### Voice and Diction 425.1

### Spring 2020

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00-9:15

Carroll 283

**Dr. Lynn Owens Office Hours: Mondays 10-12:30 p.m.**

lynnowens@unc.edu **and by appt. Carroll 325**

**Course Description**

MEJO 425.1 is designed to help you to build vocal skills that will serve you well in all your oral communication. More specifically, the techniques you will learn during this course will help you to communicate more effectively as an on-air broadcast journalist. We will start with the basics and end by working on specific professional vocal challenges. Along the way we will focus on these areas:

1. **Breathing** correctly to support your voice is the key to all good vocal production.
2. **Phonation** is the creation of vocal sound. During this course you will learn how your vocal folds work, how to keep them healthy, and how to use them more effectively.
3. **Articulation** refers to the formation and shaping of the sounds you create into crisp, clean syllables.
4. **Stress and intonation** variations will help you to turn those syllables into compelling words, and to convey their meaning more clearly.
5. **Resonance** refers to the use of resonating cavities to enrich and augment the tone of your voice. Use of the techniques you will learn in this course will literally help you to make your voice sound richer.
6. **Sounding conversational** in an artificial, electronic environment poses a unique challenge for all broadcast journalists. The techniques you learn in this course will help you to cut through the technological clutter and communicate more effectively with the real people in your audience.
7. **Going live** poses a variety of challenges for broadcast journalists. During this course you will learn tips to help you with live interviewing, reporting and anchoring; working both with and without a teleprompter.
8. **Tension** is a daily reality for broadcast journalists, and so are the vocal problems tension causes. This course will help you to develop effective strategies to cope with the stress you will face as a working professional.

**Academic Integrity**

During this course we will strive to be ethical journalists, adhering not only to the guidelines of the University of North Carolina Honor System but also to the codes of ethics developed by various professional journalism organizations. I encourage you to discuss issues and concerns about broadcast journalism inside and outside this class, but the work you submit is to be exclusively your own. You must be careful to give attribution wherever appropriate. Please refer to this website: <http://instrument.unc.edu/> if you have questions about upholding academic integrity in your work. Your participation in this course comes with my expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code.

**This course contains content that addresses the following AEJMC Competencies:**

* Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
* Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
* Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
* Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
* Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
* Think critically, creatively and independently;
* Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
* Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
* Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
* Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**Honor Code:** You areexpected to conduct yourself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://studentconduct.unc.edu/>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class.

**Diversity:** The University’s policy statements on Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination are outlined at <http://policy.sites.unc.edu/files/2013/04/nondiscrim.pdf>. In summary, UNC does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression or disabilities.

**Harassment:** UNC does not tolerate harassment based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture, disability, or for any other reason. It is also a violation of the Honor Code and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Title IX of the Educational Amendments. If you need assistance with a harassment issue or problem, bring it to my attention or The Office of the Dean of Students, [dos@unc.edu](mailto:dos@unc.edu) or 919.966.4042.

**Special Accommodations**: If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let me know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Learning Center website at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu/ldadhd-services/> or call 919-962-3782.

**Attendance:** As in the broadcast industry, punctuality is essential and deadlines must be met. Classroom experiences are a vital part of the educational process. Therefore, regular class attendance is essential. The following policy governs absences and their effect upon your grade:

* I expect you to arrive on time, and to stay for the entire class period. Arriving late, coming in and out during class and/or leaving early will have an impact on the class participation aspect of your grade. Do not schedule activities related to other classes that will conflict with your ability to attend these class sessions.

**Participation**

One of the primary forms of participation in this class will be discussion. We will converse as a class and in small groups, thinking through issues together and critiquing our own work and the work of others. In order to create a good climate for everyone to participate, please follow these discussion guidelines:

* Be ready to share and explain your opinions. Feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and back them up with evidence.
* Listen carefully and respond to other members of the group. Be willing to change your mind when someone demonstrates an error in your logic or use of facts.
* Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of any point or term you do not understand.
* Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.
* Be honest but sensitive in critiquing the work of others, whether you know the people involved or not. Keep the focus on the work, not the individuals, and critique their work as carefully as you would hope to see someone else critique yours.
* When critiquing your own work, to the extent you can try to divorce yourself from your emotional connection to it so you can be as objective as possible.

To get the most out of our discussions, we must be prepared. That means you are responsible for having read that session’s material and for having thought through any questions given out ahead of time.

# Undivided Attention

If you become a broadcast journalist you will utilize electronic devices daily, but all reporters must learn to listen well and take good notes without the aid of a computer. During class, all computers are to remain off at all times unless the instructor asks you to turn them on.

**Course Materials**

There is no required text for the course. Links to reading material will be posted on Sakai and handouts will be given in class.

**Grades and Assignments:**

Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, all assignments are due at the start of class. Students will be penalized a letter grade (ex. B- to C+) for each day that the assignment is late. You cannot receive a passing grade in the course unless all assignments in the course are completed.

A numerical grade scale will be used on all papers and tests. Here are the letter equivalents:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 94 – 100 | A |  | 70 – 73.9 | C- |
| 91 – 93.9 | A- |  | 60-69.9 | D |
| 88 – 90.9 | B+ |  | 59.9 and below | F |
| 84 – 87.9 | B |  |  |  |
| 81 – 83.9 | B- |  |  |  |
| 78 – 80.9 | C+ |  |  |  |
| 74 – 77.9 | C |  |  |  |

# Final Grade Breakdown

# Class attendance / participation in discussions 10%

Test 1 20%

Final Exam 20%

Outside Advice Assignment 15%

Mock Live Shot 10%

In-Class Assignments 10%

Final Project 15%

Attendance and class participation (10%)

Active engagement in class discussions is integral to the success of the course. Therefore, attendance and participation are required. I expect you to come to class on time and prepared to participate in all course activities. This grade will be out of 10. Perfect attendance will earn you 10 points. Every absence will be minus one. Excused absences are for university-approved circumstances (such as those from the athletics department and the Dean of Students). Please note: for wellness-related absences to be counted as “excused,” an email must come from the Dean of Students office.

Test 1 ( 20% )

Final Exam ( 20% )

Readings and class notes in this course are intended to give you a scientific understanding of your vocal mechanism, and what you can do to keep it healthy and make it work better. You will be tested on information from handouts and class lecture materials in two tests.

Outside Advice Project (15%)

Beyond the information you will study in class, you will be expected to contact a working broadcast/communications professional to solicit advice and information about newsroom vocal problems and solutions. Your choices could include a news director, an anchor, a producer, or reporter. The person you choose must either work on air, or work in a collaborative or supervisory capacity with on-air talent. In addition to asking for information you will need a link to the person’s work (if he/she is on-air talent) or an example of work that your interview subject says he/she believes is an example of good voicing. You will write a 2-3-page report on your findings, and will make a classroom presentation on them.

Mock Live Shot (10%)

You will need to shoot a 60 second “straight live” shot as per the live shot guidelines taught in the course. The live shot should be uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo and a link sent to Dr. Owens

In-class Assignments/Homework (10%)

There will be a number of in-class assignments throughout the semester, such as practice anchoring and live shots. These assignments CANNOT be made up for credit in the event of an absence.

Final Project (15%)

You will write/voice/record your own news, sports, or feature program (approximately 5 minutes), using the vocal techniques learned in the course.

**Class Topics and Assignments by Date**

| Date | Topic | Assignment DUE |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1** | **Preparation** |  |
| **Thursday 1/9** | Get acquainted  Course overview  Discuss syllabus |  |
| **Week 2** | **Vocal Review** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **1/14** | Breathing | Sample various TV newscasts.  Bring links to vocal delivery you like and don’t like. |
| **Thursday**  **1/16** | Review of “Like and dislike” assignments |  |
| **Week 3** | **Phonation** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **1/21** | **1st Recording of**  **The County Fair**  **Class will meet in the studio** |  |
| **Thursday**  **1/23** | Phonation – Using the Vocal Folds Effectively |  |

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| **Week 4** | **Resonance** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **1/28** | Resonance – Enriching Speech Sounds |  |
| **Thursday**  **1/30** | Resonance – Enriching Speech Sounds |  |
| **Week 5** | **Articulation** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **2/4** | Articulation – Forming and Shaping the Sound |  |
| **Thursday**  **2/6** | Articulation – Forming and Shaping the Sound |  |
| **Week 6** | **Stress and Intonation** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **2/11** | Enhancing Meaning through Stress and Intonation |  |
| **Thursday**  **2/13** | Enhancing Meaning through Stress and Intonation |  |
| **Week 7** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **2/18** | In-class exercies  Review for Test 1 |  |
| **Thursday**  **2/20** | **Test 1** | **Test 1** |
| **Week 8** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **2/25** | Present Outside Advice Reports | **Outside Advice Written Reports Due** |
| **Thursday**  **2/27** | Present Outside Advice Reports |  |
| **Week 9** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **3/3** | Effective Use of Rate |  |
| **Thursday**  **3/5** | Going Live |  |

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| **Week 10** |  |  |
| **3/10 & 3/12** | **NO CLASS -Spring Break** |  |
| **Week 11** | **Live** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **3/17** | Going Live in-class exercise |  |
| **Thursday**  **3/19** | Live Shot Exercise |  |
| **Week 12** | **Anchoring** |  |
| **Tuesday**  **3/24** | Review Live Shots  At the Anchor Desk |  |
| **Thursday**  **3/26** | **2nd Recording of**  **The County Fair**  **Class will meet in the studio** |  |
| **Week 13** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **3/31** | Guest Lecture  Review 2nd recordings |  |
| **Thursday**  **4/2** | Mock Live Shots | **Mock Live Shots Due.** |
| **Week 14** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **4/7** | Coping with Stress |  |
| **Thursday**  **4/9** | Studio Reading Practice  **Class will meet in the studio** |  |
| **Week 15** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **4/14** | Touch screen Practice  **Class will meet in the studio** |  |
| **Thursday**  **4/16** | Touch Screen Review |  |
| **Week 16** |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **4/21** | Final Projects Due  & Final Exam Review |  |
| **Thursday**  **4/23** | Individual Feedback Meetings |  |

**FINAL EXAM - April 28, 8 a.m.**