The New Commons Project   Podcast Assignment

OVERVIEW

In groups, you will propose and record four 10-15-minute podcast episodes. Three of the podcast episodes will focus on season one, while the final installment will allow for exploration of a theme (race, gender, urban life) or relevant issue (Black Lives Matter, opioid crisis, immigration policy), or the utilization of an experimental format. Your group should incorporate typical features of the podcast genre and close analysis of the show's visual elements. Your individual analytical essay will explain how the submissions typify the podcast genre and approach key elements of the show.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1) Explore the plot, characters, visual elements, and themes of *The Wire* in a meaningful way.
2) Incorporate standard features of the podcast genre for effective media presentation.
3) Articulate thematic relevance and utilization of features of podcasts in clear, concise essay.

RATIONALE

One of the main reasons for *The Wire*'s nomination and selection in the New Commons Project is its unique engagement with multiple themes in the midst of a multilayered crime narrative. This project provides you with the opportunity to explore some of these themes with depth in collaboration with your classmates. Moreover, the podcast format will require you to produce this content in a popular, albeit nontraditional, genre. This process will increase your compositional flexibility and skills for approaching new media.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

1) You will work in your small groups for writing, recording, and editing of podcast episodes.
2) Each group will produce four podcast episodes: three focused on your responses to the assigned episodes and one focused on a theme (race, gender, urban life), or social issue (Black Lives Matter, opioid crisis, immigration policy).
3) The three episodes will each explore a single episode of *The Wire*. In these installments, you should plan talking points while also maintaining a conversational tone. The fourth episode will focus on a social issue by considering season one as a whole, as well as perhaps incorporate an experimental format.
4) Each episode will be 10-15 minutes in length.
5) You will submit an individual analytical essay (two to three pages) at the end of the project sequence that reflects on your group's treatment of key concepts and incorporation of the typical features of podcasts.
6) You will each submit a completed version of the self-assessment rubric at the end of the project sequence.

FORMATTING

You should render each podcast episode in MP3 format at 320 kbps.

TECHNOLOGICAL NOTES

You should feel free to use any software you like to record your podcasts, but Audacity (audacityteam.org) is a highly accessible free program.