

### MEJO 523.3 – News and Production Management

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**Course goal:** MEJO 523 is an advanced radio journalism class for students who have completed MEJO 426. While MEJO 426 students are expected to contribute to the school's radio newscast, "Carolina Connection," MEJO 523 students are expected to be leaders, managers, and mentors. Our goal is simply to produce the best college radio newsmagazine in the nation, with content that's accurate, well-written, well-produced, memorable, and innovative.

**Course policies:** In MEJO 523, there are no exams, no quizzes, and no textbook. Your grade is based solely on the quality and quantity of work you do for "Carolina Connection" and our other productions. You should aim to make meaningful contributions to each of our weekly shows. Typically, MEJO 523 students serve as producers, anchors, or technical directors for "Carolina Connection" as well as doing some high-level reporting. They may also help create and produce podcasts.

Each new group of MEJO 523 students is empowered to bring their own vision to "Carolina Connection," suggesting changes in the show's format, editorial content, workflow, distribution, or overall sound. As with any journalistic product, "Carolina Connection" must continually evolve to remain relevant, and our student producers are in the best position to lead that evolution.

**Course policies:** In MEJO 523, there are no exams, quizzes, or textbook. Your grade is based solely on the quality and quantity of work you do for "Carolina Connection." You should aim to make meaningful contributions to each of our weekly shows – by serving as anchor or producer, producing a story, helping another reporter with a story, contributing a live report or Q&A, or performing other duties.

**Deadlines and workflow:** As in a professional newsroom, meeting deadlines is essential. If you're producing a story for Saturday's show, I need to see a draft script by **Wednesday at 6:00 pm**. (The only exception would be if you're covering an event that takes place Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.) *I must give the script final approval before you can produce the story.* Share it with me on Google Drive, and I'll respond either with my approval or suggested changes. The finished, produced story must be done by **Friday at 3:00** unless you're covering late-breaking news. Missed deadlines will affect your course grade.

We meet as a class once a week to discuss story ideas for upcoming shows. You are expected to attend these meetings, bring well-thought-out story ideas, and be prepared to discuss your own and your classmates' ideas. Missing meetings – or arriving to meetings without story ideas --will affect your course grade.

**Course expectations:** Here's what I'll be listening for in each story you produce:

- **Audio quality:** There's nothing worse than bad audio on the radio. If your listeners can't understand what's coming out of their radio, they'll likely turn it off. Clean, understandable audio is a minimum requirement for all stories. Every time you go out on a story, test your equipment before you use it. Wear headphones ALL THE TIME while recording to monitor sound quality, and check your recording before leaving each location to make sure the quality is acceptable. **Set aside enough time to mix your stories!** It can take several hours to properly edit and mix a radio story. All sound should mesh together seamlessly, and all edits should be undetectable to the ear. If you have questions about field recording techniques or need help mixing your story, contact one of the producers, the production director, Dylan Field, Gary Kirk, or me.
- **Accuracy:** Our standard is 100% accuracy. You must fact-check every sentence in your story, whether you say it or somebody else does. (For example, if you interview a protester who's complaining about the Chancellor's "million dollar salary," you need to make sure the Chancellor

really earns a million dollars before you use that quote.) Major factual errors can affect your final grade, as can multiple smaller ones. And all errors – big and small – must be corrected on the air and on the web as soon as they come to our attention.

- **Clarity:** In addition to being accurate, our stories must be comprehensible. You'll be expected to write in clear, conversational, grammatically correct English. Your delivery should be polished and understandable.
- **Transparency:** Good journalism gives the listener all the information he or she needs to assess the credibility of a story. That means we **fully identify all voices**, attribute our facts to reputable sources, and disclose any potential conflicts of interest (for instance, if the athlete you profile is your sorority sister, or the political science professor you interview is a consultant for a political party). We don't use anonymous sources except in extremely rare cases when there's absolutely no other way to tell the story and where disclosing the source's name could endanger his or her life or livelihood. (I must approve the use of any unnamed source.)
- **Innovation:** Rather than mimicking what you already see and hear on mainstream TV and radio, think about innovative ways to present quality journalism. Can you come up with a better structure for your story than the standard "acts and tracks" piece? (That's what we call the typical radio story, where ACTualities of interviews alternate with the reporter's voice TRACKS.) Can you do the story as a compelling personal profile? A vibrant audio portrait that lets listeners hear the sounds of an interesting place? Is there a role for reporter involvement? An online component that invites listener participation?
- **Importance:** As one of the most visible news productions on campus, "Carolina Connection" strives to tell *important* stories about news events, issues, and lifestyle trends. Our audience includes not only students, but also the Triangle community (and the North Carolina community) as a whole. You should strive to tell stories about vital issues, identify and analyze trends ... and also have fun once in a while with lighter stories. Each "Carolina Connection" show should have a mix of breaking news, in-depth analytical stories, and lighter features.
- **Participation:** As in a professional newsroom, every student in JOMC 426 is expected to be an active participant in the news team. That means pitching solid story ideas every week, making yourself available to cover spot news, helping with the Carolina Connection website, and contributing to Carolina Week and SportsXtra. Unexcused absences will affect your course grade.

**Honor Code:** All students must conduct themselves within the guidelines of the University honor system ([honor.unc.edu](http://honor.unc.edu)). All class work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. While this class is more collaborative than most other classes, you may not represent anybody else's work as your own. **You must never fabricate any aspect of your stories, plagiarize other people's work, or use audio that's not our own (from YouTube or other sources) without proper permission and credit. To do so is an honor code violation.** Always consult with your instructor or a producer before using any audio you did not record yourself!

**Special Accommodations:** If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. For more information, visit [disabilityservices.unc.edu](http://disabilityservices.unc.edu).

**Diversity:** UNC's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is at [www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin](http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin). UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment and does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

**Accreditation:** The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate:

[www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps](http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps). This class teaches students:

- *To write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.*
- *To critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.*
- *To demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;*
- *To think critically, creatively and independently.*
- *To understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press.*
- *To demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.*

### MEJO 523 CLASS SCHEDULE – SPRING 2018

<b>Wednesday, January 10</b>	Course introduction
<b>Friday, January 12</b>	Recording and editing training, Carroll 132, 1:45 pm (mandatory for all newcomers)
<b>Every Wednesday, beginning Jan. 17</b>	Story meeting, Carroll 21, 11:00 am
<b>Every Friday, beginning Jan. 26</b>	Open production time, Carroll 132, 1:45 pm
<b>Friday, January 19:</b> No class, but remember that your first scripts are due Jan. 24.	
<b>Friday, March 30 (Good Friday):</b> Attending production time is optional, but stories must be complete for the Mar. 31 show.	
<b>Finals period (Date/Time TBD, depending upon studio availability):</b> Produce class podcast, reviewing top stories of the semester.	

### “CAROLINA CONNECTION” BROADCAST SCHEDULE – SPRING 2018

Jan. 27

Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24

Mar. 3, 10, 24, 31

- NO SHOW Mar. 17 – SPRING BREAK

April 7, 14, 21, 28 (April 28 is year-in-review radio show)