

# Ensure Students Are Learning: Faculty Descriptions of Innovative Teaching Practices

## Project-Based Learning: Five Phases of Radio Production

### Innovative Teaching Practice Description:

The Introduction to Radio Production course prepares students to produce creative radio shows. Students learn the breadth and depth of radio and entertainment industry information from creative brainstorming sessions during which they share wonderful ideas for new genres of music blocks, as well as innovative ideas for shows. The students also learn how to work together collaboratively.

There are five major assignments, including a capstone final project. Each assignment builds upon the previous one, leading up to the capstone. All assignments are geared toward training students to be prepared to produce a radio show of their own, and teaches the five phases of production (development, pre-production, production, post-production, and distribution). Each assignment addresses the learning outcomes for the course.

### How to Prepare for This Innovative Teaching Practice:

Teams are selected through random numbering depending on the size of the class, with up to 5 or 6 students per team.

### Five Phases of Production Assignments:

- Recording of Sweeper*

The class breaks into the randomly selected groups and brainstorms a pitch based on the brand values of the station. Each student will write and record a 15–30 second sweeper. Using the radio brand values as an example, each student from the group will write a sweeper by choosing one station brand value, e.g., creativity, collaboration, discovery, etc. This brand value will be the theme. The students will come up with three adjectives to describe how they want their sweeper to feel; then they will write the sweeper using the three adjectives, then record, then edit. Each student will learn to use Garage Band software for editing, sound effects, and music beds. The assignment is turned in through Drop Box to be reviewed by the Radio Station and instructor. If approved, it can be used on the college radio station.
- Campus Updates*

Students will create, develop, and write a 1–3 minute script about campus updates for the radio news. Students will have to read, write, and edit with sound effects. Students will learn how to use the audio board on their own.

3. *Interview*

Students will learn how to incorporate music into an interview by adding music at the beginning of the interview and having it fade into the background. Students will also use microphones. This activity is more advanced and includes the process of brainstorming, writing, and announcing. Although no editing is done because it is not aired, it will be played in class, which is considered the distribution.

4. *Group Radio Special-Professor Mentored Project*

The professor will model the production of a 30–60 minute show with a lab technician. Students will spend 2–3 weeks preparing the assignment. Each student has a part and as a team, they create the entire concept on their own. Each student will actually participate in the show by coming to the mic and sharing a little bit of what the theme is in a variety of ways (use of song, etc.). By the end, students will see every element needed for their own radio show/special, which includes series intro, legal ID episode intro, content resets, public service announcement (PSA) resets, content, and episode close. This project helps to demystify the capstone final project.

5. *Capstone Final Project*

The purpose is for students to produce their own 30–60 minute show. Students have to sign up for times to record. Class time is used for editing. This project is turned in during finals week as an MP3 file, with a show outline that details the music that airs in the special. At the end, students will become fully independent, creative producers.

### How to Ensure Participation in This Innovative Teaching Practice:

From the beginning of the semester, the instructor should foster a sense of fearlessness in sharing. Instructors should promote sharing in the students' own voices, which will help to eliminate the fear of speaking in front of the class. Instructors should establish from the beginning that the classroom is a place for collaboration.

### Notes From the Instructor About This Innovative Teaching Practice:

“Students have had incredible brainstorms and group projects. The brainstorms and ideas get better as the semester progresses. Students' concepts get stronger and more exciting, and they really shine when producing content for the college radio station.”