

Podcast Assignment

Kathleen Normington, Film and Theatre

Context

This assignment was a culminating final project for my Script Analysis class. During the course of the semester, students read and analyze play scripts, i.e., dramatic literature. The plays discussed range from Shakespeare to contemporary playwrights. I invited local, produced playwrights, and assigned groups of students to interview each. The process used the knowledge gained to craft questions focused on the playwrighting process. Most of the class are Theatre Arts majors and some Film majors along with Animation and Illustration majors and others. The ability for them to find out firsthand about making a career in the arts was invaluable.

The course was synchronous, and all information and collaboration was done through Canvas Groups. This made it easy to grade group work and helped the students communicate and share information.

Learning Outcome

To uncover information through both research and interviews with theatrical practitioners about the playwrighting process and create an edifying and entertaining podcast.

The Assignment

We used the last 6 weeks of class time for this. The students worked outside of class on the assignment both individually and in their groups.

Advice to Future Adoptees

- Have the students focus their questions and the selection of material for the podcast
- Find good podcast examples for students to module and be inspired by
- Review preliminary podcasts before final podcast (one group went completely off track and I didn't realize it until after the final day of class)
- Emphasize the importance of scripting and rehearsal prior to recording the interview and other material. Maybe do some "mock" interviews to prepare
- Arrange for an Adobe Audition expert workshop for students
- Have two students act as co-hosts (too many voices are confusing in audio)
- Remind students frequently that a podcast should be informative but also entertaining (many treated this as an obligatory "school presentation" type of assignment. I had to encourage them to think creatively)