

ASSETT Report

Fellowship Spring '22

Title and summary / description of your project

Fall '23: ARTH 4929: Museums in the 21C: final assignment: Podcast

Summary of why, how, what

The final assignment, a podcast and then presentation of that podcast, was worth 40% of the final grade.

The course was in two parts: a weekly in person seminar, and an internship. Each student interned at a local museum, working their 10 hours a week. All the students in the class intend to work in museums. To build their skills in making information about museum programs, education, exhibitions available to the public, which will be very useful in any museum position, their final assignment was an audio podcast.

Assignment description:

Podcast proposal: Write a proposal for your podcast, 350-400 words. For the subject of your podcast, present a topic of interest to a general audience, focused on the museum where you are interning. In your podcast, bring your internship experience and the knowledge you have gained at your host museum together with course readings, guest speakers, and seminar discussion.

Outline the topic of your podcast, how it relates to specific points of interest in the museum where you are interning, and to themes from course material. Provide a bibliography, minimum 3 sources for the proposal, of research to bring authority and expertise to your podcast.

Podcast: final assignment: prepare a 12 to 15- minute audio podcast, using Audacity or Anchor.fm.

<https://www.colorado.edu/assett/quick-podcasting-guide>

Tips for writing podcast scripts:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/blog/write-podcast-script-examples>

Free music to use in your podcast

<https://freemusicarchive.org/login/>

How to add intro and outro music to your podcast

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ofeTvh4Liw>

Podcast Voice Training Tips

<https://improvepodcast.com/13-vocal-tips-for-podcasters-to-get-more-listeners/>

Final Presentation: Wednesday, December 7, 3:00 – 4:50 pm. The final presentations will be in two parts. Students will have listened to all class podcasts, which were made available through Anchor.fm by Nov 28.

First, you will present your podcast in a report of approximately 10 minutes. Focus on your podcast and how it relates to your work during the internship and engagement with the course material.

Second, the class will give constructive feedback for your project. The podcast rubric will serve as a guide.

Feedback: in a work environment, teams working collaboratively on a joint project give feedback as each team member presents their work. The aim of the feedback is constructive, so that the whole team's final project is stronger. It is to support everyone to succeed.

Our feedback for podcast presenters is in this constructive mode, as part of a team. The goal is

that beyond this class, in jobs outside the University, everyone will be prepared to create stronger podcasts, through the help of constructive feedback. Feedback will be assessed as part of the participation grade.

Describe the challenge you addressed in your department with this project.

My goal is to find alternatives to the standard essay final assignment. By their fourth year, students know the format of writing an essay, it isn't a challenge and they are not clear how it will be useful in the museum job market.

Faculty in the Art History area and other Dept are very interested in doing this in their 4th year courses.

Describe desired result.

My goal is to create an assignment that will give our art history undergrads a marketable skill, an accomplishment to add to their CV that will make them stand out from other applicants in the museum job market. Museums use podcasts to promote programs in all areas.

Describe the project. What did you do?

In the section above, I gave the podcast assignment description and requirements.

I invited specialist guest speakers to join us. Prof. Megan O'Grady, arts critic and highly skilled interviewer, gave interview guidance and helped the students focus on their topics. Prof. Tamara Meneghini from Theatre and Dance gave a talk on how to do voice overs, with helpful resource web sites to visit for guidance and examples.

Describe the outcome. What worked, what didn't work, lessons learned.

All the podcasts were excellent, especially given the students were rigging their own sound studios in their closets at home, to record them! The students were required to do an interview with subject area specialists to incorporate in their podcasts. The students developed interview techniques as well as voice control and voice -over skills.

Lessons learned:

Here is what I found most interesting. At about Week 5 I realized there was considerable concern among the students. The students were worried that their inexperience in podcasting would mean a poor grade on the final podcast assignment. I had scaffolded the assignments so the podcast itself was worth 25%.

I tried something I have not done before for an assignment: I took the grade for the podcast itself off the table. I explained that they all knew how to write essays; as seniors, they pretty much have the essay-writing process down. But podcasts? Whole new thing for them in every way. To address their concerns, and recognizing the challenges of technology, format, and all the other completely new skills I was asking them to learn in a short time, I set out a different grading process for the 25% podcast: if they put in the effort, showed through their script and bibliography that they had done the required research (that was a separate grade), they would get an A on the podcast segment of the assignment.

The impact was, once relieved of the worry about a grade the students took chances, they experimented with technology. They tried out a range of technologies, apps, programs,

techniques to record, to write their scripts, and experimented- with great knowledge sharing and really brave work.

Reflect on your experience in the Faculty Fellows program and working on your project.

It was a very interesting outcome. We all work in a university environment where grades are the currency that signals success. Yet once the students did not have to worry about failure, they were liberated and could be creative, make mistakes, try again, and arrive at outstanding work. And they put significant amounts of time and energy into their podcasts.

This environment and this kind of project, presented as a team effort, reflects the work environment students will go into. They all want to work in museums. There, they will work as part of a team, with creative process as part of their jobs in museum education, exhibition design, preparatory work, exhibition installations. They will be responsible to their team. Taking chances and making mistakes and learning from that and doing even better work as a result, will be part of their everyday work life. This assignment brought this work life into the classroom.

The students were delighted with their work; they had that great feeling of taking on a challenge and doing well, with a tangible product at the end. We had a review process in the last class; as a team we had listened to everyone's podcast and gave positive and constructive critical feedback- as would happen in a work environment. Giving positive and constructive feedback is a skill in itself; we discussed how to do that. The students got that right away and were thoughtful in their feedback.

I learned a lot from this, about how we learn. My goal was to structure the class environment, from the first day of class, so that we would work as a team. The assignments were structured to support this. I think it was this particular group of students that helped make it such a success. And it was a small class, only seven students. I don't think it would work with any more than 10. And, the students gelled as a group, to support each other and share what worked and what didn't.

Technology and learning: The students were very aware that in the museum workplace, writing skills are essential and, skills in technology will be critical. They know that having podcasting skills to add to their CV, with a podcast to share to demonstrate their experience and skill, will bring significant value to their job applications. They were motivated. Their writing skills were critical in writing the script, then, the tech skills came together with the writing. It really worked out well.

Include other artifacts and visuals

Please see attached two podcasts, with student permission:

Sheri Binkly, Art History major

Nick Nemeth, Art History BAM program