# LFS 400
## Audio Storytelling

## W2017 Term 2

**MCML 154**
**Wednesdays 10-12,**
**Fridays 11-12**

This course teaches you to use audio technology and a journalistic framework in order to tell powerful stories and present academic content in new ways. It is a seminar course with a lot of personal attention, critical feedback and weekly lab-based work. By the end of the term, students will have the ability to share their knowledge in effective and creative ways.

### Instructors

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### Course Website

The online component of this course may be found at canvas.ubc.ca and an archive of student work may be found at lfs400.landfood.ubc.ca

### Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the students will be able to:

- Synthesize information to form an original personal narrative or a story;
- Apply technological tools to convey their content in podcast format;
- Develop media literacy for critical engagement with disciplinary knowledge.

During this course, students will learn to:

- Apply critical and creative thinking skills in the collection and analysis of information;
- Compare different channels and purposes of journalistic communication (e.g., traditional media outlets, social networks);
- Integrate discipline specific knowledge in powerful messages through 'humanizing the content';

- Understand the basic mechanics of creating a message for a purpose (e.g., story for emotional engagement, dissemination, awareness building, advocacy, news etc.);
- Develop skills to effectively critique their own and peers' work;
- Give and receive meaningful feedback

## Course Requirements

Active participation in the class and completion of all assignments by the deadlines indicated in the course schedule is a pass/fail issue. Personal accountability is a big part of this course. We ask you to let us know if there are issues keeping you from fully participating in the course.

## Assignment Descriptions

**Streeter (with transcript & forum post)**
**Due:** Wednesday, January 17
**Worth:** 10%
Each student will create a one minute podcast based on street interviews (i.e., a 60 second-long series of questions and answers recorded and edited by the "student reporter"). The topic/question is decided in advance in consultation with instructors and should connect to the student's academic interests (i.e., a topic within LFS's domain). Students are encouraged to approach at least ten (10) other students on campus to record their comments/opinions/ideas on the questions asked. Once recorded, 10 mins of the material is to be transcribed (this is a tool for characterizing the material you have gathered—from there you will make editorial choices about which audio you will use) and transferred to a digital editing system (e.g., Audacity) and edited for time and content. Final 'streeters' should demonstrate technical proficiencies as follows:
1) produce good quality audio recordings,
2) edit recordings (e.g., copy/paste, time-shift), and
3) insert introduction and conclusion with relevant fade-ins/fade-outs.

Students are also required to post streeters to the discussion forum and provide feedback on their peers' work. You will be assigned to a group where you'll be prompted to comment on four other students' pieces.

A note on file naming: For this and all other submitted assignments, please name your file: **LFS400_FirstnameLastname_Assignmentname**
(i.e., LFS400_DuncanMcHugh_Streeter.mp3, LFS400_WillValley_outline.pdf)
Core Learning: Develop proficiency in technological skills for interviewing, audio recording, editing, and podcast construction.

**Voicer (with script & forum post)**
**Due:** Wednesday, January 31
**Worth:** 10%
Each student will create a 1.5 minute sound story based on one of their academic interests (i.e., a topic within LFS's domain). Students will write, perform and record material that tells a compelling and complete story (i.e., beginning, middle, and end). Topics will be developed collaboratively. Assistance will be provided for writing, editing and story development. Students will be required to contact and interview at least 1 (one) source/character. Please include the script used for the assignment when submitting audio file.

Students are also required to post voicers to the discussion forum and provide feedback on their peers' work. You will be assigned to a group where you'll be prompted to comment on four other students' pieces.
Core Learning: Develop proficiency in audio recording and editing, narration, and story development.

**Project Outline for Final Podcast**
**Due:** Friday, February 9
**Worth:** 10%
Each student will submit a completed 'Project Outline,' a detailed proposal of your subject matter, possible contacts, rationale and story plan. Additional information will be provided in class. Be prepared to pitch your story during Wednesday's class (Feb 7th). You will then have two days to incorporate feedback received into your written submission.

**Group Piece**
**Due:** Wednesday, March 7th
**Worth:** 10%
In groups of 3-4, students will create a short piece (two to three minutes) on a tight deadline. Additional information will be provided in class.

**Draft Podcast & Presentation**
**Due:** Wednesday, March 21
**Worth:** 10%
Each student will produce a draft of their final podcast based on the outline. This draft will serve as an opportunity to provide and receive feedback that will be incorporated into the Final Podcast. This draft will be reviewed by instructors and classmates. This is a collaborative approach to storytelling which will help you to determine which storytelling methods are most effective for the story YOU choose to tell. You must be prepared to defend your editorial choices (e.g., language, characters, scenes developed) and be open to constructive suggestions. You will be required to present your draft in class and submit audio clips for evaluation.

**Final Podcast (with description)**
**Due:** Wednesday, April 4
**Worth:** 25%
We will provide guidelines for storytelling and techniques for audio recording in order for polished projects to be created. Each student will contribute an eight to 12 minute audio story. The subject of the podcast should centre on some aspect of Land and Food Systems. In addition, submit an image and a brief text summary/description (20-30 words max) that is enticing but not exhaustive or complete. This will be used to index your podcast. Additional details will be given in class

**Post-podcast Reflection**
**Due:** Wednesday, April 19
**Worth:** 10%
Each student will produce a post-podcast reflection in a form and format of your choice. For example, it could be in the form of a video diary, a poem, or an audio essay, as long as at least one digital medium is used. It should provide us with your story.

Specifically, each reflection should include the following:

1. what was it like to participate in this course/on this project? How was your creative journey?
2. your thoughts about your podcasts including its production and how the final product was different from the ones originally envisioned;
3. identification of opportunities for improvement to your podcast including what you could have done better/different or included if you had more time;
4. a summary of what you learned during the process and what tools or techniques will you apply in your professional life?;
5. a suggestion of what your next foray in to digital storytelling may be...

**Participation**
**Worth:** 15%
You will be graded on the quality of your in-class and online comments, as well as your engagement in class and your attendance.

**Bonus Assignment: Podcast Analysis**
**Worth:** 5%
Students are encouraged to bring in examples of exemplary podcasts they've encountered. Ten minutes at the beginning of each class will be reserved for presentation and discussion. Further details about this assignment will be provided in class.

## Grading

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Streeter | / | 10% | / | Due: Wednesday, January 17 |
| Voicer | / | 10% | / | Due: Wednesday, January 31 |
| Project Outline | / | 10% | / | Due: Friday, February 9 |
| Group Piece | / | 10% | / | Due: Wednesday, March 7 |
| Draft Podcast | / | 10% | / | Due: Wednesday, March 21 |
| Final Podcast | / | 25% | / | Due: Wednesday, April 4 |
| Reflection | / | 10% | / | Due: Wednesday, April 18 |
| Participation | / | 15% | | |

**Course Schedule – W2017 Term 2**
**Subject to changes**

| Date | Wednesday | Friday |
|---|---|---|
| Week 1:<br>Jan 3/5 | Introduction to LFS 400<br>Audio Editing Workshop I:<br>Basics & Audacity | Audio Editing Workshop II:<br>Multi-track editing |
| Week 2:<br>Jan 10/12 | Story Structure: what works best for audio stories?<br>Streeter pitches | Creative Commons Workshop |
| Week 3:<br>Jan 17/19 | Audio Storytelling<br>Making sense with sound<br>**Due: Streeter** | Interview Skills |
| Week 4:<br>Jan 24/26 | Listening session<br>How to create scenes in sound?<br>Voicer pitches | Writing for the Ear |
| Week 5:<br>Jan 31/<br>Feb 2 | Journalism Ethics<br>**Due: Voicer** | Radio station tour at CiTR<br>Student Union Building, Room 233 |
| Week 6:<br>Feb 7/9 | Information literacy: evidence-based journalism, advocacy and storytelling.<br>Outline pitches | Performing your audio stories<br>Lifting words off the page and creating scenes to tell stories<br>**Due: Outline** |
| Week 7:<br>Feb 14/16 | Guest lecture:<br>Media Relations:<br>Getting your message out | TBA |
| Feb 21/23 | Reading Break | Reading Break |
| Week 8:<br>Feb 28<br>Mar 2 | Guest lecture:<br>Science Journalism<br>Group Piece assigned | Drop-in |
| Week 9:<br>Mar 7/9 | Individual feedback sessions to help students refine and design their stories<br>**Due: Group Piece** | Drop-in |
| Week 10:<br>Mar 14/16 | TBA | Drop-in |
| Week 11:<br>Mar 21/23 | Draft podcast due: Group feedback and suggestions<br>**Due: Draft** | Drop-in |
| Week 12:<br>Mar 28/30 | Workshopping | Holiday: Good Friday |
| Week 13:<br>Apr 4/6 | **Due: Final podcast**<br>Listening Party, Pt 1 | Listening Party, Pt 2<br>**Last day of class** |

**Topics and Intellectual Territory Flow:**

1. Course introduction
2. General Journalism and Storytelling
3. Interview Skills
4. Journalist, Citizen journalist, or Advocate?  It all depends on your purpose
5. Podcast Story Construction and Paper edit Plan/Story Boarding
6. Technology 'platforms' and Communication/Traditional Media Outlets vs. Social
7. Networks: Implications, Advantages and Disadvantages; Using Data
8. Media Relations and Message Positioning

## LFS 400 Grading Rubric

| Component | Excellent | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Host (student) Speaking Audio (25%)<br><br>Process steps: c, d | Clear speaking voice, good pace and rhythm; high quality recording free from distractions and faults. | Clear speaking voice; good pace/rhythm; moderate audio quality. | Rhythm/pace of speech off by either speaking too quickly or too slowly; moderate audio quality with a few faults. | Difficult to understand words, poor quality audio with many faults. |
| Structure (25%)<br><br>Process steps: b, c, d, e, f, h | Story is well organized and has a clear introduction, meaningful substance, and concise ending/ conclusion. | Story is well organized but lacks either a clear introduction, meaningful substance, or conclusion. | Story organization is unclear but is still able to convey information. | Story is disorganized and without identifiable structure. |
| Audio Engineering (25%)<br><br>Process steps: a, c, d, g, i, j, k | External recordings of high quality free from faults; transition/splices are smooth and without distraction. | External recordings of moderate quality free from faults; transitions/splices are smooth and without distraction. | External recordings of moderate quality with a few faults; transitions/splices are noticeable but only a minor distraction. | External recordings of low quality with faults; transitions/splices are abrupt and distracting. |
| Engagement / Content (25%)<br><br>Process steps: b, c, d, e, f | Story highly engaging and entertaining delivering accurate information. | Story engaging and informative. | Story neither engaging nor entertaining but delivers accurate information. | Story boring without delivering accurate information. |