



School of English, Journalism
& European Languages

Unit Outline

HEJ605
Radio Documentary
Semester 2, 2006

<http://www.utas.edu.au/units/HEJ605>

Convenor:	Sarah Gillman Room: SOCSCI 536 Phone: 6226 1930 E-mail: Sarah.Gillman@utas.edu.au
Consultation Hours:	Thursdays 12 noon - 2 pm
Unit Description:	<p>This unit will begin with basic broadcast skills, then move on to teach students how to develop professional radio documentaries that meet exacting industry standards in terms of production and content. It will assume no prior broadcast experience, but will introduce students to the special skills required to gather sound, write scripts, conduct interviews and use recording and editing equipment. Students will be expected to focus on researching a major piece of radio documentary journalism. After mastering the generic skills of radio reporting and production, students will craft high-quality scripts and documentary packages, with a view to the work being broadcast. There will be an emphasis on meticulous scripting, appreciation of the nuances of sound recording and editing, voice development, researching a broadcast story and the nurturing of storytelling abilities that suit the radio idiom.</p>
Unit Aims and Objectives:	<p>The aims of this unit are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ provide basic training in radio journalism practice;▪ encourage the development of radio-based documentary storytelling abilities;▪ provide some training in the technical aspects of radio;▪ help students develop skills in voice and audio editing; and▪ develop an appreciation of the special nature of radio as a medium, particularly its imaginative dimension.

<p>Learning Outcomes:</p>	<p>Students undertaking this unit will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop an appreciation of the role of radio and its unique powers of storytelling; ▪ enhance their written communication skills through preparing professional documentary scripts suitable for broadcast and writing analyses of documentaries; ▪ have acquired sufficient knowledge to develop voice techniques in preparation for professional radio journalism; ▪ develop fundamental skills in sound gathering and digital audio editing; and ▪ enhance both problem solving and social responsibility skills through the teamwork and professionalism required for content provision for a real radio station.
<p>Required Text:</p>	<p>Unit reader available from Co-op Bookshop</p>
<p>When Taught:</p>	<p>Seminars: Mondays 1.10-3pm SOCSCI 313</p> <p>Pro Tools seminars: HEJ605 students who don't already know how to use the audio editing software Pro Tools will be required to attend a two-hour seminar during Week 2 or Week 3. A roster will be used to allocate places. A second Pro Tools workshop will be held in the fourth term to focus on advanced documentary techniques.</p>
<p>Assessment:</p>	<p>Radio news script, 50 seconds due Week 3 (Monday 31 July) 10 per cent</p> <p>Three-minute documentary telling a story with natural sound only (no scripting) due Week 7 (Monday 28 August) 15 per cent</p> <p>Annotated radio documentary diary due Week 11 (Monday 02 October), description and analysis of three radio documentaries of your choice, total 1,500 words 15 per cent</p> <p>Major project – 10-minute radio documentary, fully scripted and produced AND associated 2,500 word exegesis due Friday, 3 November 60 per cent (documentary 40 per cent, exegesis 20 per cent)</p>

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Week Beginning	Seminar
17 Jul Wk 1	Introduction and aims of the unit. Explanation of assessable tasks. How does radio fit into the media spectrum? Introduction to Edge Radio.
24 Jul Wk 2	Radio news scripting - a new way of writing news and a quick way to understand the difference between radio and other media. The importance of correct spoken and written style.
31 Jul Wk 3	The equipment of radio news - use of minidisk recorders and mikes. Vox pop interview exercises around campus using digital recording in the first hour, followed by discussion of vox pop exercise. Rapid news script practice.
7 Aug Wk 4	The radio interview: in the field, in the studio, on the phone. Identifying the "grab". Principles of audio editing, including ethics. Natural sound and other sound effects for news, current affairs and documentaries.
14 Aug Wk 5	Introductory principles of radio documentary making, including scripting. Considering your first documentary project – three minutes with no words. Workshopping ideas. Listening to recordings.
21 Aug Wk 6	The human voice on radio: developing a radio voice. Aspects of radio style. The role of SCOSE. An hour of voice training with an industry professional.
28 Aug Wk 7	Professional documentary techniques 1
11 Sep Wk 8	Professional documentary techniques 2
18 Sep Wk 9	Documentary styles. A variety of recordings for discussion. Workshopping major projects.
25 Sep Wk 10	Advanced documentary techniques, with recordings.
2 Oct Wk 11	Analysis of a major radio documentary
9 Oct Wk 12	Polishing your documentary – it's the little things that count. Listening and discussing.
16 Oct Wk 13	Final major project workshop

RECOMMENDED READING

Copies of the following texts have been placed on reserve in the Morris Miller Library for your use. It is worth reading them when you have the chance to enhance your understanding of radio as a medium and journalism in general.

Gail Phillips and Mia Lingdren
The Australian Broadcast Journalism Manual (2nd edition). Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Steve Ahearn (ed.)
Making Radio: A Practical Guide to Working in Radio. St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2000.

Phillip Bell and Theo van Leewen.
The Media Interview: Confession, Contest and Conversation. Kensington, NSW: University of NSW Press, 1994.

Helen Molnar and Helen Wilson (eds.)
Radio, Spec. issue of Media International Australia Vol. 91 (May 1999).

A list of websites is provided in Phillips pp.351-352. Remember, many of these websites now allow you to listen to radio on the net.

You will also need to visit Edge Radio's website at: www.edgeradio.org.au.

To listen to radio during the semester in Hobart, here are some stations to tune into:

Edge 9	99.3 FM
ABC Local Radio	936 AM
Triple J	92.9 FM
Classic FM	93.9 FM
Radio National	585 AM
NewsRadio	747 AM
HOFM	101.7 FM
Magic FM	107.3 FM
Sea FM	100.9 FM

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1: Radio news script

For this assignment you need to prepare a real news story and submit a written script that follows the format discussed in the relevant seminar (an example of a radio script is provided overleaf). You must also submit a recording of your voiceover (VO). You do not need to submit a recorded interview or a grab.

You are only required to do basic recording for this assignment, and do not need to produce the work in the studio. Therefore, do not use the digital minidisk recorders. An ordinary cassette recorder is all that is required for your VO recording.

DO NOT RECORD THE INTRO OR OUTRO, AS THESE ARE TO BE READ BY THE PRESENTER.

Your stories should be well-crafted radio news stories, strictly within the range of 30 to 50 seconds. The scripts must be timed and you need to ensure that you take account of factors such as signposting, as discussed in class. Your VO must be written out in full.

You are free to decide for yourselves the subject matter of your story, keeping in mind the following: you should write it as though it is going to be used on a youth-orientated radio station; it must be of interest to the broad community of Hobart youth; it must derive from a genuine news source; and it must be carefully checked for factual accuracy. There are any number of possible sources - I would rather you did not cover University matters. Use your initiative.

An informed consent form is available on the Vista homepage and you must download this and have it signed by whomever you interview for this story to ensure that they understand what they have agreed to. You must tell them that this story is NOT going to be broadcast, but is being used as an assignment only.

The story is due for submission by 5 pm on **Monday, 31 July**. It must be submitted in hard copy (no electronic submission), with an attached pink cover sheet.

This assignment is worth 10 per cent of your unit mark.

Marking criteria

- genuine news value;
- demonstration of radio news writing skills, including effective intro with signposting and brief and clear language;
- correct grammar, spelling and punctuation;
- adherence to the radio scripting style guide; and
- written presentation, including timing and slug.

**Typical radio script
Intro, VO and outro**

Please note that the information in square brackets is not to be written into your actual scripts. This information is provided here to guide your understanding of the elements of written scripts.

[slug] whale beaching
tynan
20/07/05

[Reader intro] Animal rescue volunteers are attempting to save a pod of 13 whales stranded on an east coast beach.

The stranding was discovered by a fisherman, Ewan Barratt, about 25 kilometres south of Swansea.

About 30 volunteers organised by Parks and Wildlife in Hobart are on the scene.

["throw"] Liz Tynan reports.

VO: No-one knows why the pod of Southern Right whales stranded themselves at the remote beach. Within two hours of the animals being found, volunteers from around the region were converging on the coast, rugged up against the extreme cold and preparing to push the animals back out to sea. Dinah Anderssen from Parks and Wildlife says the coming high tide may assist efforts. She says the high tide is expected at about 4.20am.

Tape: 24 secs

["outro"] That was Liz Tynan reporting from the whale stranding near Swansea.
43 secs

Assignment 2: Three-minute radio documentary (sound only)

In this assignment, you will tell a story using natural sound only. You may choose any topic of interest to you, but do ensure when making your choice that it is capable of being conveyed with sound only. There are many potential subjects, both urban and rural. You may use the actuality of people speaking (for example, at Salamanca markets) but you must not interview talent or create VOs for this assignment. This work is intended to heighten your consciousness of the sense of hearing and find ways to use sound to convey meaningful narrative information.

You will need to record this work using a digital minidisk recorder. You should edit it using Pro Tools. Details of available dedicated Pro Tools lab times will be given to you in Week One. If you have your own audio editing facilities you are most welcome to use them instead.

Your documentary should be presented on a CD. You should attach a script that shows the nature and duration of each piece of sound. Please give your documentary a name.

It should be submitted to the School office, with an attached signed pink cover sheet, by 5pm on **Monday, 28 August**. Late penalties will apply for work submitted after the due date without arrangements (see last page of this outline).

This work is worth 15 per cent of your unit mark.

Marking criteria:

- Creative use of natural sound to tell a story;
- Ability to find and record recognisable sound; and
- Ability to construct a professional quality written script

Assignment 3: Annotated radio documentary diary

For this assignment you need to record, describe and analyse three radio documentaries. They may be of any kind, of any duration, on any station and broadcast at any time up to the end of Week 10.

You should devote 500 words to each documentary, describe its content briefly and analyse its genre (e.g. hard news, human interest, experimental), its tone, its probable audience and its overall capacity to tell its story. Did the documentary maker use VO or does the talent tell the story? Did this method succeed? Is this about a topic in the news, or perhaps an unexpected topic away from the mainstream? What do you think the maker's intentions were with this piece? How did you respond to it as listener? Would you do anything different if you had pursued this topic yourself? What is the balance between spoken word and natural sound? You are welcome to canvass any other issues that you feel apply to your selection of documentaries. Please provide details of the broadcast date and station for each piece. Note that some radio stations and networks such as the ABC and BBC now provide audio and transcripts of documentaries online.

This assignment is due by 5pm on **Monday, 02 October**. Please submit it at the School office, attaching a pink cover sheet. Note that you do not need to submit recordings.

This work is worth 15 per cent of your unit mark

Marking criteria:

- Quality of analysis of each documentary;
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- Demonstrated understanding of the craft of documentary making and ability to apply these principles to analyse the work of other documentary makers; and
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- High quality use of language, including correct grammar, spelling and punctuation

Assignment 4: Radio documentary and associated exegesis

For this assignment, please prepare and submit a script and recording (on CD) of a 10-minute radio documentary of professional quality, suitable for broadcast. You must also provide a 2,500-word exegesis explaining the context of your documentary.

A. Documentary

Your documentary may be in a genre of your choice, revolving around a central theme, with interviews, VO, actuality, natural sound, etc and possibly some music, within the copyright limits allowed. You are free to explore any topic that interests you. Ideas will be workshopped in class in the latter part of semester.

You should not just rely upon one interview for this item - you will need a minimum of two to ensure a diversity of voices and points of view. Docos require lots of elements to sustain listener interest, so try for a variety of voices and sounds. Keep in mind that these packages are intended for broadcast on Edge Radio, and therefore should be carefully checked for factual accuracy and to ensure that they don't contravene any laws or ethics relating to journalism practice. You must get your talent to sign informed consent forms before you interview them. These forms may be downloaded from the Vista homepage.

You must provide both an *introduction* script and the final packaged recording. I do not need to receive any raw recorded material - only submit the complete edited package. It should be timed accurately and deviate no more than 30 seconds on either side of the assigned time limit. You must conclude your documentary with recorded credits.

You will be given access to the Lab to complete production on this project. Note that you will not receive technical assistance – you need to handle the audio editing yourself. If you have your own production facilities you are most welcome to use those instead. If you choose to use the UTAS facilities, you should come with a full written script plus all sound on minidisk to ensure that your session runs efficiently and quickly. Keep lists of tracks so that time is not wasted getting to the right one. It may save time for you to have pre-recorded your VOs before your production session. This means that you must do most of the preparation before you do the final production work.

Marking criteria:

- demonstrated radio writing skills, taking into account the style guide;
- ability to craft an compelling piece of radio storytelling suitable for broadcast;
- ability to obtain good on-location actuality;
- written presentation of scripts in the style recommended for this unit;
- grammar, spelling and punctuation;
- voice production; and
- basic audio editing ability.

The documentary part of this assignment is worth 40 per cent of your unit mark.

B. Exegesis

Please write 2,500 words explaining the underlying ideas informing your documentary. You should include relevant radio journalism theory and also scholarly material related to the specific topic of your documentary.

Guidelines and marking criteria:

- Consult a wide variety of sources: books, journal articles, media reports, credible internet sources, etc. to obtain as broad a view as possible of scholarship in this area.
- Take special care with your introductions and conclusions. The intro must outline the argument you are about to make in general terms. Your conclusion must sum up the evidence effectively and convincingly, drawing together all the themes and information you have surveyed.
- You must proofread your work very carefully. Errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation will be penalised.
- All assertions must be attributed. This means that you don't just cite a source when you use a direct quote; you cite all statements of fact or opinion that you have obtained from someone else. You have to be sure that you avoid any appearance of plagiarism. You may use the referencing system you are most familiar with, but it must be a recognised system (e.g. Harvard, MLA, footnotes).
- Take some care with presentation. Give this assignment a heading - type it onto your cover page and also at the top of your first page of text. Double-space your work and make sure that the type size is not too small (usually 12 point is best). Allow plenty of margin space.

The exegesis part of this assignment is worth 20 per cent of your overall mark.

Both pieces of work must be submitted by 5pm on **Friday, 3 November**. Note that an extension would only be possible in extreme circumstances, and students should consider this as an exam date.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit a signed cover sheet with every assignment. This includes a declaration that all material submitted is their own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others and that they have read the University statement on Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism or in the Student Information Handbook. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office. Those who choose to submit the essay on WebCT Vista are deemed to have agreed to the plagiarism declaration and will be held to it. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments. Assignments will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted.

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be penalised as follows: 5 per cent of the available marks for the first day, and then 2 per cent per working day thereafter to a maximum of three weeks. Late work will be accepted without penalty if accompanied by a medical certificate for the relevant period or a letter from a counsellor in the case of a serious non-medical reason. Please see your lecturer as early as possible if you think you are going to be late with an assignment.

Difficulties with your Studies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or one of the following Student Services staff as soon as possible:

- Learning Skills Adviser
- Student Counsellor
- Careers Adviser
- Disability Adviser

University Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

"**Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at

<http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see

<http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/> "

The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.

Essay Presentation

The Journalism, Media and Communications discipline uses MLA Style, which is characterised by in-text referencing and a list of works cited. See the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003). In this unit, you are welcome to use MLA. However, if you are more familiar with Harvard or footnotes, then you may use the style you feel most comfortable with.

Marking Scale

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.