

Podcast Practicum | NJIT | Fall 2025

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COM 324 / office hours: 3-5 Wednesday and by appointment

Creative. Technical. Performative. Demanding.

Course description: Podcasting has become an extremely popular and powerful communications medium. The primary objective of this course is to introduce and usher students through the process(es) of creating elementary podcasts based on their own personal interests. This course guides students through the processes of conceiving, cultivating content for, refining, and producing their own basic audio podcast. Students in the course are introduced to the fundamental aspects of podcasting, and will produce a series of unified, thematic podcasts of their own design.

This course is scheduled to meet in-person every Tuesday night during the semester. Attendance is mandatory. Missing multiple classes will harm your final grade (5 points for every two unexcused absences). Campus meetings will happen in Cullimore 311 on Tuesdays at 6 p.m.

A Final Examination will not be given.

Course materials, assignments, and information will be exchanged via Canvas (<https://canvas.njit.edu/>), which will include topical discussion forums and work submission portals.

Course textbook: Everybody Has a Podcast (except you) [Justin, Travis, and Griffin McElroy, ISBN 978-0-06-297480-8]. [Amazon link].

Other course materials, including links to forms, templates, and the course Listening Session Records, prepared by the professor, will be posted on Canvas.

The primary activity in this Practicum course is for students to independently prepare and produce a series of four 15-20 minute thematically-oriented audio podcasts* (in addition to one shorter "Trailer" episode). Students will be trained, and are required, to use the production studios at WJTB (Campus Center, 4th floor), or else the Humanities Podcasting Studio. ** [(*) = You may work with video if you are an expert videographer and have access to the necessary equipment; (**) = If you can prove that you have access to hardware and a facility that enables you to make good recordings, you are exempt from this rule.] Possibilities include doing a "talk" show, a program focusing on a particular subject/topic, presenting creative/artistic works, or other student-invented concepts. Students choose the topic of their podcast based on their own interests, and are welcome to work in pairs. Podcast proposals will be composed early the semester, everyone will then focus on designing their podcasts.

In addition to preparing, producing, and uploading each podcast, students are also required to submit, via Canvas, file a Podcast Practicum Episode Report Form for each of episode (a template will be posted on Canvas). Students are also required to keep a Podcast Journal (in Google Docs), participate in course Listening Sessions, submit Podcast Evaluations for classmates' podcasts, and prepare a Term Report.

The course is demanding, but should also be fun. Producing podcasts unquestionably presents challenges, and requires a significant amount of time commitment. Beyond the course meetings, Professor Funkhouser will be available for individual appointments and tutorials on Wednesday afternoons (office hours) and by appointment.

Note: Syllabus is subject to change; any major amendments will be announced on Canvas.

General Coursework Outline / Grading

Podcast Proposal [5 points]

Producing and posting 4 podcast episodes, plus Trailer (in .mp3 format); includes filing a brief report for each [11 points each / 55 points overall]. Assignments must be submitted by due date. Note: Late work will be penalized, .5 points for every two days past due date. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent completing production on time, speak with me about them in advance of due date.

Listening Session presentation & engagement (discussion), including providing information for the course Listening Session Record (see Canvas for Google Docs link) [5 points]

Prepare 2 Podcast Evaluations for classmates' work, dates/details t.b.a. [5 points each / 10 points total]

Podcast Journal [15 points]

Term Report [10 points]

Course Schedule

September

This month you will develop and declare your idea for a Podcast, using a Podcast Practicum Program Proposal template (posted in the Announcements section of Canvas). Program Proposals are due (on Canvas) by 9/12 (preferably sooner); submit as .doc or .pdf via Canvas.

General Note: Be sure the filename for every file you submit on Canvas contains your name in it (e.g., yourname-podcast-proposal.pdf). Examples of previous student productions and documents will be provided.

Begin composing your Podcast Journal (via Google Docs) immediately. Podcast Journals should consist of a FULL activity log for coursework: chronicle, with notes on process, everything you do—and think about—with regards to this class/your podcast (again, an example will be provided on Canvas). PUT A DATE ON ALL OF YOUR JOURNAL ENTRIES. Journal entries focus on your work, research, process, and thoughts about preparing and producing your podcast. Links to your Journals will be registered on Canvas, and will be fully evaluated on 9/30/25, 10/31/25, 12/1/25. Again: all notes related to your research in the course and production of podcasts should be included. Each evaluation is worth 5 points.

9/2: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Course introduction/overview.

Recording / listening exercise #1.

Reading assignment: Chapter One, Everybody Has a Podcast (except you).

Work in Podcast Journal; in it, brainstorm ideas and prepare a draft of your podcast proposal to bring to next week's class. Be sure your Google Doc sharing permissions are set correctly and post the link to your Journal in Canvas.

9/9: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Bring the draft of your (1 paragraph) podcast proposal to class.

Discussion: Podcast Topics.

Listening Session I (professor).

Recording/listening exercise #2.

Technology Review.

First installment of your Podcast Journal is due. Post link to Canvas [1 point].

PREPARE FINAL PODCAST PROPOSAL USING TEMPLATE PROVIDED ON CANVAS / SUBMIT VIA CANVAS BY SEPTEMBER 12 [5 points].

Once your Proposal is approved, write a script for your Trailer episode (in your journals). Bring it to class next week.

Reading assignment: Chapter Two, Everybody Has a Podcast (except you).

From this point in the course onward, you will begin to develop and produce podcast content. This is a process. Begin collecting, organizing, and preparing material (including musical accompaniment), contacting people who may be guests, and creating outlines for programs. Determine where your podcast will be hosted. Begin intensive practice with audio software and recording techniques. These matters will be discussed during class meetings, as well as on Canvas. You also continue composing your Podcast Journal (regular entries). In early October, your podcast Trailer episode will be completed.

9/16: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Bring draft of script for your Trailer episode.

Listening Session II A/B (2 students)

Discussion (on reading material), Technical Preparation (software discussion), and training/recording sessions at WJTB.

Once your podcast is approved, establish and begin furnishing information on your hosting site (share via Canvas for review/discussion if you wish). In your journal, prepare speculative outlines for each of your four podcast series episodes and begin to make plans to produce them. Begin organizing materials and writing scripts.

Come up with some ideas for soundscape(s) that are appropriate for your podcast (and begin to experiment recording with it if you can).

9/23: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Listening Session III A/B (2 students)

Software and production tutorials: Ableton Live, Audition (possibly Audacity).

Non-graded activity I: Using WJTB recordings provided (from last week), edit the recording ("filler" words, stumbles) and noise reduction.

Non-graded activity II: Select musical/sonic soundscapes to use with your podcast. Begin to experiment with mixing your vocal recording (above) with your soundtrack. Using Audition or another program create an .mp3 that mixes the two. If you did not make a recording last week you can make one tonight. Post to Canvas Discussions before next week's class. NOTE: This does not have to be your final trailer episode!

9/30: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Discussion: Multitrack (voice/sound) recording (review), trailer preparation, hosting site, and script writing.

Listening Session IV A/B (2 students).

Podcast Trailer episode is due in one week (10/7). Trailer should be at least one minute in length, preferably two to three minutes; five minutes maximum. Post to your podcast hosting site and submit link on Canvas. Podcast site should include an icon and information about your podcast.

Continue to develop and produce content for your first episode. This is a process. Begin collecting, organizing, and preparing material (including musical accompaniment), contacting people who may be guests, and creating outlines for programs.

Podcast Journal is due for evaluation #1 on 9/30. This should include a draft/basic outline of the 4 programs you plan to produce during the semester. If you have submitted and received feedback on your Journal already, you do not need to post the link on Canvas. [4 points]

October

The first full episode of your podcast is due this month.

Continue composing regular entries in your Podcast Journal.

10/7: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Listening Session V A/B (2 students).

Recording(s) review.

Software and editing instruction, as necessary.

Reading assignment: Chapters Three and Four, *Everybody Has a Podcast* (except you).

Podcast Trailer episode is due. Post Episode Report Form on Canvas.

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10/14: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Discussion and Listening Session VI (2 students).

Continue to develop and produce content for your first podcast episode. This is a process! Collecting, organize, and prepare material (including musical accompaniment)! Contact co-host people who may be guests (or co-hosting)! Create outlines and scripts for programs!

10/21: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Podcast production/preparation/editing discussion, including progress reports by students.

Discussion and Listening Session VII (2 students)

Episode 1 of your podcast is due on 10/21; post to your podcast hosting site. Submit Report via Canvas.

You will promptly receive detailed feedback on your first episode, and you are expected to begin producing Episode 2 of your podcast immediately.

10/28: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Listening Session VIII (2 students).

Podcast peer evaluations for Episode #1 are due (10/28). Submit via Canvas.

10/31: Podcast Journal evaluation #2. [5 points]

November-December

By the end of the semester, you should have prepared, produced, and posted four episodes of your podcast. Complete and submit a report for each show (templates are posted on Canvas Announcements section). You are also required to finish your two Peer Evaluations using the Podcast Evaluation Form posted on Canvas, as well as continue working in your Podcast Journal and completing other assignments listed on the syllabus.

11/4: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Listening Session IX (2 students).

Podcast production/preparation/editing discussion, including progress reports by students. Further exploration of audio software techniques.

Episode #2 of your podcast (including report) is due. Submit Report via Canvas.

11/11: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Podcast production work continues.

Listening Session X (if necessary).

Episode #2 Review, Discussion, and Problem Solving of student podcasts.

Podcast peer evaluations for Episode #2 are due. Submit via Canvas.

11/18: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Listening Session XI (if necessary).

Episode #3 of your podcast is due 11/18. Submit Report via Canvas

Episode #3 Review, Discussion, and Problem Solving of student podcasts.

Podcast production work continues.

12/1: Podcast Journal evaluation #3. [5 points]

12/2: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Podcast production work moves towards conclusion.

12/9: Class meeting, 311 Cullimore, 6 p.m.

Episode #4 of your podcast (including report) is due 12/9. Submit Report via Canvas.

By 12/9 you should have prepared, produced, and every episode of your podcast (with reports).

Term Report is due 12/11. 1000 word (4-5 pages) reflection on the experience of learning how to produce a podcast. Tell the story of your class experience. What were biggest challenges and frustrations? What interested/stimulated you the most about the process? In addition to (possibly) discussing these questions, feel free to write about any or/and all aspects of your engagement. Submit via Canvas.

ALL WORK FOR THIS COURSE MUST BE COMPLETED BY 12/11/25

NOTE: THIS IS NOT A COURSE IN WHICH IT IS APPROPRIATE TO USE GENERATIVE AI WRITING. PLEASE REFRAIN FROM DOING SO.

OTHER COURSE INFO:

This course is designed to ensure NJIT's Communication and Media program successfully provides its students with a foundation in a range of forms of communication. The course's overall objectives are designed to promote each student's competence or mastery of multi-media communications, using a podcast media as an expressive tool. Through project development and completion, students build practical skills and processes in developing audio and writing projects using online networks competently and artistically. In addition to preparing personal narratives, interviews, and long-term journals, students will acquire the ability to effectively produce and edit podcasts. The course will improve a student's flexibility in communication by using a contemporary media format, thus advancing their general skillset and delivering content via a popular media format.

Students in this course will: 1.) Gain firsthand understanding of a communicative genre; 2.) Explore the practical and creative implementation of podcasting tools and applications; 3.) Develop individual technical (audio) and written creative practices using broadcast (podcast) media; 4.) Use peers to develop ideas, and cultivate production of original work; and 5.) Foster audio artifacts for publication.

Learning outcome 1: Engage in critical thinking and reflection regarding use of language and communication strategies.

Learning Outcome 2: Gain a practice-based introduction to understanding processes and tools of verbal communication across networks.

Learning Outcome 3: Gain a practice-based introduction to methods for speaking effectively and making decisions that enable efficient communication with others.

Learning Outcome 4: The course will expand a student's conceptual perspective of communication, thus improving his or her skills in both quantitative and qualitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, and project management.

Core competencies addressed by the course include: Student awareness of, and engagement with, communications strategies; building perception of contemporary communication(s) environments; performative practice with communication tools; critical thinking on the subject matter; cultivation of communication literacy.

Instructional objectives / evaluation:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their production's:

- (1) Real-world relevance; design qualities
- (2) Sustained investigation; development of materials (process over time)
- (3) Use of multiple sources and perspectives; originality
- (4) Creating polished products; aesthetic products

Integrated assessment (feedback from multiple sources) will be used in evaluating works (podcasts) produced in the course.

Scale converting number to letter grade

A = 90 - 100

B+ = 85 - 89

B = 80 - 84

C+ = 75 - 79

C = 70 - 74

D = 60 - 69

F = 59 or less

"Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at:
<http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of

Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu" Course Prerequisites: HUM 102 with a grade of C or higher, and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher.