

**Fall 2023**

Asynchronous

**Instructor:** Rodger Smith

**Student Drop-in Hours (via Zoom and in Horizon Hall 5175):**

- Mondays 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Visit Office Hours Information on the class website for the office hours Zoom link.

Email: [rsmith6@gmu.edu](mailto:rsmith6@gmu.edu)

**Before we begin...Please read...**

**Collegiate Compassion**

- We learn best when we can show up as whole and healthy people.
- To learn effectively we need to have basic security: a roof over our head, a safe place to sleep, a stable place to live, and enough food to eat.
- If you are struggling to meet any of these basic needs, please talk to me or reach out to [our Mason resources](#).
- Remember: Asking for assistance and advocating for yourself is an important part of your collegiate experience.

*I am here to help; YOU are not alone. And the world is a better place with you in it.*

**This is an asynchronous course.**

- **We will not meet in class during the semester.**
- **All assignments will be posted to the class website.**
- **As with Comm 148, you will receive critiques and grades on your assignments you can view through the My Grades link on the class website.**
- **You are strongly encouraged to visit (either in person or virtually) during the instructor's drop-in hours. You can receive quality critiques and ask course-related questions during these times.**
- **Regularly visit the Class Announcements link on the class website for class and WGMU information.**

**Course Requirements**

- Each student will be required to work approximately three hours per week at WGMU. One hour per week will be devoted to either a rotation on-air shift or specialty show.
- Each student will also produce
  - a promo for their show and
  - two podcasts.

**Text, Supplies and Requirements**

- Read WGMU Policies and Procedures (located under Course Content).

- Read How to Be a Good DJ (located under Course Content).
- FOR ON-AIR WORK
  1. A Dropbox Account, or
  2. A Portable Drive (USB flash or jump drive, etc.). A minimum 1GB drive is recommended to save your on-air work.
- Headphones FOR ON-AIR WORK. You MUST supply your own headphones.
  - It is strongly recommended that the student activate and/or use their George Mason University sponsored email account (ex: rsmith6@gmu.edu) to communicate in this class. You can check your email at <http://masonlive.gmu.edu>. The instructor will use the GMU email account to contact the student and class if necessary.
  - Read more about Mason email in the section Technology Etiquette and Expectations later in this syllabus.
  - **Keep up to date on the Class Announcements link on the class website. From time to time, there will be important class information posted through this link.**

### Course Assignments

All work must be turned in class for class credit. All on-air work MUST be recorded and uploaded to the class website (you should also download your shows to your jump drive or Dropbox account). All Production assignments MUST be produced using Adobe Audition on the WGMU Production Room computer. All work is due at the BEGINNING of class each week. Refer to the class schedule for in-class critique dates.

- I use Blackboard Grade Center and will endeavor to keep your grades up to date. Please check for grades and any other pertinent information.

- If there is a week where a technical or other issue prevents you from uploading an air shift assignment (graded or listen in class), you **must** use the comments section of that assignment to explain the problem then upload the assignment.
- Do not use email as the primary communication of this problem. If you email the problem, also use the comments section of the assignment to communicate the problem.
- Not using the comments section to communicate the problem and not submitting an assignment result in a zero for the graded assignment or loss of one point to your overall grade for a listen in class assignment.

**AIR SHIFT** You are required to produce a one-hour air shift (producing EITHER a rotation music shift or specialty show). Each shift must be recorded on the studio computer and submitted in class to the instructor every week. Each recording will contain breaks per the WGMU Programming Log with at least one reading of a PSA (public service announcement).

For [Comm 348](#),

- You will produce a **rotation show** (play songs from an approved list from the WGMU music director) for one hour per week.
- **You are expected to produce your show at the weekly regularly scheduled time.** Producing a show at an irregular time without prior permission of the instructor and submitting said recording will prompt a point deduction for graded on-air assignments.
- You are expected to upload your music rotation show playlists through Spintron.
  - Details on the class website.
- **In Comm 348 for rotation shows:** To help you with your on-air presentation, you will need to follow the format if you are playing rotation cuts.
  - The format to follow while working on WGMU is in a folder under Course Content.
  - The DJ Announcements sheets are in a folder under Course Content.
- **FOR COMM 348: The sheets are optional, as you already have previous on-air experience, but they can be relied upon if needed. You'll be discouraged from using the sheets, as you already have previous on-air experience.**
- **In Comm 348:** You will begin work in the main WGMU studio, provided you have completed at least one semester of Comm 148 or you provide a recording and resume listing previous on-air skills. If this pre-requisite has not been fulfilled, or a student has enrolled in Comm 348 without previous broadcast experience, this person will be **STRONGLY** encouraged to take Comm 148 first.
- **Re: Guests, phone calls, etc.:** You assume responsibility for all content of your show. This includes comments by guests (on-air & off, invited & uninvited), live phone call conversation, live & pre-recorded segments & music selection. Anything that deters from the quality of the broadcast (ex: airing indecent or obscene material per Federal Communications Commission guidelines - including engaging in indecent or obscene language with guests or said by you, low microphone volume for guests or indiscernible background audio) will reduce your grade. The instructor will determine the point loss for each breach.
- In summary, the student is expected to produce a high quality, entertaining broadcast that honors WGMU Policies and Procedures.

**Objectives affecting grading of air shifts:**

- View Grading Guidelines later in the syllabus.
- Attendance. Unexcused absences earn a ZERO.
- Be on time.
- Adherence to formats and on-air rules.
- Paperwork. Following the program log and filling out the play list.
- Working well with others.

- Weekly submissions of recorded shows.

For Comm 348, there are additional requirements:

- **Promo:** You must write and produce a :30 or :60 promo that promotes your show. Consult the class calendar for the due date for this assignment.
- **Podcasts:** You must produce two pre-recorded podcasts, each a minimum of 15 minutes. Topics will be discussed in class. Consult the assignment link for the due date.

## **GRADING WORK**

**Any time you turn a recording of your on-air work, you will receive a grade for that performance. Along with this grade, you will receive a written critique on your performance you turned in. The critique will be from the class instructor and/or a WGMU staff member.**

- When working On-air: Each on-air rotation show mp3 you upload to the class website (not counting the days of in-class critique) will receive a grade. There will be four on-air recordings Comm 348 students turned in for a grade during the semester (check class calendar for due dates).
  - Each on-air grade is multiplied by 0.125.
- Recorded Promo: You will write and produce a :30 or :60 promo of your show.
  - The promo will be graded; then that figure is multiplied by .1 to determine this portion of your grade.
- Podcast Assignments: You will produce two 15-minute podcasts over the course of the semester.
  - Each assignment will be graded; then, each grade is multiplied by .15 to determine this portion of your grade.
- Missed Shows: If during a week for in class critique you do not supply an mp3 of your work from the last seven days, will be docked one point from your overall grade.
- In Summary:
  - For Comm 348:
    - (on-air 1 grade) \* .15 =
    - (on-air 2 grade) \* .15 =
    - (on-air 3 grade) \* .15 =
    - (on-air 4 grade) \* .15 =
    - (Podcast 1 grade) \* .15 =
    - (Podcast 2 grade) \* .15 =
    - (Recorded Promo grade) \* .1 =
    - MINUS Missed Shows =
    - TOTAL =

## On-air Grading

### During graded weeks, use this list as an analysis of your on-air work:

1. **On-air Delivery (25 points):** Voice is used to keep the listener with your show. Proper inflection used, voice is not too excited or dull all through the break (not sing-song delivery). Inflection correct for the situation, able to match the intensity of a song coming out of or going into a break. Break preparation (knowing what to say before going on mic) evident. Personality that listener can identify with is evident.
2. **On-air Content (25):** DJ has interesting comments about songs, PSA's, WGMU programming, etc. that keeps the listener tuned to WGMU. Information is relevant to programming and/or listener. DJ sounds knowledgeable about music and information imparted during programming.
3. **Board work (25):** DJ demonstrates mastery of audio console. Proper audio balance (voice over music, segueing from music to voice or voice to spot, etc.) achieved. Attention to detail evident.
4. **Paperwork/Procedures (25):** DJ fills out required music logs, arrives for DJ shift on time, records all required breaks onto computer.

### GRADES

4 On-air Rotation Shows	60 percent total
Recorded Promo	10 percent
2 Podcasts	30 percent total

### Numerical Grading...

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
70-76	C
60-69	D
59-Below	F

- Final Grades are rounded up or down. Example: If your final grade is 89.5 or 89.45, you earn the A-. If your final grade is 89.44, you earn the B+.
- Questions on Graded Assignments:
  - You have a restricted period after assignments are handed back in class to discuss with your instructor the grade you earned on the

assignment. To discuss the grade, you must schedule an appointment, outside of class time, with the instructor.

- For all recorded assignments, you have up to seven calendar days.
- After the restricted period for each assignment, questions on assignments can be entertained through securing an appointment with the instructor; however, grade changes on said assignments will not be considered.

**Please Note:**

- **Late Work Policy:**

- Unless otherwise announced, **all assignments are due on the day and at the time they are due.**
  - *Late work is not accepted except in the case of a documented personal emergency or excused absence, and students will not be allowed to make up assignments unless they have third-party documentation of an excused absence or emergency.*
    - ✓ It is the student's responsibility to provide written documentation from a third party that details the emergency or university-excused absence.
  - Except in the very rare case of last-minute emergencies (e.g., getting hit by a car walking to class and being taken to the emergency room), students should let their instructors know about any excused absences, provide documentation, and plan for making up any missed work in advance of missing class.
  - When the nature of the emergency makes it impossible to make up work in advance, students will be given a deadline to complete missed work, usually within one week of the original deadline.
  - Technology failures, work-related absences, work in other classes, oversleeping, or meetings with other professors are not considered a personal emergency.
  - Yes, missing a deadline costs you points toward your final grade. Don't let this happen. This is a valuable lesson from "the working world."
  - Read Professor Smith's Class Rules on the class website.
  - Deadlines are integral to the broadcast/online industries, so due dates for assignments are nonnegotiable. Late assignments, unless previously arranged, are not accepted.
  - The decision to attend class is the student's, not of the professor.
- Working at WGMU is a privilege. Any on-air behavior judged inappropriate by the WGMU staff and or instructor will be grounds for reassignment of responsibilities at WGMU.
- The student is responsible for the accuracy of their own schedule. Check PatriotWeb regularly to verify that you are registered for the classes that you think you are.

- A course in the University carries with it an expectation of a significant time commitment. A full load of five courses, or 15 credit hours, will require 37.5-45 hours per week. The specific rigor of the course as well as the academic and organizational skill set of the student will determine the exact number of hours needed to find success in each class.
  - This course should be allotted 6-7 hours per week in the student's personal schedule. This time is typically comprised of one hour of lecture, 2-3 hours of research and study and assessment work each week (listening to commercial radio stations and the completion of assignments), and three lab hours per week (on-air shifts in the practice or JC on-air studios).
- Important dates:
  - Last Day to Add a class: Monday, Aug. 28, 2023
  - Labor Day (No Classes, University Closed): Monday, Sept. 4, 2023
  - Last day to Drop a class with no tuition penalty (Full-Semester Course): Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023
  - Last Day to Drop (Last Day with 50% tuition refund): Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023
  - Unrestricted Withdrawal Period (100% tuition liability): Wednesday, Sept. 13-Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023
  - Fall Break (Classes Do Not Meet): Monday, Oct. 9, 2023
  - Monday Classes/Labs Meet (Tuesday Classes Do Not Meet This Week): Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023
    - No on-air shifts in the JC on-air studio Oct. 7-10.
  - Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only - Full-Semester Course – 100% tuition liability): Wednesday, Sept. 27-Monday, Oct. 23, 2023
  - Thanksgiving Recess (No Classes, University Closed): Wednesday, Nov. 22-Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023
    - No on-air shifts in the JC on-air studio during this time.
- [Here is a full list of student support services at Mason.](#)
  - Some of these resources are explained in depth below.
- [The George Mason University Writing Center](#) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center. Gateway Library, Johnson Center, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
- [George Mason University's Communication Center](#) supports students through one-on-one consultations focused on developing oral communication skills. Whether you are preparing for an academic research presentation or for an upcoming speech in a class, the center offers a supportive, inclusive environment to hone your public speaking skills and knowledge, reduce your presentation apprehension, and increase your communication confidence. Gateway Library, Johnson Center.
- **Special needs & equitable learning.** This university and this instructor are committed to providing an equitable learning environment for every student. If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with

Disabilities Act, please notify me immediately. I will readily adjust for students with special needs, but you must work through [Disability Services](#) (703-993-2474) to arrange accommodations. The Office of Disability Resources will provide you with a letter to give to me and/or you may request to have them contact me directly. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty member to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

- **The GMU Honor Code applies to all students.** The University Honor Code is upheld and supported by the Office for Academic Integrity. The principle of academic integrity is taken seriously, and violations are treated gravely.
  - What does academic integrity mean in this course? This: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions.
  - If you have questions or concerns of any kind, please ask for guidance. I will refer all suspected violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Academic Integrity for adjudication. This process is designed to protect your due process rights. The OAI will review your case and determine next steps.
  - Read more about OAI [here](#).
- **Diversity:** George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth.
- The university offers student support with a wide variety of services through [the Student Support and Advocacy Center](#).
- For links to Mason campus groups, visit [the Mason 360 website](#).
- Syllabus schedule is subject to change due to weather and other factors.
- **Name and Pronoun Use:** If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via email. I use he/him/his for myself and you may address me as Prof. Smith in email and verbally.
- **Contact with Classmates:** Make sure you obtain an email address and phone number from one or two classmates, so that you can consult with a classmate if you would like to do so.
- **Advising.** I strongly recommend you see the undergraduate academic adviser for your major every semester as well as advisors for minors. You should also include instructors as part of your advising team.



- **Tuition Insurance:** The Tuition Protection Insurance Plan helps students and their families overcome the financial losses that may result from events which force students to withdraw from the semester due to a covered medical reason.

### **Technology Etiquette and Expectations**

- Technology can be a wonderful learning tool, and can immensely speed communications and information retrieval, but must be used wisely with awareness of limitations. Technology should not be used during class time (unless for note taking or contributing to classroom dialog), especially if use is disrupting learning for others. By remaining in this course, students are expected to adhere to these ground rules:
  - *Email Address and Expectations.* Students must use their GMU email address or forward email from this address to an address they check regularly. The instructor tries to review email regularly (usually within 48 hours) but is not as consistent over the weekend (expect longer delays during breaks or conference travel).
    - All email correspondence should use the SUBJECT line, include the course number and name (Comm 348), and indicate what the message specifically concerns—such as: Comm 348-Reporting Project
    - I use your GMU email address for all communication, including additional class information. Please check your GMU email inbox regularly.
    - I am best reached through my GMU email. I am very willing to meet with you individually during my office hours listed above. Please contact me to set up an appointment. I look forward to it.
    - I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.
  - *Media Use.* Any use of video clips, audio clips, graphics, files, or texts for class assignments must meet copyright requirements and give full and proper attribution.
- **Emergency Procedures**
  - **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**
    - As a faculty member and designated “Non-Confidential Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence and stalking to Mason’s [Title IX Coordinator](#) per [university policy 1412](#).
    - If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (703-380-1434), [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (703-993-2380), [Student Health Services](#), or [Mason’s Title IX Coordinator](#) (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).
  - George Mason University is dedicated to preparing staff and students in the event of an emergency. All students in this class

are encouraged to register for Mason Alert, a system that allows university officials to contact the community during an emergency by sending a text message to cell phones, emails, or PDAs. In addition, we all need to take a minute to view the emergency procedures poster in our classroom. This poster explains what to do in the event of medical emergency, fire, tornado, violence, power outage or another bad event. Please let me know if you would like to discuss these procedures or any information on emergencies. If you are not currently registered for Mason Alert, please visit [this website](#).

Class Calendar: Consult the class calendar on the class website.