

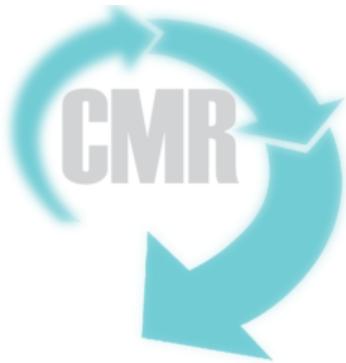


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This document compiles articles that were previously published online as stand-alone posts on the College Media Review website. During the original release period, content was not produced as bound issues; articles were uploaded individually as they were approved. For archival purposes, traditional volume and issue numbers have been replaced with a volume year, reflecting the publication cycle from July through June. CMR historically published a Research Annual each year. When publication frequency changed, some research articles were published online only. To avoid excluding any work, all online-published research articles are included.



College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

Editor challenges students: get 'fired up'



Journalists 'ready to go' after Mega Workshop

By Madison Roth, Minnesota Daily

Eager journalism students filled the room, carrying their hopes and dreams with them as they settled into the dingy orange chairs. Chatter bursting with excitement rang in the ears of the staff members leading the workshop tracks.

This is the weekend the some 100 students had been anticipating for months: the 2023 [Associated Collegiate Press College Media Mega Workshop](#).

[Rick Green](#), executive editor and chief content officer of the *Press Democrat* in Santa Rosa, California, kicked off the workshop by asking staff and students where they were from, as every area of the country was represented in some way.

He asked the students why they were attending the conference.

Responses ranged from “We’re really excited to get different ideas from school and learn how to improve our newspaper.” to “If you have enthusiasm and trust in yourself, anything you’re putting out there, people are gonna listen.”

Other students and faculty responded with “I see all these people in this room and I want to help them get to where they want to go.” and “You guys are the best and we’ll all learn from each other.”

Green proceeded to tell the audience why student journalism, now more than ever, is important. He talked about the recent Northwestern scandal with their football team’s hazing allegations and how no major newspaper wrote the story. The students at Northwestern University did, though.

“You’re the future. You represent the next wave of journalists who will make a difference,” Green said.

He added that without student journalists, stories like what happened at Northwestern could have been swept under the rug. The students at the *The Daily Northwestern* decided to look into this story when nobody else was paying attention.

While it started with a Friday-afternoon press release, the students followed up with some quality journalism, digging around until they unearthed the [whole story](#).

Because of *The Daily Northwestern*’s story, the president of the University turned a two-week suspension of the football coach into the coach being fired.

“Have you ever wondered: Does the work you do matter?” Green said. “It’s one story, one person who wants to make a difference.”

It matters.

Green shared one more story about the impact of one person.

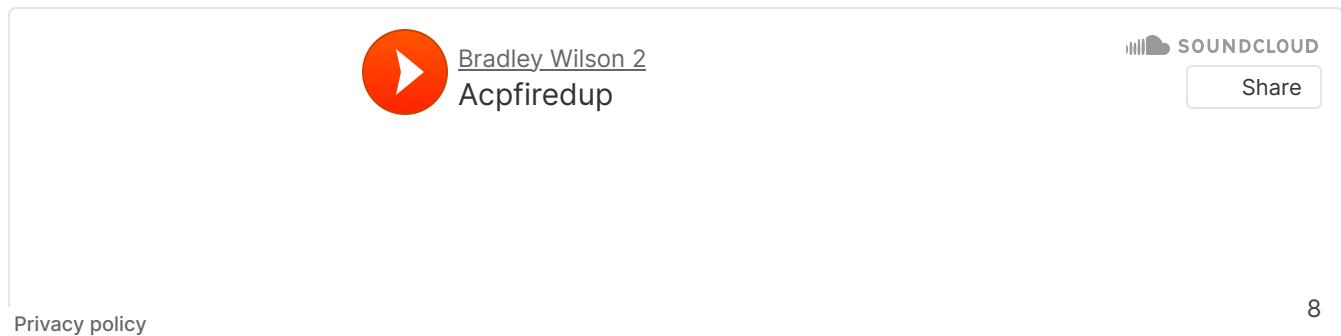
He told of a [woman in South Carolina](#) who repeatedly shouted “Fired up. Ready to go.” at a rally for then Sen. Barack Obama in South Carolina.

The campaign adopted the slogan. Obama was, “Fired up and ready to go.”

Green challenged the students to be fired up and ready to go, pitting one side of the room against the other.

“Fired up.”

“Ready to go.”



[Bradley Wilson 2 · Acpfiredu](#)

Green stressed the importance of how much of an impact journalists can have on the world and how the students attending the conference should take advantage of

being surrounded by the “best of the best.”

“I want you to soak up every opportunity you can,” Green said. “Are you fired up?”

And the crowd screamed back, “Ready to go.”

As the students rushed from their seats to find their classes, there was no doubt in their minds this weekend would not be one to forget.

Photos by Preston Jenkins, Western Kentucky University

[slideshow_deploy id='10668']

To see more student images from the workshop, [CLICK HERE](#).

To see more images from the workshop, [CLICK HERE](#).

CORRECTIONS: An earlier version of this story incorrectly named the student newspaper at Northwestern University and the student photographer. Both errors have been corrected.

July 24, 2023 / College Media / college media, newspaper,

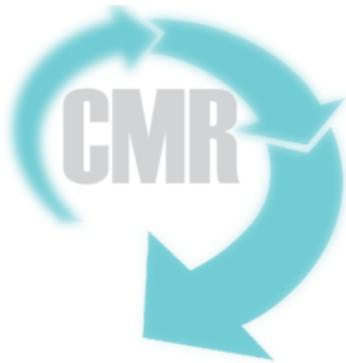
rick green

One thought on “Editor challenges students: get ‘fired up’”

 Chuck Clark

July 25, 2023 at 7:11 am

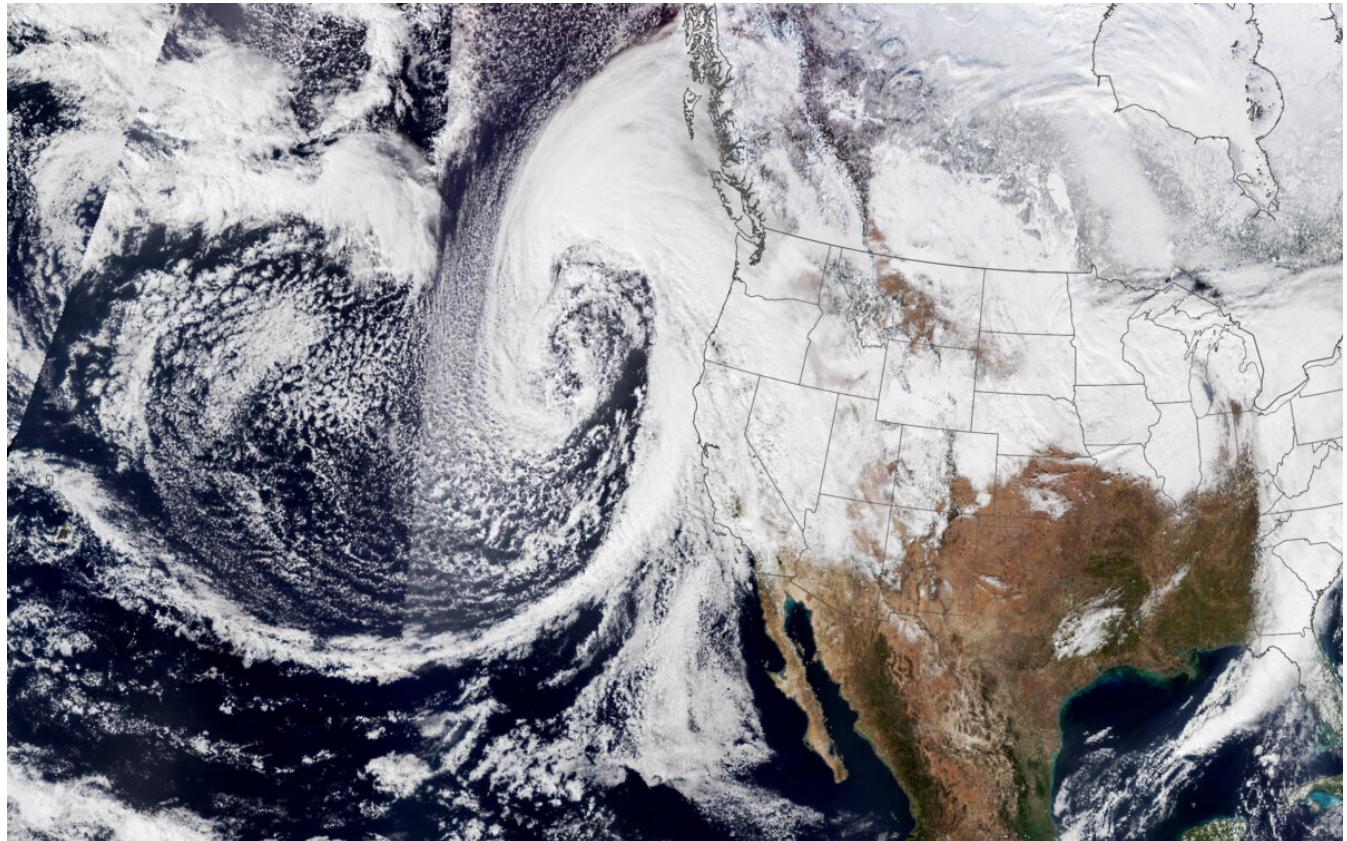
A couple of corrections: It’s The Daily Northwestern, not the Northwestern Daily; and the photographer is Preston Jenkins, not Peyton Jenkins.



College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

Weathering the storm



Strategies for sustaining student media in times of crisis

By [Patti Piburn](#) and [Kim Lisagor Bisheff](#)

Abstract

Student reporters in KCPR, using remote technologies, continued producing and broadcasting live news on-air throughout the pandemic and during subsequent disruptions. This qualitative [case study](#) examines the remote strategies adopted by the station in the lockdown to determine what should remain, with two goals in mind: keeping broadcast student media going in a future crisis and better equipping journalism graduates. Semi-structured interviews with graduates who were part of the radio news team before, during and after the pandemic reveal that they acquired and refined crucial soft skills during their remote student media experience. The graduates report that their experience equipped them for a “new normal” in the workplace. They described gaining such soft skills as confidence, resilience and adaptability as well as improved organization, communication and collaboration. While in-person reporting is preferred, blending remote work, and the technologies that support it, into student media makes the organization more resilient and better prepares students for transformed newsrooms.

Introduction

An [atmospheric river](#) flowed across the college town of San Luis Obispo, closing the university for the first two days of the 2023 winter quarter. The massive rainfall and flooding killed two people and created dangerous conditions across the county. The storm also meant student reporters could not safely get to the campus radio station to report weather related news, vital to the local audience. The student radio news team resorted to what they learned in the [COVID-19](#) lockdown—doing news remotely.

Approximately one-third of college radio stations went off the air in 2020 (Knopper 2020), and of those that continued broadcasting, most relied on automated playlists as students were unable to physically access campus studios (Minsker and Yoo 2020). While music and entertainment content broadcast on radio has value, live news is critically important in a crisis. Media organizations must develop strategies

to provide news coverage during an event that prevents journalists from accessing newsrooms.

Through the COVID-19 lockdown, California Polytechnic State University's broadcast news program developed methods for student reporters to remotely produce and report live news over the airwaves. When the catastrophic storm hit in early 2023, the student radio news team again used the remote reporting strategies developed in the pandemic to deliver vital weather coverage to their audience.

The goal of this qualitative case study is to explore how broadcast student media at Cal-Poly responded to the global pandemic and to identify strategies that student media advisers should retain to prepare for future disruptions. While this study endeavors to examine Cal Poly's student media practices, the intent is also to provide information that may be transferable to other universities' student media organizations.

Literature review

Many student media advisers just want to forget the past several years and get back to "normal," but there is an opportunity to learn from the pandemic and the strategies that advisers employed to get through it. Not only did COVID-19 upend student media, it also upended professional journalism. And while student media advisers are returning to a "new normal," the news industry is doing the same. Most newsrooms returned to in-person work while retaining some remote work, as Zoom meetings, Slack messages, Google Docs and other virtual shared work platforms became part of this new normal (Heyward 2021; Denoulet 2021; Dool 2020; Margolis and Condon 2021; Sherman 2021; Tornoe 2022; Waterson 2021). The Reuters Institute surveyed 246 media leaders in 52 countries and reported that hybrid news work is now the norm, with some news organizations transitioning to fully remote operation (Newman 2022).

In hybrid newsrooms, in-person news routines are now blended with technology-based distance work (Heyward 2021; Denoulet 2021; Margolis and Condon 2021). Meetings are conducted via video conferencing software like Zoom, and technology connects remote news workers in virtual workspaces. Reporters are gathering

information through video conferencing, email, text messages and doing on-air interviews on Zoom or other platforms (Dool 2020; Sherman 2021; Tornoe 2022). Journalism graduates who enter this transformed workplace will need some proficiency in remote work routines. As the journalism industry establishes its new normal by reconfiguring newsrooms and news work, the question arises, how should student media organizations adjust to properly prepare journalism graduates who will enter this new hybrid or blended workplace?

Recent scholarship has examined how higher education responded to the abrupt, emergency transition to online, identifying both challenges and opportunities (Turnbull, Chugh and Luck 2021). Student media advisers must also turn their attention to what they can learn and retain from that response to inform practices in a post-pandemic world. The pandemic provides an opportunity for advisers to rethink how student media operates, and how the experience can better equip graduates for a transformed workplace.

A 2020 survey shows that 62% of student media advisers are tenured or tenure track faculty (Kopenhaver, Smith and Biehl 2021). Even though all advisers are not instructors, they all teach. The College Media Association's "New Adviser Handbook" lists 14 things an adviser does; giving advice and teaching are the top two (Ingelhart 1997). Although the learning happens outside the classroom, student media is a place of learning, and thus, just as educators reexamine practices post-pandemic, so too can advisers. Student media newsrooms provide experiential, or learn-by-doing, opportunities to prepare graduates for the workplace. Journalism programs often struggle to keep up with rapid changes in industry (Sivek 2013; Lynch 2014) and there has long been disagreement about the proper balance of theory, practice and skills in journalism education (Solkın 2022; Walck, Cruikshank and Kalyango 2015). Beyond the classroom, student media offers a place where participants can practice and develop professional skills.

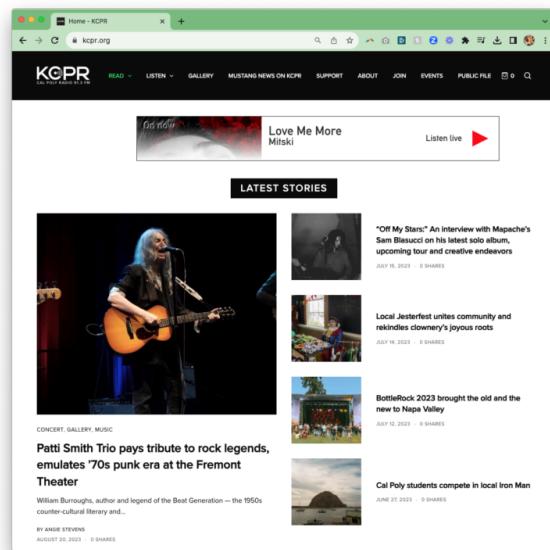
Learn-by-doing

Cal Poly's student media operates within the university's overarching learn-by-doing pedagogy defined as "a deliberate process whereby students, from day one, acquire knowledge and skills through active engagement and self-reflection inside

the classroom and beyond it” (“Learn by Doing” 2011). John Dewey was one of the first to describe a learn-by-doing pedagogy that locates learning in doing the thing that is being learned (Dewey 1997). Seymour Papert built on Dewey’s ideas by explaining that learning occurs when students co-construct an artifact, reflect on it, and share it publicly (Parmaxi, Zaphiris and Ioannou 2016).

Whether on a polytechnic learn-by-doing campus or not, all student media provides experiential learning. Student media newsrooms mirror the real world and create a space where students can acquire and hone both hard and soft skills. A nationwide survey of human resource managers reveals a talent shortage attributed to a lack of soft skills that more than half the respondents said higher education was not doing enough to address (Burner et al. 2019). Hard skills

refer to the ability to perform a task such as operate a machine (Cimatti 2016; Whitmore 1974), or in the case of student media, operate technology to perform tasks. When the U.S. military first defined the term “soft skills,” it referred to “important job-related skills that involve little or no interaction with machines and whose application on the job is quite generalized” (Whitmore 1974, 12). The term “soft skills” has numerous definitions (Matteson, Anderson and Boyden 2016) and is broadly described as the skills needed to collaborate or work well with colleagues (Cimatti 2016). Soft skills valued for journalism include “interpersonal communication, working in a team, and time management” (Bluestein, Haynes and Zheng 2019, 41). The learn-by-doing student media experience, using technology as students did during the pandemic, presents the opportunity for students to acquire soft skills now valued in newsrooms. Considering the upheaval in industry and higher education, this study is an opportunity to examine students’ reflections on what worked (and didn’t) when doing news remotely, so that advisers may better understand how to use technology to improve student media practices.



KCPR

KCPR 91.3 FM News

In the Cal Poly journalism department's student media organization, Mustang Media Group, students learn by doing in KCPR 91.3 FM, the radio lab. The study's investigators are MMG advisers, one who oversees KCPR's paid student management team of six and a volunteer staff of about 60. When the university sent everyone home abruptly in March 2020, the MMG radio news team was broadcasting live news remotely on-air five days a week, often from their bedrooms, using both new and newly adopted technology. Students, physically located in cities across California and the U.S., were reporting news live from their homes during a global health crisis, at a time when journalism was arguably critically important to the public.

Applications such as the shared cloud-based newswriting program [Rundown Creator](#), Google Docs, Slack and Trello created a workspace, a virtual newsroom, where students asynchronously worked together to produce the weekday newscasts. The audio programs Cleanfeed and Zetta2GO, paired with Zoom and SoundCloud, formed a virtual studio space where students gathered synchronously to broadcast their newscasts. The radio news team used Zoom to conduct and capture interviews for news stories. Students communicated using Slack and group text messages. They coordinated content and coverage using the workflow application Trello. To broadcast live on-air, the team gathered in the virtual studio space connected remotely from their various locations by two audio programs, Zetta2GO, part of the station's automation program, and a free version of Cleanfeed, an internet-based audio application.

With this combination of technology, KCPR operated remotely through 2020. During subsequent transitions, back and forth between in-person and remote, the station fell back on remote broadcasting each time. Even after fully returning in-person, there were frequent instances of students participating remotely because they had been exposed to the COVID-19 virus, were awaiting test results, and various other pandemic-related reasons—including stress and anxiety. With each disruption, the remote broadcast strategies developed during the lockdown kept the radio programming going. These practices persist. KCPR leverages technology to blend remote work and in-person routines, either to accommodate individual students,

case-by-case, or (in the event of a crisis such as the winter storm) the whole news team.

Methodology

Qualitative case study is the appropriate approach to examine practices in the radio station from the student perspective because this “methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts” (Baxter and Jack 2008, 544). Furthermore, this methodology capitalizes on the investigators’ position as professors, advisers and insiders in the radio station with in-depth knowledge of the program and access to the participants, documents, and work product for data collection (Walsham 2006).

Yin’s (2003) extensive explanation of case study as a research methodology provides the foundation for this qualitative research. Yin (2003, 13) asserts that a “case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” This methodology is appropriate for exploring what Cal Poly’s student media did in response to the lockdown, describing how that response worked and explaining why, to inform future practices.

Framework

Social constructionist theory posits three important facets of learn-by-doing. Learners are co-constructing knowledge by creating an artifact together, reflecting on their experience by critically evaluating their work and others’ and sharing the artifact publicly (Parmaxi, Zaphiris and Ioannou 2016). In a learn-by-doing approach, students on the radio news team learn by making a newscast (artifact) together (co-constructing), which they broadcast live (shared publicly) on KCPR.

Procedure

Investigators approached two distinct groups: 1) broadcast news professionals, and 2) recent Cal Poly journalism graduates. The professionals were surveyed; the recent graduates were interviewed.

To help understand the new normal that exists in newsrooms, the investigators conducted a survey of eight professional journalists (four men, four women). The responses were used to construct a picture of post-pandemic news work and what employers are seeking in graduates. The questionnaire included both multiple choice and free response questions related to in-person and remote news work and hiring preferences.

Semi-structured interviews with 12 recent graduates (six men, six women) provide both subjective and narrative descriptions of the remote student media experience during the pandemic. The same open-ended questions were posed, allowing consistency while also allowing the participants to answer authentically. It also allowed the investigators the flexibility of asking follow-up questions for clarification, which enhances the research validity. The interviews were 45 minutes to an hour in length and were conducted on Zoom, which provided a recording and transcript. Notes were taken during and directly after interviews to preserve contemporaneous observations. Purposeful sampling was used to recruit respondents for the survey and graduates for the interviews.

Participants

Graduates were identified and invited to participate from a pool of approximately 60 students who were involved in the radio station at the start of, during, and in the transition back from the pandemic. While Cal Poly's journalism program is identified, the participants' identities were protected. Yin (2003) provides a rationale for identifying the program while justifying anonymity for the participants. In this case, protecting the participants' privacy ensured they could be frank in their answers without concern about criticizing the program or its instructors. Confidentiality was also provided to survey respondents. The investigators were aware that student interviews and survey responses could reveal personal information and made every effort to protect their privacy. Gender-neutral pseudonyms were used in place of names, any identifying information excluded or altered, and interviews were stored using codes rather than names. While interpretation of data is subjective, the investigators strove for accuracy in writing up the findings and checked in with participants for validation prior to publication.

Investigators

The investigators are student media advisers, and one is the instructor for the department's radio courses. It is common in qualitative studies for the researcher to be an insider and operate as both observer and participant (Yin 2003; Walsham 2006). While this close perspective has the advantage of experience with, knowledge of and access to the case under study, it also required that the investigators be cognizant of their insider position. At every turn, the investigators strove for impartiality and self-awareness throughout the process.

Data collection

The method of data collection was participant observation and semi-structured interviews with 12 recent graduates. Additional data was collected by surveying eight broadcast news workers. The survey questionnaire combined multiple choice and free response questions. It was answered by eight people who were selected because they work in supervisory roles in broadcast newsrooms across California and are involved in hiring.

Coding

An open coding approach was used to analyze the interview transcripts, allowing the investigators to construct meaning from the patterns and themes that emerged from the data. To ensure methodological rigor and the quality and trustworthiness of the study, before completion, the investigators followed up with participants to validate the authenticity of the results. Data gathered from interviews was triangulated with observations and student media content to further support the credibility and dependability of the findings.

Research question

Which remote practices—such as Zoom meetings and interviews, communicating on Slack, coordinating on Trello, or broadcasting via Zetta2GO and Clean Feed—should be retained in student media broadcast programs beyond the pandemic (and why)?

Findings

Three themes emerged from the semi-structured interviews. The first theme was a new normal of blended remote and in-person work in newsrooms; this theme was also supported by the survey responses. The second was that remote work during the pandemic prepared graduates for this “new normal” in the workplace. Third was that by doing remote work during the pandemic, participants acquired and refined soft skills.

Theme #1: A new normal

The interview participants—all recent graduates—were working or had recently worked in a broadcast related job at the time of the interviews. They spoke of what several described as a “new normal.” All participants did some portion of their work remotely, had co-workers who did some work remotely, or interacted with others, internal and external to their organization, in remote ways. All described remote work as a fallback and noted the value of being prepared for and comfortable with it—for example, being able to accommodate someone who would only agree to be interviewed on Zoom. Sawyer said, “Remote learning has definitely helped me technology-wise to be prepared to immediately Zoom someone or immediately pull up a meeting and get things ready and organize stuff like that, which I probably would not really have learned or been prepared for had I not gone through online learning.”

The survey responses support those findings. The respondents, local TV and radio newsroom supervisors in hiring roles throughout California, illuminated what employers now desire in recent graduates. Except for one, these local news outlets are places recent Cal Poly journalism graduates have interned or started entry-level jobs. At the time of the survey in 2022, nearly all the respondents reported that most news work in their organization was done in-person, with some remote work. Only one respondent reported that no remote work was done in their newsroom. However, in the open response portion of the survey, all other respondents described some level of remote work done either by themselves or others in their organization. They also described a reliance on technology that enables distance collaboration, used even when employees are in the same physical location. Sixty

percent of respondents did some remote work, ranging from 10% – 80% of their job. Several respondents said most news work was done in-person, with certain activities like story meetings conducted on a web conferencing platform such as Zoom. Four respondents reported that while most employees were back working in-person, one or more employees in their newsroom did all or a significant portion of their work remotely.

The survey responses revealed a picture of transformed news work in which in-person reporting and interviewing is always preferred, as it yields better-quality audio, video and reporting. However, remote interviews happened at times when necessary. Post-pandemic, other work such as meetings, internal and external communication, planning and coordination is now frequently done remotely through technology.

Theme #2: Remote work prepared students for the new normal

All of the student interviewees felt that their remote student media experience prepared them for a transformed workplace. Casey said this new normal means preparing students for “sort of like a multi-tasking, Swiss army knife sort of ordeal” where graduates need to be ready for anything. Participants felt doing student media during the pandemic instilled a sense of accomplishment, confidence, adaptability and resilience. Describing how working through the pandemic prepared them, Hunter said, “in interviews, they would ask me questions about working [remotely] and what it was like to organize myself, and to make sure that things were done efficiently, and talking on Zoom, and all of those things. I feel like I’m more equipped to host a meeting on Zoom than I am in person. Because of school, I’ve just become so used to it.” Hunter expressed a belief that if they could persevere through the conditions of a pandemic, then they could easily succeed in the work world. Dylan said, “I talk about the pandemic in every interview I’ve done with a professional organization.” Hunter, who was then working in a fully remote media job, said, “I was in the middle of college in the pandemic, so it disrupted everything. I had to figure out how to work [remotely], and now I will say that I was able to virtually work in a radio station in every job interview for the next twenty years until it’s not relevant anymore. It’s a foundational thing that I did not expect to happen, but it definitely has prepared me for the work that I’m doing.”

Theme #3: Students acquired soft skills

Both survey respondents and participants emphasized the importance of soft skills. Participants said they felt proud, confident and accomplished because they had acquired and refined soft skills which helped them get broadcast jobs. Participants reported gaining soft skills, transferable to the workplace, from the use of the news production software Rundown Creator, the workflow application Trello, and communication software Slack, GroupMe, and text messaging.

Hunter added, “Those things are super transferable, and, like I didn’t know how to use Salesforce coming into my job now, but I was able to hype up the fact that I’d used other organizational tools in school to say I can pick it up if you just show me.”

Through remote work, participants improved email and phone etiquette for communicating with co-workers and securing interviews. They refined their remote interviewing skills by using CleanFeed, Zoom, email and phone. Harper mentioned feeling proud and accomplished when a colleague complimented their ability to make people feel comfortable on Zoom during an interview.

Hunter said, “My biggest takeaway from being remote was developing my soft skills. It’s like the soft skills that you are forced to develop, working remote, are vital to any career. Because you can learn any job, it’s just whether or not you have discipline, self-awareness, organization, communication. Whether you have those skills is what gets you places.”

All but one survey respondent reported that in hiring for entry level jobs, proficiency in remote technology is valued. However, several survey respondents explained that their priority was not experience with specific software, applications and platforms, but rather familiarity with some technology and the willingness and ability to learn and self-teach. Echoing what the respondents reported, the graduates felt that knowing how to use specific technology is less important than being able to adapt quickly to new technology.

Logan said, “Overall, I do think it’s soft skills, and I think it comes down to work ethic, motivation, willingness to learn, because I think everyone can be trained to do

the technological stuff.”

Several graduates said that by figuring out how to use the technology required to participate remotely in student media, they became self-learners, which made the prospect of using new technology less intimidating. Logan explained that even though they had no experience with the specific technology at their new job, their employer hired them because they had experience with remote broadcasting, which demonstrated their ability to learn.

“They’re like, you have this experience and that’s great, like don’t worry that you don’t know XYZ, we can train you,” Logan said, “so, [employers] just want to see that you have a willingness to learn what they’re doing.”

Two survey respondents described valuing “over-communication skills” because news workers are now more frequently using email and instant messaging for internal and external communication, which requires effort, organization, initiative, and being able to over-communicate. Participants also stressed the need for soft skills such as over-communication to excel in the workplace. Several noted the importance of appropriate and effective communication through Slack, Trello, message features in news production software such as Rundown Creator, ENPS and web conferencing platforms such as Teams and Zoom.

Participants said during the pandemic, they acquired transferable soft skills such as being organized, self-directed, adaptable, and able to meet deadlines.

Hunter said, “I definitely think that the skills that I’ve gained working remote are intangibles that I’ll be able to carry with me.” Hunter added that becoming accustomed to Zoom meetings improved their communication skills, “and also, organizational skills, like organizing yourself working remote because of the over-communication that is required to make sure that things run smoothly, that won’t just go away. That is part of me now.” Blake said, “Figuring out that communication aspect of it … it’s really, really tough,” but that remote work taught them how to be “a good digital, virtual communicator.”

Riley said, “It’s important to learn, to build all those skills that will be universal. Wherever you go, you’re going to be able to like, use those skills.” Riley explained that they had learned “troubleshooting, patience and problem solving” while using remote broadcast applications, adding, “you carry that with you when you’re using other apps or technologies in your job.” Riley said if you know the basics of one program, “everything is somewhat similar. You’ll be able to learn everything else, you have those skills that make it easier for you to learn new technologies, transferable skills. It’s important to be able to adapt, and I think that’s something the pandemic taught us all, to adapt.”

All participants expressed that working in student media during the pandemic prepared them for the media jobs they got after graduation. “I think it provided a lot of good base skills to have now that I’m in the workforce,” Sawyer said. “I actually think, going through all those classes and whatnot online made us stronger in-person.” The confidence, resilience, and adaptability that participants reported acquiring in the pandemic was connected to mastering the technology needed to work together remotely. Parker explained, “It somehow made me better because I figured it out by myself, and it was hard. After we came back, I thought to myself, if I could survive that ... doing it all by myself, getting [Zetta2GO] all set, then I could do it in person. No problem. And it’s true.”

Discussion

Post-pandemic, in this “new normal,” in-person broadcast reporting is preferred by the survey respondents and participants because the audio and video quality is higher. However, they all agreed that remote broadcast is necessary as a fallback. Participants felt that the pandemic experience had equipped them well for the new normal and recommended integrating some remote broadcast and remote work routines into student media so that students are familiar and comfortable with it and acquire valued soft skills. This is supported by the survey respondents’ description of newsrooms where reporting is mostly in-person but still requires some remote interviewing, meetings and communication for which graduates must be prepared.

The technology the Cal Poly journalism department adopted in 2020 allowed students to jointly produce and broadcast live on-air newscasts together in a virtual studio space from any physical location where the students had internet service and a laptop.

Morgan summed up the feeling of the participants: “We now have technology that lets us do live remote broadcasting. It’s very cool, and I hate the fact that it took a pandemic for us to start doing that.” They added, “but now that the technology is there, use it. You might as well run with it. ... This generation, and all the students that will come after us, will be tech natives, so let the kids run with it.”

Participants agreed that while the in-person broadcast experience is preferred, there is value in keeping a remote option for future-proofing.

Sawyer noted, “Technology-wise, I do think being able to just have remote broadcasting in your back pocket is a great advantage.”

This echoes Turnbull’s (2021) advice that educators can prepare for the future by blending the effective parts of in-person learning with online tools and technology so that they are ready for disruptions (Turnbull, Chugh and Luck 2021, 6401–19). Using a blended approach to student media would help journalism programs keep pace with industry while preparing for disruptions; both serve to better prepare students. Integrating remote work into student media not only prepares the organization for an uncertain future, but it also prepares graduates for an uncertain future, as well as the transformed workplace. Blake, who was working mostly remotely for a broadcast organization, explained that remote broadcast learning taught them to be “good at being in a digital workspace, like in the working world.” This is supported by Hoak’s (2023) finding that “comfort and familiarity with tech” helped journalists learn new technologies on the job and adapt to remote work conditions (16).

Doing remote work in student media helps students become familiar and comfortable with the technology required to perform it, and importantly, acquire soft skills, for using the technology well. Being part of student media during the pandemic imparted a sense of confidence and resilience to the participants. They

reported acquiring soft skills such as adaptability, problem solving, flexibility and the ability to think on their feet. They graduated feeling accomplished and recognized that they had acquired such soft skills as organization and better communication, that they had become self-learners and had gained confidence and proficiency at tackling new technology.

Conclusion

Journalism graduates who begin jobs in newsrooms will need to be proficient in the use of remote technologies such as web conferencing and remote broadcast software, working and interacting with colleagues on platforms that organize remote work, and be self-directed and able to work productively from remote locations without supervision. Strategies that were incorporated during the pandemic for remote broadcast reporting and technologies that facilitate remote collaboration in shared digital spaces should not be abandoned but rather woven into student media.

While prioritizing in-person work, advisers should integrate remote work that requires the skills graduates will need in the workplace. Learning the technology necessary for remote broadcasting during the pandemic alleviated feelings of intimidation related to new technology and imparted valuable soft skills.

To help students acquire self-teaching strategies for learning new workplace technology, advisers should give students opportunities to practice remote interviewing and reporting and become comfortable with and effective at remote meetings and communication. In addition to becoming accustomed to technology that supports remote broadcast reporting, such as Zoom or CleanFeed interviews, advisers should also incorporate technologies that facilitate distance work, such as collaborative authoring tools like Google products, news writing programs like ENPS and Rundown Creator, communication applications such as GroupMe and Slack, and collaborative workflow platforms like Trello and Basecamp. Using these applications can help students acquire effective communication and collaboration skills, while improving self-direction, self-organization, and self-supervision. Thus, graduates will be better prepared for a transformed workplace in which some remote work is the new normal. “By regularly using digital technologies, students are already

building skills that are likely to be useful in the jobs they have after graduating” (Barber et al. 2021, 12).

This study is limited because it only examined the Cal Poly journalism department’s radio lab. While it provides insight, examples, and recommendations that can help improve learn-by-doing in student media, because of the methodology employed, and the purposeful sample, it may not be generalizable to other programs. While not generalizable, this case study provides thick, rich detail of the student media experience that allows readers then to transfer useful findings to their own program (Atkins and Wallace 2012; Flyvbjerg 2006).

Despite this limitation, the results provide a valuable understanding of how strategies developed and technologies used in response to the pandemic may be retained to improve student broadcast media and can be useful and transferable to other student media organizations. A deeper understanding, from a student perspective, of what worked well and why during the pandemic, informed by what employers value in recent graduates, can shape the future practices of this and other student media organizations. More study is needed as student media advisers move farther away from the pandemic. In the future, exploration is needed to examine the long-term role remote technologies will play in news work.

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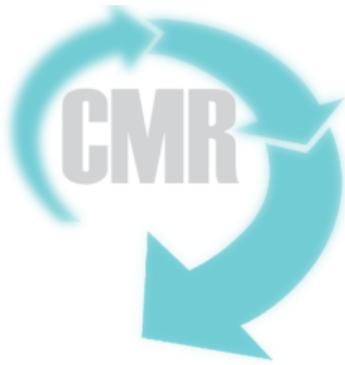
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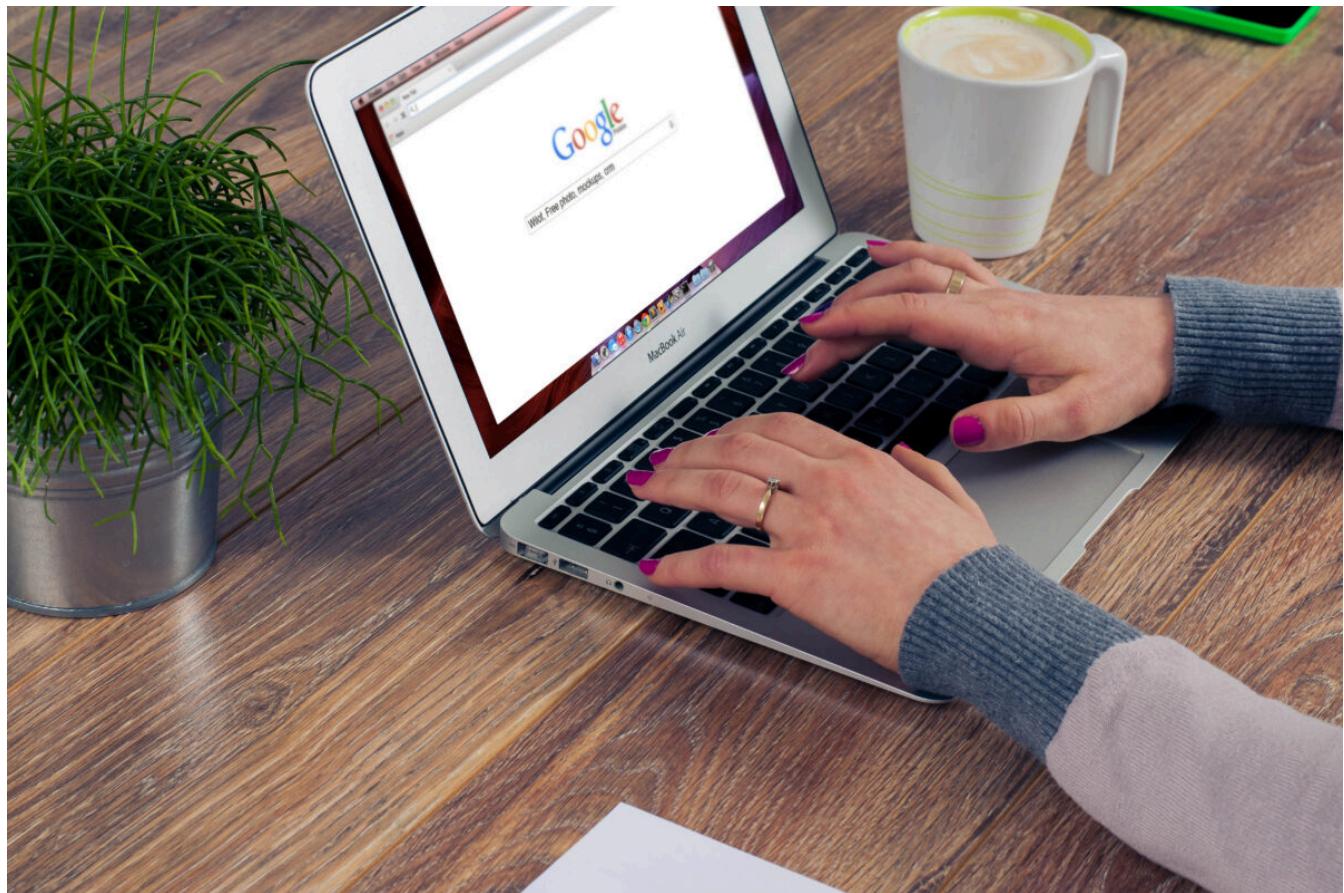
College Media Review / August 28, 2023 / College radio, Research / college newspaper, crisis, journalism, newspaper, student media



College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

Why I asked my students to Google me



An activity for the first week of class or before the first staff meeting

By Erin Olson

In the first five days of class, a crucial window for building relationships with my new students, I did something that other educators might consider bold. I asked my students to Google me and make inferences about the year we would have together. Realizing this is something they were likely to do anyway, I wanted to witness firsthand how they searched, how they shared what they found, and if they believed the information they encountered.

In just a few minutes, students discovered a little bit about me, and I discovered a lot about their ability to effectively look for information online.

I kicked off our time together with this exercise because I wanted to create an environment where students are curious, contributing ideas and information, and willing to engage in academic discussion – and that requires them to have an ability to discern, question, and investigate the abundance of information available online. Through this exercise, I learned about the support they would need to better navigate the digital landscape. Essentially, I learned whether my students were media and news-literate.

Being media literate means students can access, analyze, evaluate, create and act using all forms of communication. News literacy is the more specific ability to determine the credibility of news and other information.

These are essential skills to incorporate into the first days class – and throughout the year. (You can replicate this lesson without asking students to dig up details about you on the internet each time. Instead, ask students to search for a person of interest or even the university.)

An often-cited 2019 [Stanford History Education Group study](#) found that 96% of young people didn't consider why ties between a climate change website and the fossil fuel industry might lessen the site's credibility. More than half of those

involved in the study believed that a grainy video of ballot-stuffing — actually shot in Russia — was “strong evidence” of voter fraud in the U.S.

While we may think of our students as “digital natives,” these alarming stats show that access to the internet does not mean automatic access to credible sources. Having an unprecedented amount of treasured information within our reach does not matter if we do not know how to get to the gold.

The good news is that students can learn how to identify credible sources from everything else, so they are not vulnerable to being misled by conspiracy theories, paid influencers, or biased opinions masquerading as news.

Here are some news literacy skills to work on, and resources to kick off the journey:

- **Lateral reading:** Gone are the days when we told students to check an “about us” page to find out more about a website. Verifying information online involves more than examining the appearance of the site or the source. It requires searching across the internet to verify a claim. This is called lateral reading – when you leave a website, open a new tab, and start a new search to see what other sources say about the site. To see how this is done, [check out this mini-lesson](#), which uses TikTok to demonstrate lateral reading skills and the importance of verifying information.
- **Share better search strategies:** Model effective search tips for finding the best information, like using quotation marks around specific terms, narrowing results to only news sources, and searching within a specific site. ([Check out these eight tips](#) on how to Google like a pro and get better search results.) Then, send students into the digital landscape to test those strategies by finding information about a topic connected to your content, a current event, or a student interest.
- **Support new habits:** Take as many opportunities as you can to remind students to practice media literacy tips and strategies. You can also remind students about the [red flags that often accompany misinformation](#), like emotionally charged statements like “let that sink in” or “do your own research.” You could include media literacy resources in your virtual classroom, syllabi, or build nudges into assignments. Effective searching takes time to build as a habit, and these cues to

interrupt our basic internet search can help students form more effective habits for better search returns.

Thinking critically, developing a healthy skepticism, and knowing where to go for factual information are important skills for students to master across every subject. They also take more than a week – or a few – to perfect. Becoming media and news-literate is a journey of continual learning and practice. But you can start your students down the path by laying a foundation for facts in the very first days of class.



Erin Olson is a senior manager of education partnerships for the [News Literacy Project](#), a nonpartisan nonprofit. She previously taught English in middle and high school, was an instructional coach and supported school districts with technology integration.

Erin Olson



College Media Review / September 5, 2023 / College Media, Media Management / activity, digital native, news literacy, online search



College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

'The Journalism Salute'



Apple Podcasts Preview



143 episodes

The Journalism Salute is a journalism appreciation podcast. We interview working journalists about who they are and what they do.

Our aim is to have diverse guests, thoughtful [more](#)

The Journalism Salute

Mark Simon

Society & Culture

★★★★★ 4.8 • 21 Ratings

[Listen on Apple Podcasts](#) ↗



SEP 4, 2023

Frank Vaisvilas, Indigenous Affairs Reporter, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel ➤

On this episode, we're joined by Frank Vaisvilas. Frank covers indigenous affairs for the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. He just joined the Sentinel after three years at the Green Bay Press-Gazette as part of Report for America. Wisconsin is home to 11 Native American tribes, so there's a lot to cover. Fran...

[▶ PLAY](#) 29 min

AUG 28, 2023

LOCAL NEWS MATTERS: Maritza L. Félix, Conecta Arizona ➤

Hi everyone - We're doing a feed swap this week with a podcast that shares similar sensibilities to ours. Local News Matters features extended conversations covering a wide range of topics. Tim Regan-Porter, CEO of the Colorado Press Association, talks to reporters, editors, publishers, startup...

[▶ PLAY](#) 1 hr 5 min

AUG 21, 2023

Em Espay, Education Reporter, Moco360 ➤

On this episode, we're joined by Em Espay. Em is an education reporter for MoCo360 Media, which covers Montgomery County, Maryland, comprehensively online at Moco360.media. Em is transgender and goes by the pronouns they/them. They've previously worked as a transcriptionist and court...

[▶ PLAY](#) 33 min

AUG 14, 2023

Jen Sorensen, Award-Winning Editorial Cartoonist ➤

On this episode, we're joined by Jen Sorensen. Jen is an award-winning editorial cartoonist whose work can be seen at magazines, newspapers, and websites (including her own). She was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2017 for her coverage of the 2016 presidential race. Jen talked about how she...

[▶ PLAY](#) 34 min

AUG 7, 2023

Kadjata Bah, JEA Wisconsin Student Journalist of the Year ➤

On this episode we're joined by Kadjata Bah. Kadjata is an incoming freshman at Yale University. She was the 2023 Wisconsin JEA Student Journalist of the Year from Madison East High School in Madison, Wisconsin. Kadjata spoke about her journalism origin at Simpson Street Free Press (a...

[▶ PLAY](#) 29 min

Podcast highlights people who believe in journalism

A Q&A with Mark Simon

What is your podcast about? Why?

My podcast, [The Journalism Salute](#), is a journalism appreciation podcast. It's meant to show

1. That working in journalism is a great career path.
2. There are so many different options someone could pursue.
3. That journalists are NOT the enemy of the people.

I do 30-35 minute interviews with journalists about who they are and what they do. It's their platform to talk about the backstory- the how and why behind what they do.

I was a journalism major in school. I'm 48 and I've been reading newspapers and following news coverage since I was 5. In 2020, I was tired of listening to Trump and other right-wing people call the media the enemy of the people.

My original way of making a difference was small donations to journalism non-profits. But I figured that a potentially more useful thing I could do would be to give good journalists a means of exposure, of telling their story and the story of the work they do.

And that goes in particular for journalists that come from demographics underrepresented in the industry. My guest list over the life of the podcast is more than 60% women, 45% non-white, and they come from nearly all 50 states, ranging in age from 18 to 80. This year, my guests have been more than half non-white.

Who is your target audience? Why?

- People who like and believe in good journalism and want to learn more about it.
- Students and aspiring journalists who are trying to figure out a career path.

I've got 130+ interviews with an incredibly diverse array of people.

At the time I'm answering this, my last 10 episodes include:

- [A reporter covering Indigenous affairs](#)
- Three reporters covering [LGBTQ related topics](#)
- [A Black food critic who was a Pulitzer finalist](#)
- [One of the few female political cartoonists in the country](#)

- [An award-winning reporter who didn't attend college](#)
- [Two incoming college students, one of whom is African Muslim](#)
- [A longtime reporter who sandwiched two reporting stints around a long career as a professor](#)
- An interview I taped today was with a longtime photographer of Chinese/Malaysian heritage who covered the George Floyd protests and criminal trials.

When I say 'there's something for everyone,' I can back it up.

How did it get started? Why?

I wrote [a long answer](#) detailing my origin story in 2020. The medium-length version of the story is that my entire professional career has been in sports media or media-adjacent areas, including nearly 16 years as a researcher and writer at ESPN. Telling stories and interviewing is in my wheelhouse.

So I wanted to show that I could tell stories that weren't in sports. And I thought that potential journalist guests would be willing to embrace the goals of the podcast once it was explained to them.

I started with the one person who answered one of my donations with a handwritten note, Allison Augustyn, then of [Investigate West](#), and the co-founder of the most interesting organization I'd read about, Eve Pearlman, of [Spaceship Media](#).

They were both willing, so I taped with them. When I got done with the interview with Eve, she told me she appreciated being asked questions framed differently from those she typically got.

That was important. Since then, it's been a goal to get that response in every interview I do.

What challenges has it offered?

The biggest challenge right now is finding the time to do it. I have a full-time job, a side job broadcasting sports for small colleges, and multiple hobbies and interests.

And I only know one way to do each thing I get involved in – I go full bore. So I put a LOT of time into potential guest selection and guest research. Guest selection is pretty challenging because I'm constantly looking for guests who bring something that hasn't been brought to the table already. And I'm generally not looking for well-known people.

There's also only so many hours in the day and I'm a one-man operation, so things like newsletters and promotion is hard.

Lastly, I've made \$0 from doing this (and I'm not asking for money; I view this as a public service). I have no advertisers.

How do you see it evolving? In a couple of years what do you want it to be?

The next step for it is educational integration in some form.

I have done outreach asking professors and teachers if they have any interest in using my podcast in their classroom.

For example, could it serve as extra credit for a student to pick an episode, listen to it, and report on the most interesting things they learned?

I'm happy to help in any way I can. I know listener guides can be helpful- I'd provide them if there was legitimate interest. I will gladly speak to journalism classes about my experience and they can talk to me about my journalism jobs too, as I've had a pretty cool career (Besides ESPN, I've written [a book about the history of the Yankees](#) among other things).

What can we all learn from your experience?

As a listener, you'll learn what I stated at the very beginning – it's a great profession, there are so many possibilities for what you can do, and journalists are

not the enemy.

If you're a podcaster, you'll learn the value of research and the value of asking a good question.

Where can people find your podcast?

You can find it on any podcast app ([Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Pod.Link](#)), as well as at [my website](#). One of the benefits of going to the website is that the episodes are categorized, so if you're looking for a journalist that covers a specific subject, you can find it easily.

What else do people need to know about your podcast?

1. The podcast is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Robert Cole, a legendary journalism professor at Trenton State College and The College of New Jersey. He was a mentor, and I think of him often as I'm planning and executing episodes.
2. I like the idea of being a hidden gem kind of podcast, but I would also love more listeners because it would serve as further motivation to keep going. If you gave it a try you'd find it to be a worthwhile use of your time.



Mark Simon

Mark Simon works in content creation at [Sports Info Solutions](#), a company that invents stats and tools to help pro teams evaluate players and game strategies. He writes, edits, creates podcasts, creates social media content and serves as a mentor. He has been a lead researcher for ESPN's Baseball Tonight and a regular contributor, ESPN.com. In addition, he was a play-by-play broadcaster for more than 25 years. He's author of the 2016 book *The Yankees Index: Every Number Tells a Story*.

- X, formerly known as Twitter — [@journalismpod](#)
- TikTok — [@journalismsalute](#)
- Facebook — [Journalism Salute](#).

- Email — journalismsalute@gmail.com



College Media Review / September 11, 2023 / Feature / career, journalism, journalism salute, podcast



College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

Training students how to report on mental health



College media is in a prime position to be at the forefront of reporting responsibly on mental health

By Ben McNeely

NC State was reeling. Students were stunned, parents were worried, and administrators were trying to respond.

My alma mater, NC State University, went through hell last academic year.

Fourteen students died, seven of which were deaths by suicide. In April, two students took their own lives within a 24-hour period.

[perfectpullquote align="full" bordertop="false" cite="" link="" color="" class="" size=""]September is [National Suicide Prevention Month](#)[/perfectpullquote]

In the midst of all this, I interviewed for my current job as editorial advisor. In those interviews, I knew training the students on how to report on mental health was essential. That meant coming up with a training module that was grounded in best journalistic practices, as well as busting myths that surround mental health.

 **Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain**

Suicide is a major public health concern and a leading cause of death in the United States. Suicide affects people of all ages, genders, races, and ethnicities. Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it can be preventable. [Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives.](#)

Here are 5 steps you can take to #BeThe1To help someone in emotional pain:

- 1. ASK:** Are you thinking about killing yourself? It's not an easy question but studies show that asking at-risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.
- 2. KEEP THEM SAFE:** Reducing a suicidal person's access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.
- 3. BE THERE:** Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Research suggests acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.
- 4. HELP THEM CONNECT:** Save the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline number (call or text 988) and the Crisis Text Line number (74747) in your phone so they're there if you need them. You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
- 5. STAY CONNECTED:** Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

For more information on suicide prevention:
www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention
www.bethe1to.com

 **NIH** National Institute of Mental Health
 NIMH Identifier No. OM 22-4315
 Revised 2022

It's long been known that mental health issues often manifest between the ages of 18 to 24. And despite the advances in science and insurance parity between physical and mental health, barriers to treatment still exist and misinformation still abounds.

The way the media covers mental health and its constituent issues—illness, addiction, suicide—can have a profound effect on the audience.

College media is in a prime position to be at the forefront of reporting responsibly on mental health. Mental health issues affect our target audience profoundly. Responsible reporting goes a long way to busting myths, connecting people to resources, and providing hope.

As a professional journalist, I've covered my share of death. Much of my coverage relied on instinct and following good ethics: Being respectful of friends and family, minimizing harm, and writing in plain, thoughtful language.

As soon as I came on board at NC State Student Media, my director, Patrick Neal, and I made it a department goal to create this training with an eye toward making it required for all student employees who work with our newspapers.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:
The behaviors listed below may be some of the signs that someone is thinking about suicide.

TALKING ABOUT:	FEELING:
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Wanting to die ▷ Great guilt or shame ▷ Being a burden to others 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live ▷ Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage ▷ Unbearable emotional or physical pain
CHANGING BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS:	
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Making a plan or researching ways to die ▷ Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items, or making a will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast ▷ Displaying extreme mood swings ▷ Eating or sleeping more or less ▷ Using drugs or alcohol more often
<p>If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.</p> <p>988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Call or text 988 Chat at 988lifeline.org</p> <p>Crisis Text Line Text "HELLO" to 741741</p>	
<p>www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention NIH Identifier No. OM 22-4316</p>	

As I set out to create this training, I needed to balance my own experiences with best practices. There are plenty of places to find best journalistic practices out there when it comes to mental health, but they are in disparate places. You have to go hunting for them.

I also wanted to show the students the “why” behind responsible reporting on mental health—that what they do can save lives.

I reached out to my friend Rose Hoban, founder and editor of [North Carolina Health News](#). Rose is an award-winning journalist and former public health nurse who started her own news and analysis outlet focusing on health news and policy.

In February, I brought Rose and her mental health reporter Taylor Knopf to campus for a workshop on reporting on suicide. They shared their experiences and best practices with the students.

Along with leaning on Rose and Taylor’s expertise, I took it upon myself to get up to speed as well.

I took an online course from Johns Hopkins University school of public health on responsible reporting on suicide (free through [Coursera](#)). I also took a journalism educator training program with [Reporting on Addiction](#) over the summer.

Turning to sources like [Reporting on Suicide](#), [The Carter Center](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [Dart Center for Trauma and Journalism](#), all that gave me the foundation to create this training module that focuses on myth-busting and best practices.



Download Ben's presentation.

Key takeaways of the training:

- The American public sees mental health as a major crisis, especially among young people.
- Suicide is a leading cause of death in the country and a public health issue. Report on it as such.
- Young adults report they struggle with anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues, but also say they have trouble getting access to the resources they need.
- Responsible reporting can mitigate suicide contagion. Sensationalizing mental health issues, addiction, and suicide makes the problem worse.
- Solutions-oriented stories on mental health can offer hope for people who are affected.
- Never make assumptions about anyone's experience with mental health. While symptoms may be universal, everyone's story is different.
- Remember what Ted Lasso says: Be curious, not judgmental.
- Taking care of yourself as a journalist is just as important as reporting the story.

I built in breaks in the training for students to take a breather and decompress a little before carrying on. This is heavy stuff, after all.

I also share a little bit about my own struggles with anxiety, depression, and alcohol use with the students as well. My goal with that is to normalize talking about mental health. You never know what someone else is feeling, so being open about your struggles may be the inspiration someone needs to get help, even if they never tell you about it.

Grappling with the mental health of students is a challenge for higher education institutions across the country. I see this training as a way that student media outlets can support their peers and push campuses to take the issue seriously.

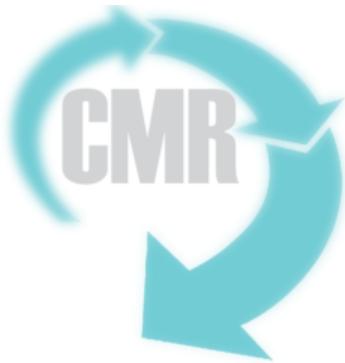
By sharing this with other college media advisors, my hope is that others can take it, tailor it to their needs, and empower their students to report on this important issue responsibly and compassionately.



Ben McNeely takes notes during the announcement of a new university chancellor at North Carolina State University in 2004.

*Ben McNeely has practiced journalism in some form and fashion since he was 14 years old. He spent his career at local North Carolina newspapers, and 10 years as a political producer at Spectrum News 1. He is the editorial advisor for student media at North Carolina State University.
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College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

An FAQ on how to write an FAQ



Frequently Asked Questions alternative story format popular with reporters, readers

By Andy Bechtel

Readers of student media often have questions about things in the news. College journalists can provide answers using the “frequently asked questions” format.

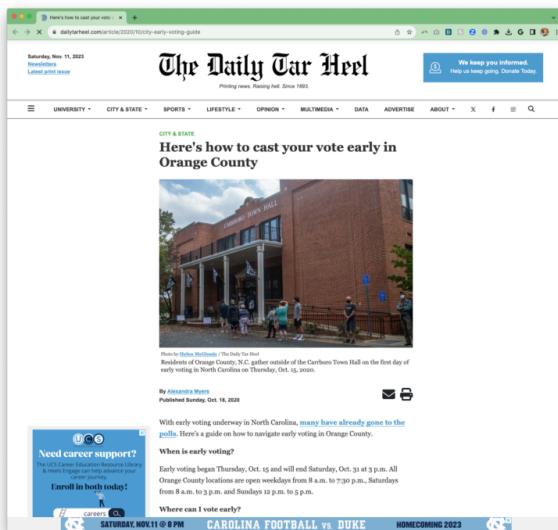
Korie Dean, a reporter at *The News & Observer* in Raleigh, North Carolina, specializes in FAQ stories. She’s reported and written them about topics such as COVID restrictions, health insurance and bans on outdoor burning.

“You might find yourself asking questions about a new law that’s gone into effect, a confusing term that’s related to the news of the day, a viral post on social media or just about anything else,” says Dean, a 2021 graduate of the journalism school at UNC-Chapel Hill. “Those topics make for fantastic FAQs, because they’re things people undoubtedly have questions about and will be searching (literally searching on Google — SEO is key!) for answers on.”

So when should you try a FAQ, and how do you put one together? Here’s what you need to know.

QUESTION: What is an FAQ post?

Answer: A news story, press release or web page that’s structured in a question/answer format. Just like this post.



The Daily Tar Heel

Q: Why use the FAQ format?

People often have common questions about an event, organization, issue or trend. The FAQ format is easy for readers to search and to skim for information that they are looking for.

“The common tie is that people will want the information in an easy-to-understand, digestible format that quickly equips them with the information they need,” says Dean, who wrote for student publications Media Hub and The Durham Voice while a student at UNC.

Q: When should we use the FAQ format?

The FAQ format is handy for “teachable moments” — like a “how to” guide about a topic. It’s also useful for information about an announcement, policy change, etc.

Q: How do we brainstorm an FAQ story?

Use the “how what why when where” of news judgment to anticipate reader questions. You can also solicit questions from your readers using social media. That brainstorming and information gathering will be the framework for your FAQ.

“You want your story to be a one-stop shop for answers about the given topic, making sure to address as many questions as possible, anticipating what questions readers will have to begin with, as well as additional questions they might have after learning the basic facts that you present,” Dean says.



Washington Post

Q: How do we start an FAQ story?

Write a brief lead of one or two paragraphs to introduce your topic. Consider using the direct address, speaking to the reader like a friend or guide. Then go directly into the questions and answers.

Q: How do you organize an FAQ story?

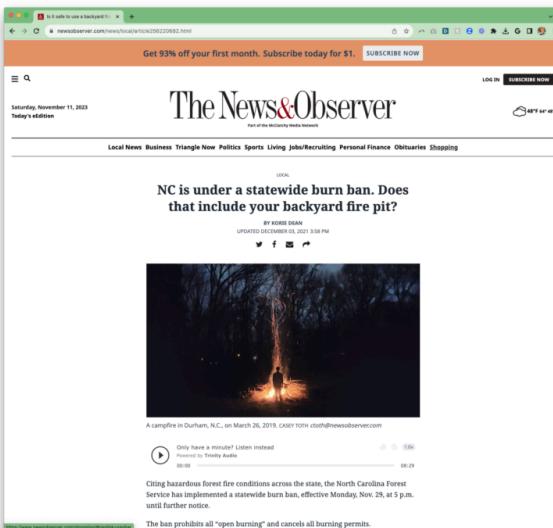
Order the questions in a way that makes sense. Start with the fundamentals — often a “what is” question works well. Each answer should lead naturally to the next question, like a conversation or interview.

“One of the first stories I did in my current job was [an explainer on the Emerald Ash Borer](#), an invasive pest that’s killing ash trees across North Carolina. I could have easily started that story by jumping straight into questions about the bug and the harm it causes — but as I started writing, I realized that I, personally, didn’t even

really know what an ash tree was or what one looked like,” Dean says. “I figured there was a good chance many readers would have the same experience.”

Q: How long should each question/answer be?

Each question should be one sentence of no more than 30 words. Lengths of answers may vary, but aim to be concise. Don’t forget to check for Associated Press style, grammar, etc.



Raleigh News & Observer

Q: How long should an FAQ story be?

It depends. The more concise, the better. But sometimes people have a lot of questions! If your FAQ is getting long, consider dividing it into categories with subheads.

Q: How should the FAQ end?

One option is to use a “call to action.” How can readers learn more or participate? Another option is to end with a “what’s ahead” or “what’s next” question, which foreshadows more news on the topic.

“I try to always list resources at the end of the story where readers can go for more information, if needed,” Dean says. “That could be contact information for someone at a government agency or just additional online resources.”



Andy Bechtel

Andy Bechtel teaches writing and editing at the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at UNC-Chapel Hill. He joined the faculty in 2005 after about a dozen years in newspaper journalism. Bechtel is the author of two online courses for Poynter Institute’s News University: one on the fundamentals of editing and another on alternative story forms. He has also written reviews and articles for publications such as Journalism & Mass Communication Educator and Tracking Changes, the newsletter of [ACES: The Society for Editing](#).



College Media Review / November 11, 2023 / Feature / FAQ, journalistic writing, media, reporting

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College Media Review

Journal of the College Media Association

Photographers document city fizzing with excitement



23 photojournalists document the personality of Atlanta, host city of fall convention

Whether the photographers knew Atlanta as the “Chicago of the South” or “ATL” or just “The A,” their assignment was simple: “[C]reate an image — worthy of a postcard — showing that Atlanta is a city that’s always fizzing with excitement.”

In Atlanta, even the buildings have personality. Show the personality of people interacting with those buildings. Or parks. Or vendors. Or visitors.

The photographers on-site at the [College Media Association](#) and [Associated Collegiate Press](#) national convention in Atlanta definitely set out to cover those visitors, vendors, parks and buildings to document the cultural diversity of the city.



SECOND PLACE AND CLASS FAVORITE: Ashanti Thomas, Eastern Illinois University (Greg Cooper); althomas5@eiu.edu

Mauro Espinosa, 4, gets his picture taken by his mother Janette Espinosa in front of the Children's Museum, Oct. 31, in Atlanta.

There were no restrictions on where the photographers could take their photos other than the images had to be taken inside the city limits of Atlanta. And they must have

been taken after 9:50 a.m., Oct. 30 and before noon Nov. 1 at which time the photographers had a large-group critique led by Sam Oldenburg of Western Kentucky University.

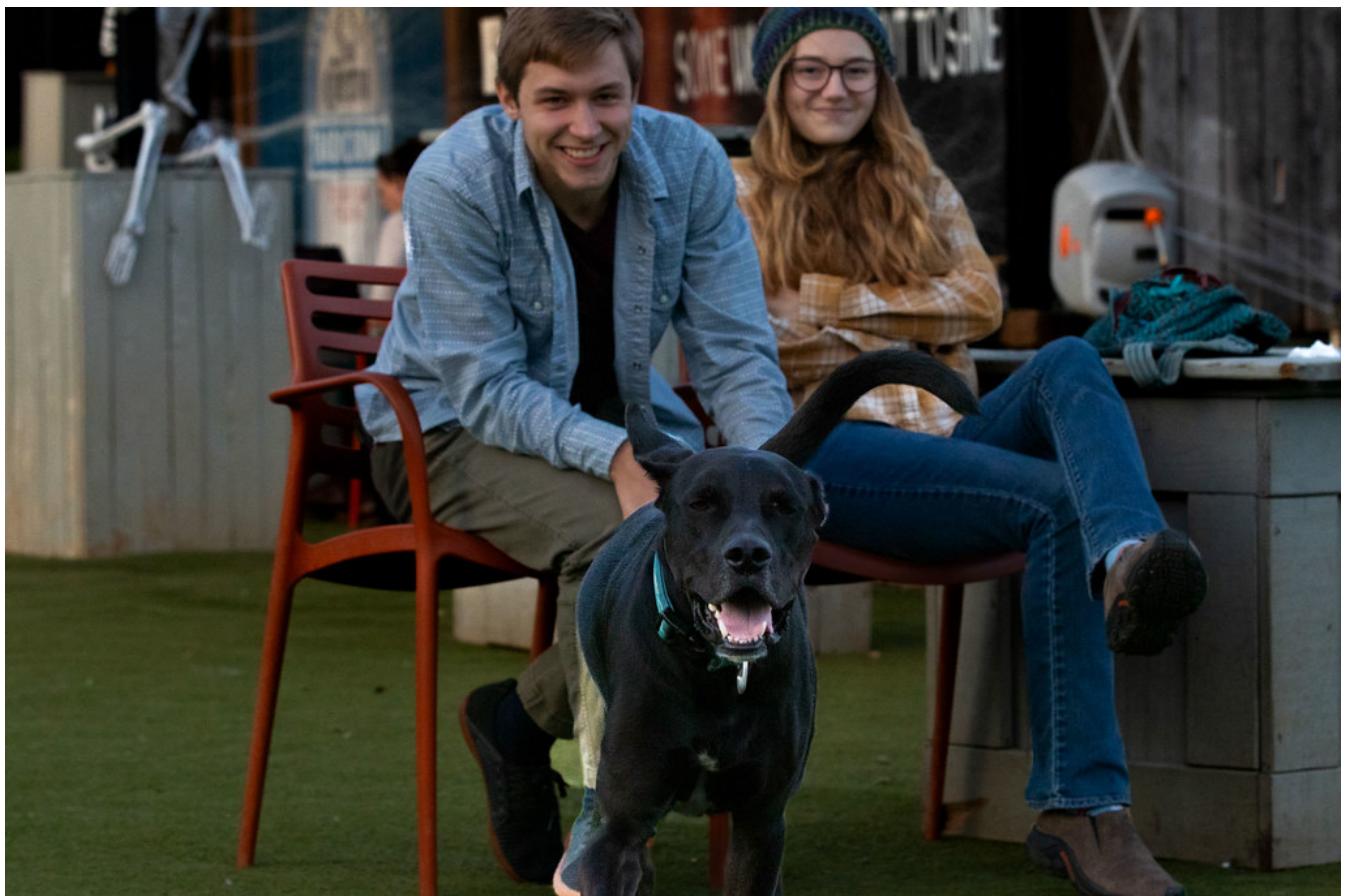
In all, photographers submitted 45 images into the contest.



THIRD PLACE: David Katzenmaier, Appalachian State University (Susan Davis, adviser) *Add A Splash of Fun to Your Day!* Many visitors such as Mari, just seeking a spritz of excitement, visit the fountains at Centennial Park. Mari said she has always wanted to see historic landmark and loved getting up close and personal. She said, “What’s a little water on a pretty fall day? It’s fun.”

- **FIRST PLACE:** Alex Hoben, Tarrant County College (Chris Whitley, adviser)
- **SECOND PLACE and CLASS FAVORITE:** Ashanti Thomas, Eastern Illinois University (Greg Cooper, adviser)
- **THIRD PLACE:** David Katzenmaier, Appalachian State University (Susan Davis, adviser)

[VIEW](#) gallery of images.



ON-SITE CRITIQUE:

Sonya Singh, David Levy, Sam Oldenburg

JUDGES:

Candace Bowen, Carrie Webbenhurst, Casee Harl, Cecil Witherspoon, Danny Fulgencio, Debra Klevens, Eliot Aust, Elise Carlson, Emily Arnold, Eric Thomas, Erin Martin, Greg Cooper, Hillary Warren, Hunter Doughty, Jacob Wilken, Jane Blystone, Jeff Grimm, Jessica Bramer, Jim Domke, John Beale, John Knaur, Julie Barker, Justin Turner, Kelly Buckner, Kelly Furnas, Margaret Sorrows, Mark Webber, Meagan Abo, Michelle Rivera, Pedro Cabrera, Robert Muilenburg, Sam Oldenburg, Stacy Short, Shannon Oden, Todd Maisel, Tom Hallaq, Tucker Love

HELPERS AT OPENING:

Sonya Singh, Robert Muilenburg, Kevin Kleine, David Levy, Greg Cooper, Sam Oldenburg



Bradley Wilson / November 15, 2023 / College Media / college media, photography, photojournalism