



Western
UNIVERSITY • CANADA



MJCOM 9601 – Podcasting

Winter 2023

FNB 3050, Tuesday 9:00 – 11:50 a.m.

Territorial Acknowledgement: Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London.

The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Instructor: Allison Devereaux

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Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom or phone

PLEASE NOTE: SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF COVID-19 OUTBREAK. CURRENT AS OF DECEMBER 15, 2022.

Enrolment Restrictions:

Enrolment in this course is restricted to graduated students in the Faculty of Information & Media Studies (FIMS) at Western University.

Overview:

MJCOM 9601 - Podcasting combines online and in-person lectures, seminars and discussions with written and audio assignments completed during the winter semester. Officially, the course runs from Jan 9 – April 14, 2023.

During the winter semester, students will;

- complete two podcast critiques
- pitch and plan an original, branded podcast for a company or organization
- write, record and mix a podcast trailer
- create an original, interview-based podcast episode
- present audio content for professional feedback

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of MJCOM 9601B – Podcasting, students will have:

- Improved their understanding of podcasting, thinking deeply and critically about form, ethics and place in society.
 - Enhanced their audio production skills through workshops and assignments.
 - Expanded their understanding of the possibilities of podcasting form.
 - Prepared to launch both independent and branded podcasts.
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Assignments

Jan 24 – 15%

Podcast Critique #1

Feb 28 – 5%

Branded Podcast Assignment: Presentation

March 7 – 20% + 15%

Branded Podcast Assignment: Report

Branded Podcast Assignment: Trailer

March 28 – 15%

Podcast Critique #2

April 11 – 25%

Original Podcast Episode

Podcast Critiques: 15% each, 1000 words max

During the winter term, you'll be expected to critique two podcasts. You'll want to hear to at least four episodes. Listen to the most recent season.

The first report should include:

- a) a description of what the podcast is about
- b) format (interview, serialized, docu-drama, etc.), span (regular, seasonal, series), frequency and length.
- c) a mini-bio of the podcast host
- d) ethical issues and how they're handled
- e) your own critique of the podcast

The second report should include:

- a) a description of what the podcast is about
- b) format (interview, serialized, docu-drama, etc.), span (regular, seasonal, series), frequency and length.

- c) critique of sound, special effects and mixing
- d) critique of pacing, conversation, writing and delivery
- e) takeaways and how you'll apply them your own original podcast episode

Suggestions:

- Don't waste this opportunity by listening to podcasts you're already familiar with.
- Listen to at least one podcast outside your genre comfort zone. If you love comedy, for example, listen to at least one investigative podcast.

Please include source references.

Style and format: Times new Roman, 12 point, single-spaced. Include word count.

Use page numbering and/or a header.

Due by 6 p.m. on January 24, 2023 (Critique #1) and March 28, 2023 (Critique #2)

Please submit via OWL

Branded Podcast Assignment

Report: 20%, 1500 words max

This is a three-part communications assignment.

1. Along with a partner, you'll be randomly assigned a corporation or organization to develop a podcast that best represents the brand.

Prepare a report including:

- a) The pitch! 1-2 sentences explaining and selling your podcast
 - *What is your podcast name?*
 - *Always keep the audience in mind. Who is this podcast for?*
 - *Is the language you're using specific to the audience you're trying to reach?*

- b) Format, length, frequency & span
 - *Is it a weekly, recurring interview show? Or a limited run series?*
 - *What is the length of each episode? How many episodes per season?*
 - *What is the structure of the podcast?*
 - *What are your reasons for these decisions?*

- c) Audience for your podcast
 - *Who is already paying attention to this company?*
 - *What does your audience care about? What problems/pressure points can you help to solve?*
 - *Is this podcast for them or aiming for another demographic?*

- *What do you have to consider when shaping your content for your chosen audience?*
 - *Is this audience already downloading podcasts? Do you face any challenges in appealing to them?*
- d) A mini-bio of the podcast host
- *Is it you or your partner? Co-hosting?*
 - *Will you be hiring a host? What are the qualities, sound or demographic you'd like them to represent?*
 - *What is the host's tone?*
 - *Why would this host appeal to the audience?*
- e) Marketing strategy: Consider and outline the steps you'll take for marketing/platform-building activity to build interest and an audience for the podcast.
- *Can this audience already be found online?*
 - *What platforms will you use to attract attention?*
 - *What can you commit to doing regularly?*
 - *Would live events complement the podcast (ie a beach cleanup for an environmental podcast, a concert for a music podcast, a Q & A for an investigative podcast)*
- f) Synopsis of three launch episodes.
- *Who will you interview? What stories will you tell?*
 - *Think about sound*

Please include source references.

Style and format: Times new Roman, 12 point, double-spaced. Include word count.

Use page numbering and/or a header.

Due by 6 p.m. on March 7, 2023

Please submit via OWL.

Trailer 15% & Presentation 5%

This is a part two of the branded podcast assignment.

2. Along with your partner, develop a trailer to sell your podcast and hook listeners. This should be 90 seconds to 2 minutes in length and be rich in sound.
3. Present the trailer in class for professional feedback on Feb 28. Please include the highlights of your pitch: 1-2 sentence description, format, intended audience and first three episodes. Length 5-10 minutes.

Format: .mp3 or .wav

Presentation + feedback will be Feb 28, 2023.

Report + trailer due by 6 p.m. on March 7, 2023

Please submit via OWL.

Final Assignment: Original Podcast Episode: 25%

Create an original podcast episode 20-30 minutes in length with the following elements:

- Name, theme, concept
- Original interview with a guest

Format: .mp3 or .wav

Due in class April 11, 2023

Please submit via OWL

Participation & Professionalism 5% (pass/fail)

This is a professional program and attendance is mandatory. If you miss more than two classes without notifying your instructor first, it results in an automatic failing grade. Be on time.

Missing class to work on a production deadline or assignment for MJCOM 9601 – Podcasting or another course is not acceptable.

This pass/fail grade will reflect your attendance, as well as your contributions during class time. Your feedback for peers should meet these professional standards: respectful, thoughtful and helpful. Etiquette is expected in class and online: listening, contributing and avoiding cell phone use.

Academic Performance

The course uses the following grading scale:

A+ 90-100 A 85-89 A- 80-84 B+ 77-79 B 73-76 B- 70-72 F <70

Deadlines & Duplication

Deadlines are crucial in journalism, and learning to meet them is essential. Assignments filed after the deadline will receive a grade of zero. If allowance is needed – for medical or other emergencies – please email or phone to request more time. Requests for extensions will only be considered up to 24 hours before deadline.

Assignments filed after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, unless an extension has been granted beforehand. Extensions may or may not be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Duplication of assignments between courses is an academic offence. If in doubt, please consult your instructor.

Health/Wellness Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with **Accessible Education Western (AEW)**, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both **AEW** and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Academic Integrity

FIMS enforces the highest standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the policy [here](#).

Helpful Resources

NPR's Podcast Start Up Guide by Glen Weldon (Ten Speed Press) will be available at FIMS Graduate Library.

[Freesound.org](https://freesound.org) is a resource with Creative Commons music and sound effects.

[Nothing But Podcast Trailers](#) by Dan Misener is a feed of trailers drawn from the top 100 U.S. podcasts.

[NPR Training](#) has great information about radio and podcasting

Pacific Content is a Canadian company that makes branded podcasts. The [blog](#) has plenty of useful advice.

[Transom.org](#) shares insider tips about public radio and podcasts. Check out the blog entries for excellent information about sound, story and the industry.

Ethics

The Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) [Ethics Guidelines](#)

CBC's [Journalistic Standards and Practices](#)

Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) [Code of Ethics](#)