition tapes of student interviews. Continue discussion of interviewing and on working at press conferences.

****DUE** Turn in Assignment #8.**

ASSIGNMENT #9 - This is the most demanding assignment of the semester. Your task is to work in groups of three to produce a 30-minute recorded program, complete with a script aside from interviews. Each group member will be responsible for 10 minutes of the program. You must develop a theme for the program and identify an audience. You will also be expected to think about how you will get your program to its target audience and therefore must consider potential distribution channels, such as radio and/or the Internet.

We expect you to turn in an outline of your program prior to its airing in class. You will also submit proposals and partial drafts, and then revise them, based on our feedback, for resubmission. All programs will be aired in class and you will be responsible for helping us grade them. This involves scoring programs on the sheets we provide and writing a brief analysis of each program. If you miss a class during this time, you will have to come to one of our offices to listen to the program you missed and turn in an evaluation. **You are not allowed to use ads, features, interviews, etc., that you have already produced for other assignments.** While the themes for programs will differ, all programs are expected to contain the following elements:

*Billboard opening with an introduction that sets the stage for the whole half hour.

*At least one interview per group member with someone who has played a role in your personal narrative development.

*Any good story takes a listener along. As such, your program should use music and other sound to take the listener to the location.

*Transition between the two stories included.

*Closing comment and/or reflection.

*Whatever else we can agree upon is appropriate.

NOTE: You are not allowed to use entire songs in your program, however, we expect you to use music in at least some of transitions, as well as perhaps in your open and close.

The day your program is aired in class, you must bring in a program outline that identifies each topic and who is voicing it. Bring enough copies for the entire class. (My secretary can assist with making the copies, if necessary). The program should be carefully edited. It should be something you will be proud to have friends and family hear. We can guarantee you will work hard on this assignment and that you will learn much from it. You will also have a lot of fun putting it together!

Wednesday (11/7)

Critique interviews of remaining students. Discuss sources of information that might be used in the class project and in the future.

Week 11

Monday (11/12)

The Ethics of Storytelling, This American Life “Mr. Daisy and the Apple Factory” case study.

READINGS:

Chapter 13: Production Ethics

TBA

Wednesday (11/14)

1st hour: Radio in a Multimedia Word.

2nd hour: Meet in groups to work on final projects.

Week 12

Monday (11/19)

Final project workday.

Wednesday (11/21) – CANCELLED

THANKSGIVING RECESS NOVEMBER 22-25

Week 13

Monday (11/26)

We will talk about final project problems, project distribution possibilities, podcasting and you can meet in your work groups.

Wednesday (11/28)

Final project workday.

Week 14

Monday (12/3)

Class Project #1

Wednesday (12/5)

Class Project #2 & 3

Week 15

Monday (12/10)

Class Project #4

Wednesday (12/12)

Class Project #5

Course wrap-up

(Also, class review and discussion of audition tapes for applications.)
