

Project Three Justification Document

Andrew, Eva, Brenna

"Graduate Research Diaries" and "How to Go Pro"

Our goal in creating our podcasts was to avoid a monologue where one person read the lesson aloud. Another goal was to cover the main points in the web-based lessons in a fashion appropriate for an audio format. We feel that the podcasts supplement the original lesson without being redundant or losing the instructional value of the original lessons.

To supplement the Research lesson, we incorporated the most important points of the lesson into an audio diary format that is similar to the concepts behind the running case study: providing a realistic example that is similar to a situation that many technical communication students would find themselves in. By incorporating helpful advice from our expert (Halcyon) in appropriate points throughout the audio diary, students can benefit from an instructor of a Library Research Workshop. The diary format allows some humor and creates an entertaining, yet informative, listening experience.

For the professionalization lesson, we adopted a radio show format to showcase our interview with a graduate student (Halcyon) who has experience applying to and presenting at academic conferences. We decided to limit the scope of our podcast to applying for academic conference because one of the main goals in the web-based lesson was to reduce confusion and alleviate some of the anxiety associated with applying to conference. We felt that the audio format allowed a personal connection between the graduate student and listener which was ideal for accomplishing these goals (perhaps even more than the web-based lesson). By limiting the scope of our podcast to applying for, preparing for, and attending conferences we were able to thoroughly cover this seldom discussed topic.

We enhanced both podcasts with music that is available under a Creative Commons license (which ensures sustainability and allows legal publication and distribution). The music adds a layer of professionalism and functions as a structural element by signaling the beginning and end of each episode as well as creating a transition between diary entries.

To create enhanced audio quality we reserved the recording booth in the Digital Media Center which eliminated background noise. We then used the Audacity editing application to crop, edit, and enhance sound quality for a podcast that has a small file size, is easily portable on a mobile device, and has sufficient audio fidelity for listening on an iPod or other media player.