

Guidelines for Food Producer Podcasts

You have already done the bulk of collecting data for this course. We also want to bring a more human angle to the map, and storytelling is an incredibly effective tool for this. You will be turning your recorded food producer interviews into short podcasts. These are the basic requirements:

Deadline: June 5, 2015

Format: mp3 file

Length: ~2 minutes (as short as 1 minute and as long as 3 minutes is okay).

Music: You are not expected to have music or sound effects. It's okay if you want to include them, but you won't get extra points for it.

Intro and outro: Begin with, "You are listening to a part of 'Geographic Impacts of Global Change: Mapping the Stories,' a StoryMap project. This is [narrator name], and the piece you are about to hear was co-produced with [names of project partners]." Then introduce the place and interviewees. End with "This story was created by Stanford University students as part of the course Biology 128 in Spring of 2015." You can add very short acknowledgements or "Thank you for listening" if you like.

Follow these steps to create your podcast:

- 1) **Decide what your storyline or message will be.** Think about the most important message your interviewees are conveying. This should include something related to global change, but is very flexible and depends very much on your interview.*
- 2) **Narrow down the interview material you want to use.** Make a copy of your audio (you should keep an original version just in case!). If working in GarageBand, create a Podcast project (Audacity instructions have been distributed). First you can take out totally extraneous ideas and material, and pauses in conversation. Then prioritize what you want to keep, beginning with the bare minimum: the soundbites that sound best and are most relevant to the storyline you're using. Build in other lines that lend your interview an arc (building some tension or the before, during and after) and insight or takeaways from your interviewee. Of course, you will fill in any gaps with your own narration. If you have space, also leave in some audio that is whimsical, fun, poignant, or otherwise adds to your piece emotionally.
- 3) **Create a script.** You won't turn this in, but you will almost certainly need one to read and record your own narration. Organize the pieces of the interview you want to use into a final order, and then fill in gaps with narration, as outlined in the storyboard example later in this handout.

* If there isn't much in your interview that relates to global change, or you have other questions, talk to the instructors (email Laura at lcussen@stanford.edu or come to her office hours) and we can work something out

- 4) **Record.** You may record directly within Audacity or GarageBand, or use an external recorder and import your audio. Use a microphone connected to your computer!
- 5) **Edit.** Use your editing software (Audacity or GarageBand) to cut out what you don't want, rearrange the flow of thoughts, or improve pacing.
- 6) **Mix.** Manage volume fades
- 7) **Compress.** Convert to .mp3 in Audacity or iTunes. You may need to reduce the size of your file. Select mono, 96 kbps at 44.1 kHz sampling rate to produce adequate quality in a small file.
- 8) **Send** the file to Laura at lcussen@stanford.edu by June 5th.

Structure

The stories should be just that: stories with an arc. At the minimum there should be a before, during and after structure. Present your subject like a character with motivations, and set the scene. This is important because users may listen to many podcasts, and it will be powerful for them to get a mental picture of the diversity of places in our country where people are facing the issues we treat in this class.

In terms of format, half the time should be the voice of your interviewee, and half your own voice narrating, though this can vary a lot. A good rule of thumb is to **show, then tell**. Have the interviewee's voice show (describe something). Then the narrator tells the audience more (for example, what the implications might be). The narrator then introduces the interviewee's next 'show' segment. A basic story structure could look something like this:

Narrator: Introduces the name of the place with a descriptive detail (e.g. "a town in Kentucky known for its peach preserves and white picket fences") and the interviewee.

Character: Adds details to the scene in a sentence or two. Sets the "before" or status quo.

Narrator: Quickly gets to a hint of the problem (e.g. "Lately Greenfield hasn't been the same").

Character shows what is happening. Then the narrator comes in for explanation, context, paraphrasing or rephrasing something the interviewee took a long time to say instead of including original audio, or transitioning. The narrator and character alternate and tension builds.

Character: Gives details about the climax of the story.

Narrator: Tells audience what the implications might be

Character: Provides their reflection and explains the new or expected status quo

Narrator: Ties any remaining knots and ends with a relatively broad statement

Note that structure can vary, and this is just a suggestion.

For inspiration, check out some of these podcasts. Keep in mind that we don't expect yours to be as polished as these professionally produced pieces.

- NPR's Science Friday - <http://www.sciencefriday.com/audio>
- RadioLab - <http://www.radiolab.org/series/podcasts>

For student podcasts, look at Professor Liz Hadly's Bio30N 2011 course:
<http://extinctionseminar.podomatic.com/>

Source: Some of this material is adapted from Professor Liz Hadly's Bio 30N Podcast Assignment Handout