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9-2015

JRNL 340.01: Intermediate Audio

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Recommended Citation

Banville, Jule A., "JRNL 340.01: Intermediate Audio" (2015). *Syllabi*. 3711.

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intermediate audio

JRNL 340 - FALL 2014 - MW

11:10 – 12:30 - DAH 316

Asst. Prof. Jule Banville (or just Jule)

Don Anderson Hall 427

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Office hours: MW 3:10-4:30 p.m. and by appointment



COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This class is about more than using sound in stories. You will do that right away and throughout the semester, but you'll also key in to elements of great public radio journalism. (Hint: YOU'RE GONNA WRITE.) You'll figure out what sound contributes to news and how to write radio news that's accurate, conversational and concise. You'll focus on writing in this class because writing is what makes or breaks most audio stories, regardless of what's on the tape. You'll also get all kinds of comfortable sticking microphones in faces and other places. You'll learn how to voice stories so they sound like you and not like anyone else. You'll edit and mix audio that sounds seamless, even to me. And, finally, you will produce radio stories of professional, airable quality for real, actual listeners. More on that later.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, successful students will:

- Demonstrate killer news judgment by knowing the key to radio stories is having a good idea in the first place.
- Understand the unique quality and importance of radio writing and be able to draft solid scripts.
- Become proficient in gathering and editing audio.
- Improve voicing techniques.
- Produce several types of multitrack pieces that blend creativity and the rigors of good journalism.
- Complete all that's required to submit pieces for this class and also for outside outlets, including but not limited to KBGA, PRX.org and Last Best Stories podcast.
- Critically listen to radio news and features from a variety of sources, including stations, national shows and podcasts.
- Meet deadlines.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Students in good standing as Journalism majors are expected to know the basics of gathering sound and writing for radio. They should be familiar with Audacity audio editing software and be able to learn Adobe Audition.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- USB Flash Drive. So not kidding about this.
- Quality headphones.
- Card readers for the Marantz recorder.
- A crap-ton of AA batteries.

EQUIPMENT ON LOAN

The J-school is loaning professional-quality audio kits to this class for the semester, which you will share with at least one other person. That means you do not have to go through checkout. You're welcome. It also means you remain responsible for your team's kit. If it's damaged or lost, that's on you. A complete Marantz kit is \$1,000. You'll be signing checkout forms that will be kept on file by me and you must return all equipment in working order on a date TBA.

And here's a tip: In the basement of Don Anderson Hall are plenty of unused lockers. Get a combination lock. Share the combination! Text your teammate(s) when you plan to use the equipment. Once you're finished, load the audio files into your computer and flash drive. Then put the kit back and text that you've done so. This way you don't have to bike all over Missoula to hunt each other down!

ABOUT MOODLE/UM ONLINE

I *will* use it for this class. ***You will, too!*** All reading, listening and production assignments and deadlines will be posted on our class page, which can be accessed by entering a Net ID at moodle.umt.edu. Grades will be there, too. ***If you miss class (more on that later), fail to check Moodle and then miss a deadline or an assignment, you can be confident that's not my fault. IF YOU MISS CLASS, DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK ME WHAT YOU MISSED.*** Wait until the end of the business day and check the freaking site. In addition, you'll have listening assignments where you'll be required to listen to pieces online, post links to stories you find and post comments. Instructors can easily tell when and how frequently you check Moodle.

TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

There's no required text for this class. But there will be required readings via handouts and links on Moodle.

LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

We'll do a lot of listening and talking about what we hear during class, but you'll also need to listen to pieces outside of class and come prepared to talk about them. As mentioned, you'll also complete listening assignments through Moodle. You may also be asked to share audio stories with the class and should be prepared to lead discussions about them. I CAN'T TALK ALL THE TIME. DON'T MAKE ME.

QUIZZES

We'll have them on both reading and listening assignments. I'll warn you in class. So you'll have to come to class.

PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENTS

This is a 300-level skills class, so expect to learn by doing. Here's a brief description of your production assignments. But, first, take note on how to file: All final mixes must be ***emailed to me as an attached MP3. If a story has a script, that script must also be attached.*** Deadlines are 9 a.m. on the date indicated. ***Due dates may change and will be finalized in class and posted to Moodle.*** In most circumstances, a failure to meet deadlines will result in a failing grade.

- Voxpop. Due: Monday, Sept. 7
Jump right in and let's see if you can swim. We'll define and go over examples of voxpops in class and you'll record and mix your own well-paced blend of voices. 2 minutes. We'll listen to several in class on Sept. 9.
- News Reader (Script only). Wednesday, Sept. 16.
Adapt a complicated print story for radio. Script only. Out loud, must come in at 60 seconds. Must file by 9 a.m. and bring hard copy to class on 9/21 for an exercise on voicing.
- News Wrap. Deadline Monday, Sept. 28.
Find some news. Get tape. Write coherently into and out of two actualities. Intro yourself AND outro yourself. 60-90 sec.
- News Story. Deadlines TBD
Must have approved pitch, multiple sources, edited script. Must include numbers/stats and other hard facts. 2-4 minutes.
- Narrated Feature. Deadlines TBD. 5-7 minutes.
You'll do a more complicated radio story that includes multiple sources and documentary sound. You'll need an approved pitch, an edited script and two rounds of a final mix (you'll make edits to your mix after I give them to you). Must include at least one tape-to-tape transition.

- Jule's Choice. Deadline TBD.
Based on skills that need the most work, I'll come up with your last assignment for the semester as the end draws near. Parameters and requirements will be discussed in class.

SPECIAL PROJECT*

This class has a *possible opportunity to work in partners to create stories about smokejumpers past and present to be featured in multiple places, including the Smokejumper Visitor Center in Missoula and as a series on the Public Radio Exchange, among other outlets. Details are still being ironed out. Stay tuned!

GRADING

Production Assignments: 75 percent

Special Project: 10 percent* (If this falls through, Production Assignments will be 85 percent. of total grade.)

Quizzes: 5 percent

Attendance and Participation: 10 percent

Grades will be based on a scale of 100 percent. Letter grades will not be used except as the final grade (per requirement). The equivalents are as follows:

- 90 - 100 percent: A
80 - 89 percent: B
70 - 79 percent: C
60 - 69 percent: D
50 - 59 percent: F
- UM's plus/minus system also makes the following distinctions:
A+: 97-100
A: 93-96
A-: 90-92
B+: 87-89
B: 83-86
B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79
C: 73-76
C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69
D: 63-66
D-: 60-62
F: 59 or lower

ATTENDANCE

Your job while in college is to come to class and do what people like me ask you to do. So do that. If you must miss class because you are really sick (more than sniffles)

or you have an unmovable conflict, you must notify me at least an hour before class via email. Those who have three or more unexcused absences will get a zero for Attendance and Participation (10 percent of final grade).

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

- Students with disabilities and/or special needs should notify the instructor at his or her earliest convenience and contact Disabilities Services for Students, umt.edu/dss/ or x2243.
- Academic Misconduct and the [Student Conduct Code](#): All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the university. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php
- DOUBLE-DIPPING: No element (recordings, story ideas, scripts, etc.) for another class can fulfill assignments for this class without DOCUMENTED ACCEPTANCE from instructors of all involved courses. Failure to do so will result in failure of that assignment.
- PLAGIARIASM and ETHICS: Have pride in your work and banish the idea of turning in something written or recorded by someone else and presented as your own. Writing a script, asking someone to read your words and then pawning it off as legitimate journalism is also a big, fat no. Penalties range from failing this class to expulsion from school.
- If you are a JRNL graduate student OR undergraduate student admitted to the professional program, your security code has already been generated for the semester and your GrizCard has already been activated to enter the front doors of DAH. You will have continual access (during the semester) to DAH until you graduate or drop from the Professional Program. If you have forgotten or misplaced your six-digit code, please see Cameron in DAH201 or call her at 243-4001 to obtain it.