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The Assignment: How the Videographer's Role is Shaped by the Job Assignment

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THE ASSIGNMENT:
HOW THE VIDEOGRAPHER'S ROLE IS SHAPED BY THE JOB ASSIGNMENT

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Bachelor of Arts with

Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

By:

Ian J. Dowty

Western Kentucky University
2015

CE/T Committee:

Professor Bradley Pfranger, Advisor

Dr. Victoria LaPoe

Ms. Allison Smith

Approved by

Advisor
School of Journalism
and Broadcasting

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2015

ABSTRACT

I am a videographer. Yes, my degree will qualify me as a reporter, someone familiar with the inner workings of a news station. However, I posit that the School of Journalism and Broadcasting does not give you a career, but rather a skillset that prepares you for a range of jobs. My discipline taught me how to articulate my thoughts in a clear, concise manner, which translates well to script or track writing. In addition, I have technical abilities that enable me to handle video and audio equipment proficiently. Combining these capabilities with soft skills I honed over the past few years on the Forensics team, I am what the industry would call a one-man-band. As such, I can implement each strength in the best way I see fit. The variable that most often alters how I manage my attributes on an individual production is the job assignment. Even though I may use the same equipment, the job assignment changes the storytelling process. My thesis project further delves into this idea by drawing on personal examples, as well as, times in the media where someone crossed the precarious line between agenda driven production and news media.

Keywords: videography, reporting, news, storytelling, ethics

Dedicated to my high school forensics coach, Melissa Newton Loepp.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would be remiss by failing to highlight the contribution of those who supported and challenged me throughout my four year journey at Western Kentucky University. My loving family, teammates, and faculty members kept me motivated and made my undergraduate experience a fruitful chapter in life.

Western Kentucky University's Journalism and Broadcasting program is nationally known for producing high caliber work, which is indicative of the quality of education and the level of dedication professors have to help students succeed. I would like to specifically thank my advisor, Brad Pfranger, and Dr. Victoria LaPoe; they were instrumental in getting this project off the ground and are continually refining the way I cover news.

While the education I received in the classroom was certainly valuable, the resources available and experience I gained at the Technology Resource Center, were critical. I started working for the university at the TRC my first semester at WKU. Josh Marble and Julie Taylor are largely responsible for giving me a foundation of technical skills. In addition, I used TRC equipment to shoot, edit, and produce the DVD included.

When I met Dr. Craig Cobane in high school, I had no idea how much of a role he would play in my career path. I am forever grateful he helped facilitate my education abroad. Ultimately, he opened the door to client based videography and inspired me to

juxtapose the piece I produced for the Office of International Programs with a news piece I produced for NewsChannel12 and the Extra Point.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Jace Lux and the WKU forensics team. I would not have left the state of Kansas, pursued broadcast communications, or become the person I am today had they recruited someone else. Forensics will forever have a place in my heart. The community and all it fights for is truly inspiring.

VITA

August 19, 1993.....Born – Wichita, Kansas

2007-2011.....Valley Center High School
Valley Center, Kansas

2010.....Prairie Schooner Mate

2011.....Valedictorian

2011.....FBLA Nationals

2011.....DECA Nationals

2011.....NFL Finalist

2011-2014.....WKU Forensics Team

2012-2015.....Dean’s Council of Students

2013.....Jarve Honors College Award

2013-2014.....Study Abroad Scholarship

2013.....DELO Scholarship

2013.....Gilman Supplemental Award

2013.....Travel Abroad Grant

2014.....International Multimedia Grant

STUDY ABROAD

2012.....	Cordoba, Spain
2013.....	Cuba
2013.....	Rome, Italy
2014.....	Trinidad and Tobago
2014.....	Paris, France

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Broadcast Communications

Minor Field: French

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Media	
- Attached CD contains the client project, sound on tape tease, and news package	
- Visible online at ianjdowty.wordpress.com	

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A peculiar trend I noticed as I progressed in my discipline was that with each passing year, my interest in being a reporter diminished, but my perceived value in course content increased. I fell in love with what I was doing, as far as, interviewing people, manipulating a camera, and editing footage in postproduction. However, when communicating to the public via a news outlet, I found there are additional constraints in the storytelling process that in my opinion pigeonhole the videographer.

For example, time, in the context of a deadline, and ratings are two pressures inherent to the industry (Frost, 2013, p. 322). Social media and the increasing access to the internet means people can retrieve information faster than ever. The obvious implication is the news industry must try to keep up to remain relevant. There is already pressure to turn stories for a time-sensitive deadline, but this additional expectation alarms me. It is not that news stations should avoid including social media. I have witnessed it used as an excellent method of cross promotion to shift viewers from one platform to the next. Although, if reporters are making time the paramount factor and battling the conciseness of social media, then they are not focused on the quality of their product. If a reporter has to sacrifice something in order to get a story on the air, creativity and cinematography are the first to suffer.

In addition, ratings tend to drive the type of content (Frost, 2013, p. 47). News stations need viewers. The School of Journalism and Broadcasting makes it clear that bolstering an element of a story for the sake of making it more interesting is unethical. Even so, it is understandable that reporters feel the temptation to prime people on camera or unnecessarily pull on the emotional strings of the audience. Unless news media give up and only cover dramatic, exciting events, we are left with a catch 22. It's possible to make dry, but important issues intriguing; one must simply present it in a unique and fascinating fashion, but that takes time. For instance, there was a student hit by a vehicle this semester while crossing a road on campus. I did an initial story on crosswalk safety and a follow up story with the pedestrian from the accident. News of someone getting hit catches people's attention with ease. However, to make footage of crosswalks interesting, I did time-lapses of several locations on campus. To create a time-lapse, one shoots for a long period of time and then speeds up the footage while editing. I added a counter, seen in Figure 1.1, which tallied the number of pedestrians who used the crosswalk in less than two and a half minutes. This process took a visually bland but important issue, and made it informative and engaging; unfortunately, the industry demands the captivating product within a narrow deadline. This is not always feasible and why I started exploring client-based work.



Figure 1.1: Still from crosswalk time-lapse

CHAPTER 2

EQUIPMENT

For the sake of juxtaposing the storytelling process and my role in the two job assignments, I wanted my equipment to act, in a sense, as a constant. In other words, I used the same camera, microphones, and software in both projects. People can truly see how the nature of the assignment dictates how I utilize my skillset rather than attributing a conscious choice as a mere coincidental swap of lenses.

I use a Canon 5D mark iii. This is a DSLR camera, the type of camera more commonly found in the photojournalist department. I purchased this camera for two reasons. YouTube star, DevinSuperTramp, piqued my interest by producing many promotional pieces using a DSLR. Each video had stunning videography and beautiful composition. After researching different specifications, I determined the Canon 5D mark iii had the versatility necessary to effectively work in a variety of multimedia industries. Accessibility was the second reason. Broadcast students, at the time, were not given the opportunity to shoot with DSLRs; the curriculum has since changed. I am interested to see if more students will pursue a similar route by studying broadcast communications, but use equipment stereotypically associated with photojournalists. To stabilize the camera, I use a lightweight Sunpak tripod.

The rest of my equipment I rented from the Technology Resource Center in MMTH. This includes a microphone shoe, shotgun microphone, wireless lavalier

microphone, an eighth inch to double XLR splitter cable, and an XLR to eighth connector cable. The cabling is necessary to separate the two audio channels, left and right. Once separated, I can collect natural sound with the shotgun microphone. This microphone is considered directional because it picks up sound in a narrow angle in the direction the microphone is pointed. I clip it to the shoe, which is simply a holder that screws onto the top of the camera. Natural sound is an important layer because it helps build a scene by isolating the sound of what is in the frame of the video. The lavalier, on the other hand, is an omnidirectional microphone, picking up sound in all directions. It is possible to clip it onto elements in the story, but is generally used in an interview setting. The two channels merge editing the audio and it is time to export the final video. Keeping them separate is beneficial because an individual can manipulate them independently, such as, dropping the natural sound or raising the interview audio to better hear someone on camera; other situations might call for the natural sound taking prominence if it's highly relevant to the story. In essence, if a reporter is referencing fast cars, they should hear a screeching wheel or engine rev.

When it comes to editing, I use the Adobe suite, which includes Premiere, a video editing software. This is another case where my practice deviates from the bulk of students in the discipline. I took hours of tutorials and practiced editing, even taught editing on Premiere while working at the Technology Resource Center. I learned how to use Avid and took two classes where we were required to use it as an editing platform. I prefer the way Avid stores files. In my experience, audio buffers faster and it doesn't have to conform footage, basically remember the file location, like Premiere. Regardless,

I know more features on Premiere, I'm a quicker editor when using it, and find the Adobe suite of applications more streamlined.

CHAPTER 3

CLIENT ASSIGNMENT

Dr. Cobane, the director of the Honors College, approached me in the 2014 spring semester. He informed me of a group of students traveling to Trinidad and Tobago as part of an African American Studies class. At the time, it was a new program and there was a new grant, the Diversity Abroad Grant, to help those students and students in the future study abroad. It was my understanding he wanted to document the program and invite a wider range of demographics to pursue studying abroad. We met weeks before the program to discuss my role. Over the following weeks we corresponded through emails. I completed an initial video to get feedback on direction and content. The key note on this video production is that we had an agenda. Agenda tends to absorb a negative connotation, but in this sense, I mean to say there was a message and purpose going into the project. Having that frame of mind changed how I interacted in groups, experienced the program, and certainly how I captured specific shots. Figure 3.1 is screenshot of my editing workspace for this project.

At times I had to distance myself from an event, in order to display students experiencing immersive education. Although I was also a WKU student, my role switched to more of an outside perspective. In Figure 3.2, one can see my knee is covered in black goo. It clung to my skin after kneeling in a soft portion of pitch to get the photo showed in Figure 3.3. I had to position myself low to the ground to get the full drip of tar.

In addition, I moved forward and to the left of the main group. This gave me a better vantage point. The still photo is far from perfect, but I didn't adjust it in Photoshop. I wanted people to notice the sky. On the left it is completely blown out, or white. On the right, blue hues are present. Not only did this angle give more color to the background, it picks up light on the student's face. If I had opted to not get tar on my knee and stood with the rest of class, the subject would be a silhouette, and the sun would've blown out all the color in the sky.

Both the student's narrative and my narrative are part of Pitch Lake, as a story. However, the client in this case only wished to communicate the students' narratives. As a reporter, I would have used the moment in Figure 3.2 as part of a standup. The reporter is concerned with building the entire scene. Even though none of the other students had to use a substance similar to WD40 to remove tar from their legs, it had happened to people on other tours, or I could've use the historical significance by linking it people who were entirely tarred and feathered in the past. Searching for ways to make a demonstration, add new information, or bridge two parts of a story is a reporting process. While I could have easily incorporated that incident into a news package, the client-based producer in my head said it doesn't concern your client, it doesn't matter.

On the other hand, I had to be careful not to exclude myself from the student activities. In order to accurately represent the student's experience, I had to know exactly how they felt. This sentiment manifested in two different ways. Figure 3.4 shows me licking a leaf. The guide told our group that the black mangrove produced salt on its leaves. There was a woman sitting next to me who tasted the leaf. I did the same because it gives me insight into what transpired within her head. This also humanizes the

storyteller making the subjects more natural and genuine around the camera. While it is important to capture natural moments in the news industry, if not done carefully, spending time with a subject can hurt the reporter.

If you'll notice, I interviewed a student, using him as a character and letting his audio guide the piece. Finding a character is an effective storytelling method I learned from broadcasting; yet, the relationship with the character builds slightly different. As a reporter, one runs the risk of compromising a professional line. When dealing with a client, being professional is still a concern, but there is less public scrutiny and more room to befriend the subject. However, if a news story focuses on a cultural group, ethnic group, minority group, involves working with police, or even takes place in certain geographic locations, time and trust are essential to helping a contact open up in front of a camera. "Those from ethnic minority cultures may require building the relationship first before sharing information. Without trust fully established, the information is not forthcoming" (Whitehouse, 2002). Depending on the news beat, or a specific group assigned to the reporter, this trust evolves differently.

In postproduction, I manipulated text on title pages to convey a designed message to the audience. There were cosmetic errors due to negligence such as misspellings; however, I also had to change the order of thank yous because it suggested a different level of contribution. In addition, I used title slides to give descriptions of the Diversity Abroad Grant and to explain how the service project abroad worked. I have used graphics in news before, but never to prime the audience. This isn't to say the text in the first client production is falsified. Rather, it encourages further action be it studying abroad or

looking into the grant. Benign as it is, this subtle influence is an unethical form of agenda setting in the news industry.



Figure 3.1: Screenshot of client workspace



Figure 3.2: Tar leg



Figure 3.3: Student at Pitch Lake



Figure 3.4: Black mangrove leaf

CHAPTER 4

NEWS ASSIGNMENT

At the beginning of the semester, all the students of our capstone class, depending on their track, were assigned days to air their news packages. The stories are up to the student to find, write, shoot, and edit. Given the fresh nature of news, people generally make appropriate preparations a week before the deadline. Breaking news requires immediate action like the name suggests. On the other hand, there are some pieces that carry the same relevance regardless of when the air date is. People can complete these stories weeks in advance. Needless to say, I didn't go into spring break prepared to cover the story in Figure 4.1. All I knew is that I signed up to take a canoeing trip with ORAC, the outdoor recreational group at WKU, and I had a story due the following Tuesday. I couldn't find a timeless piece the weeks leading up to spring break and I didn't want to rely on breaking news taking place the Monday after getting back.

I went to the trip's info meeting knowing that I would have to find a story, but as far as direction and content, I didn't have any expectations. After meeting the group, I thought I might have a lead. There was a couple going on the trip. It was interesting they would choose to go camping and canoeing. They were going to be cold, dirty, and placed in a tent with a third person. This isn't exactly the ideal couple's retreat or typical beach party you find on spring break. It could have been an intriguing story, but it would

essentially be a recap of the trip from the eyes of a couple. In my opinion, running with that angle would be easy but not rigorous reporting, lacking in merit.

It wasn't until the second night I thought of the angle I ended up pursuing. I was sitting by the campfire and I heard two track athletes discussing when and where they were going to exercise. I had just canoed a few miles and hiked a couple of hours with them, so I was curious when I heard them debating running into the woods. Instantly, I switched mental tracks to tell their story of training in the backcountry. It pertained to WKU athletics and presented an opportunity for a follow up. In other words, this angle generates future content because I could reference the track meet for which they were training. Unlike the client-based production, where I fulfilled a contract and was finished, news is an always evolving entity.

One key note regarding my role as a storyteller when covering this piece is that I let the narrative unfold itself. Sure, reporters know where a story is heading. They, and myself included, build a tentative script mentally. This helps, on a basic level, determine who you need to talk to and how you build the composition; for example, I knew that if I was talking about the track athletes, I would need to talk with their coach or trainer of some sort. In addition, I knew that I would need to keep an eye out for when the two runners encountered different elements or prepared to exercise. When I interviewed their coach, she asked if I wanted her to comment on the risk of injury. I made it clear that I didn't want or hope for a specific soundbite. I simply asked, why did you allow them to go on the canoeing trip and what were you thinking when they first approached you about going? She opened up and addressed the health concern, but added her desire for the two students to enjoy other facets of college, something I never anticipated and could have

missed if I guided her answer and unethically built up the risk factor for drama. When story angles randomly appear or a soundbite surprises the reporter, it's excellent. With that being said, there is a degree of comfort knowing exactly what the message is and how you plan to obtain it, which are amenities in client work.

The only times where I personally contributed to the story were in my sound on tape tease, or SOT tease, and standup. A SOT tease is most commonly a clip, roughly ten seconds, of the reporter giving an idea of what to look forward to later in the show. They might give a location and brief idea of the subject matter without giving away too much information. A standup is when the reporter bridges two elements of a story, does a demonstration, or provides additionally pertinent information within fifteen seconds on camera. Together, in this particular instance, they acted as book ends. The SOT tease, depicted in Figure 4.2, provided a unique setting and introduction to the story. Then, the standup at the end functioned as a way of tying up the story while ending on a pleasant and unique shot at Whittaker's Point seen in Figure 4.3. My standup took place on the rock lookout, which may not be obvious. If I would have had more time, I might have been able to achieve the perspective you get from Figure 4.3 in the portion where I was on camera.

Similar to the client-based production, nature presented some challenges. I didn't encounter a lake of pitch, but I had to shoot while on the river. I used a tripod and camera in the boat when capturing the scarlet ibis at the bird sanctuary in Trinidad, so I felt confident enough to carry the equipment on to the Buffalo River. The canoe was narrower, with a more rounded hull, making it easier to flip. The Buffalo was also flowing at a faster rate. I didn't anticipate these variables, but after a few hours on the

water, I felt comfortable in getting out the electronics. When I deemed it unsafe or too risky to have it out, I stowed it in a rolled up dry bag.



Figure 4.1: Screenshot of news workspace



Figure 4.2: Still from SOT tease



Figure 4.3: Still of Whittaker's Point

CHAPTER 5

APPLICATION

Within my discipline, there is a law and ethics course. This course aims to inform students of their rights, rights of others, and how our freedoms apply to this industry. Students must develop a code of ethics, which is based on or directly reflects the NPPA, National Press Photographers Association, and the RTDNA, Radio Television Digital News Association's code of ethics. While people are expected to uphold ethics in any workplace, the decisions of people in the news industry can dictate how the public behaves. BBC, Reuters, and the American Press Institute's Media Center conducted a study, polling 10,000 people in ten countries, including the United States, showing 61 percent of citizens trust the media more than their governments (2006). This percent, is of people proclaiming their trust in the media. Daniel Kahneman explains that people have a subconscious trust as well.

Kahneman is most notable for receiving the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 2002. He delineates two systems of thinking. System 1 acts automatically and quickly, with little effort (Kahneman, 2011, p. 20). Often times, System 1 is associated with intuition and is lazy. System 2 requires greater attention to mental activities that require more effortful computations (Kahneman, 2011, p. 21). This system is associated with concentration and deliberate choice. The two systems of thinking affect broadcasters and the audience.

Broadcasters are used to having deadlines. System 1 searches for routines that can speed up the process to make deadlines. In Chapter 3, I discuss the time required to gain the trust of a minority group. When a new story develops within that minority group, System 1 says, instead of spending valuable time making a new relationship, see if your contact within that group can provide any information. I shadowed a reporter my sophomore year to investigate a drug stop along I-135 highway in Wichita, Kansas, where there was a sign saying drug dogs were in use. The reporter questioned the legality of using dogs to sniff cars exiting the highway. He told me there was a lawyer he frequently consults on a time crunch. Within an hour, the lawyer agree to meet for an interview. This thinking isn't inherently bad, but it does open door for cutting corners, when System 2 should dig deeper on a story or double check a fact.

Audiences watching the news have the same System 1 and 2 mental processes. An audience that does not actively fact check the news is relying on System 1. It is not the viewer's job to get the information right, it is the reporter's job, but it can still be dangerous to passively listen to the news. When Jenny McCarthy told CNN that vaccines cause autism, some parents chose not to vaccinate their children, putting the health of the children and others at risk (Nyhan, 2013). News stations used doctors to discredit her claims since her initial appearance, but early fear of vaccines sparked an emotional reaction in System 1. The parents who chose not to vaccinate their children relied on what Kahneman refers to as availability bias. He explains an availability heuristic is when System 1 swaps one question for an easier one and a "dramatic event temporarily increases" the chance of this occurring (Kahneman, 2011, p.130). CNN was asking, is there any validity to what McCarthy is saying? The parents who didn't vaccinate their

children likely asked themselves something to the effect of, what if my child gets autism from vaccines, without consulting System 2 and researching.

Availability biases are not always harmful, but in the news, it can easily compound. For example, an availability cascade is when a “story about a risk catches the attention of a segment of the public, which becomes aroused and worried. This emotional reaction becomes a story in itself, prompting additional coverage in the media, which in turn produces greater concern” (Kahneman, 2011, p.142).

When working with a client, I operate with a code of ethics, but the degree to which people trust me is substantially different. In both client based work and news production, I must get to know people and ethically use and distribute what they say. The glaring difference is that clients trust me to create a specific product; whereas, the public trusts the reporter in me as a source of the truth. I haven’t encountered a moment where I felt the content a client wanted me to produce was dangerous to the public. During my presentation at the Research Experiences and Creative Heights conference this spring, a judge asked me what I do if I have a client with whom I disagree. I said, I would voice my concern in a professional manner because someone else might share the concern. In the end, I would produce how the client wants because he or she is paying me to do a job. Following up that statement, I made it clear that if the content could harm people consuming the media, I reserve the right to turn the client down and would base that decision on my code of ethics. I am not sure how a production company handles situations like these; however, depending on where in the field I end up, it could be an issue I must appropriately address in the future. As of now, my name is my brand, both as a reporter standing by my work and as a contracted videographer.

Brian Williams perfectly illustrates the delicacy of a personality brand. Williams is most known for anchoring NBC's Nightly News. He was suspended six months without pay after admitting to exaggerating an event that transpired while he was in a helicopter in Iraq (Steel, 2015). The story came up in public settings outside the newsroom several times after 2003, the year Williams went abroad. Each time, he recalled the event in a way that was more dangerous than the previous retelling. Once veterans made his errors public, his credibility faltered. People began digging into his past to fact check other stories he covered. Williams serves as a reminder that if I continue to produce news and client work, I must make a clear distinction which videographer is producing the material.

CHAPTER 6

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Thu 2/6/2014 1:58 PM

Wanna go to Trinidad and Tobago over spring break? Email me or come by the office ASAP.

--

Jace Lux, Ed.D.
Director of Forensics
Western Kentucky University

.....
Fri 2/7/2014 11:20 AM

To whom it may concern,

I was recently asked to accompany the group going to Trinidad in March. My role will be to document the experience as a videographer. I was told that funding would be covered by another department; however, I still need admittance to the program. For that reason, you will find the payment section, of the attached application, blank. I am under the impression that an IMG will cover my expenses, but if you need additional information, I will gladly provide it.

Best regards,
Ian Dowty

.....
Thu 2/6/2014 5:06 PM

Ian:

I am thrilled to hear of your interest in applying for an IMG to accompany the student studying in Trinidad over spring break. I think you could do some great work capturing in video and stills the experience of this study abroad program.

We have a lot to do in a very short time, but cced are some people with which you will need to coordinate. As we discussed, you will need to meet some people and get their approval for you to join this program. It is not my program, so I can fund you, but cannot put you on the program.

- 1) Need to put together a proposal of video ideas, etc. related to the theme we discussed today.
- 2) Contact Dr. Ardrey and meet with her and the other faculty involved (show them your work, tell them your ideas, get their ideas, check dates, attend pre-departure, meet students, etc.)
- 3) Work with Abby Leake to fill out the IMG grant.
- 4) See if Wolfgang Brauner can find you a one-credit practicum or independent study for which you to register.
- 5) Sometime soon, we need you to contact Jerry Barnaby and, if everyone is in agreement, get you signed up on the program (i.e., plan ticket, hotel, etc.).

Please remember, for some of the people above this is the first they are hearing about having a videographer accompany this program, so there may be some confusion. Also, we have to do all of this very quickly, so I am relying on you to take the lead on most of these task.

Good luck and let me know if I can be of assistance.

Dr. CTC

Tue 2/11/2014 10:37 AM

This sounds like a fascinating project!

You could sign up for 1h of lower level HON Independent Study. The application is at the link below and the deadline is March 26:

<http://www.wku.edu/honors/forms/independent-study-proposal.php>

Clay,

Could you please confirm that this arrangement would work?

For your HON requirements, you don't need that 1 hour, because you are already done with your electives – but you may need it for funding purposes.

You still need 4h of 300/400 courses, with 3h of those counting towards your major.

And you still need 6h of capstone or 300/400 courses in your major, if you switch out of the thesis track.

You could consider making this program part of your capstone project, if you intend to do one. If so, make an appointment with Dr. Leslie Baylis to explore the options.

Please let me know how else I may help you with this project.

Thanks,

Wolfgang

Wolfgang Brauner
Academic Advisor
Honors College at WKU
Phone: 270-745-2081
<http://honorsadvising.blog.wku.edu/>

Tue 2/11/2014 5:09 PM

Ian,

I just spoke with Dr Motley.

He is willing to create a 1h Independent Study for the 2nd bi-term if he receives your application including a solid project 1 week before the beginning of the 2nd bi-term.

So your application would be due Mar 17, as the 2nd bi-term begins Mar 24.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

WEB

Wolfgang Brauner
Academic Advisor
Honors College at WKU
Phone: 270-745-2081
<http://honorsadvising.blog.wku.edu/>

Mon 2/17/2014 10:23 AM

International Multimedia Grant: A proposal by Ian Dowty.

I will be accompanying the group of students studying in Trinidad from March 5th- 15th, 2014 under the supervision of Dr. Rosa, Dr. Ardrey, and Dr. Foster. My role with the program is to document the experience as a videographer, highlighting its success in providing a unique opportunity for students who may not otherwise be able to study abroad; this includes an emphasis on the academic value of "international reach." I understand that SAGL will have rights to all video/ photographs submitted for the IMG and fully intend to uphold my end of the agreement.

What does that look like?

My energy will be dedicated to creating two videos. Even though both videos will include content collected over the course of the entire trip, they will have an independent focus and different approaches.

Video 1: I aim to create a sentimental/ inspiring piece that delves into the concept of "firsts;" for some, it might be the first time traveling outside the country. What does it mean to see, smell, and taste a different culture, and what does that look like? The vehicle, so to speak, will be a poem. Here is a video that illustrates the narration will

model -->http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Sv_Bv1H7BQ . As for the aesthetic side of the video, I will attempt to capture an organic feel. This may not adhere to the rules students are supposed to follow; however, it has made my role model, Casey Neistat (featured at recent Sundance festival), famous. His work is visible here --> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxfZkMm3wcg> .

Video 2: This video will focus more on the student. I will interview one or two students on location. This will have a beautiful setting and the questions will reveal genuine thoughts and emotions. The flow and content will obviously depend on their responses; however, I will attempt to really draw out the financial opportunities and learning experiences the students have acquired.

Qualifications:

January of 2013, I completed three videos for the honors college, two of which can be seen below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=929wEei-g2M>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wKawCOil40>

In addition, I created a scholarship video project during the summer of 2013 while studying abroad in Italy, which can be viewed here --

> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_EbVt8UmU&feature=c4-overview&list=UUEe8Mq1oqs8w_5lFVcz2bqw

Aside from my video projects abroad, I worked in the Technology Resource Center for two years. It is a lab on campus in which I would teach students how to edit video. This is also where I will acquire the necessary materials to shoot the project and then edit return.

Additional Notes:

I attended the program meeting last week. It was there that I corresponded with Dr. Ardrey.

Mon 2/10/2014 11:24 AM

EXPLORE TRINIDAD!!

We will have a meeting of students participating in the Explore Trinidad trip

Thursday, Feb. 13 at 9:15pm in Grise Hall Room 337.

Questions and information about the logistics of the trip, plane ride, accommodations, scholarships and final funding. We will discuss the course, Blackboard, assignments, in country activities, etc. etc.

We will discuss foodways, cultural dos and don'ts.

This is a mandatory meeting for the students that should last until around 10:30pm.

Bring your PASSPORT so we can make copies.

Dr. Saundra Ardrey
Faculty Leader
Explore Trinidad

Tue 2/11/2014 8:25 AM

Good morning, Dr. Saundra.

I look forward to speaking with you this Thursday. I will be shooting video throughout the trip; however, wanted to ask before simply showing up, would it be okay if I bring my camera to the meeting? I never know when a good shot will present itself.

Best regards,
Ian Dowty

Tue 2/11/2014 9:40 AM

Yes, of course. We have added to the Blackboard for the course. It should appear as AFAM 190-185, Explore Trinidad.

I look forward to talking with you.

Dr. Ardrey

Fri 2/7/2014 3:26 PM

Hi Ian,

I am thrilled that you are applying for the IMG. I have attached the application to this email. As Dr. Cobane said, we need this turned in very soon, however, please do make sure you spend time on the application and turn in a quality proposal and portfolio. Let me know if you have questions. I ask that you complete this by Monday, 2/17.

Kindly,

Abby Leake

Study Abroad Advisor
Office of Study Abroad and Global Learning, Grise Hall 128
Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd #11064
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1064
USA
1.270.745.5334

Fri 2/21/2014 8:07 AM

Hi Ian,

Thanks for stopping by yesterday. Now that I have awarded the money, I will put together a contract for your IMG stating how much money you are receiving and what projects you are completing. I will not have this contract ready until Monday but I can send it to you via email once it is ready.

Have a nice weekend!

Best,

Abby

Sat 3/22/2014 9:48 PM

Dr. Cobane,

I wanted to get some feedback on the first video. The next portion of the email is just a bunch of thoughts I wanted to get out there before you preview it.

I wanted the interview in Trinidad; however, the service project was the last day before we left and I was not able to squeeze the interview in before we departed.

All of the title slides are boring. I will spruce them up, but did I get the information correct?

The last shot after the credits was a good sound bite that I thought you might want. It does not have to go at the end, but as it is, I am likely to leave the sequence as it is and delete that last shot.

Do you want him to mention the Diversity Grant? The other thing about this section is that he talks for 40 seconds without a lay over so if we keep all of it, I will probably lay down some other footage to highlight website links or something.

Overall, it looks grainy. It didn't at the trc, but on my laptop (which has a lower resolution) it looks dull and choppy. How does it look on your computer? I can tweak some export settings to try and get a better result.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LXBmmBDVJ8>

Sorry for the word vomit,

Ian

Mon 3/24/2014 6:15 AM

Ian:

I am currently in Serbia on my way to Kosovo, so I am busy and exhausted. It has taken a while to get access to enough WIFI to watch. Here are some very quick first blush comments.

- I know it is a first draft, but overall a bit disappointed
 - needs a strong "catch" opening.
 - What is the call to action on the video? Go talk to SAGL about study abroad opportunities
 - more descriptive opening screen – TT, ?? students, all but two never studied abroad
 - No one will now what AFAM is need to write out the course name as part of the "catchy" opening
 - needs to have who the speaker is
 - He is talking about service learning, but all we see is a classroom with middle schoolers (?) hugging. What is service learning about that?
 - thank you to OIP and SAGL (not HC)
 - Diversity Abroad Grant – need more information about it
 - List full names of Faculty
 - Need a list of all the students, majors, year, and hometowns at the end of the video
 - Need something that says student's name as he talking, give the proper name to Pitch Lake, etc. yes, the student says the name, but it is lost in the visuals
 - Not a lot of academic content.
 - Needs more explicit OIP WKU branding. Maybe a watermark WKU logo in the corner throughout the video. Not sure.
- Have you watched Sam Oldenbergs Africa videos on our You Tube channel?
- There needs to be an edit between "WKU seems to make \$ available" and "as is previously know the HC makes..." This grant has nothing to do with the HC, so any reference to it needs to be removed.
 - Overall DELO gets a better shoutout than SAGL and OIP received. The latter contributed 4-5 times more funding than DELO contributed.
 - I would move the final section into the body of the video under a new heading. It is a good quote.

Some of the theme above might be handled in other videos (e.g., historic nearly all African American study abroad program funded by a new DAG, etc.). I am not sure your overall thinking.

I will try to get back to you more quickly on the next draft. Also, send the next draft to Andrea.Cheney@wku.edu also.

Dr. CTC

Wed 4/2/2014 1:05 PM

I have been asked to include all the names, majors, and graduating years of the participants who went to Trinidad in the video.

If you wouldn't mind taking thirty seconds to write your first and last name (however you want me to refer to you), major and expected year you are graduating, that would be awesome.

Feel free to email, facebook, or text me 316-670-4815.

BTW, I miss chilling with you all in Trinidad. Simone! Karlos! The meatloaf!

Best,
Ian Dowty

Tue 4/22/2014 2:05 PM

Can you please acknowledge the Diversity Enhancement Committee... see Dr. Miller's comment.

Thank you.
Dr. A

From: Miller, Richard
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2014 9:06 PM
To: Ardrey, Sandra; Schwartz, Rebecca; Greunke, Erin; Barnaby, Jerry; Cobane, Craig
Subject: RE: Video

Sandra,
Wonderful video!! My only disappointment is that the Diversity Enhancement Committee was not acknowledged as a contributor to the DAG Grant.
Maybe next time!!
Richard

Tue 4/22/2014 6:18 PM

I will :) I am waiting to hear from Dr. Cobane so I can properly attribute everyone involved. Thank you. I will notify you as soon as it is complete.

Best,
Ian

Sat 4/26/2014 10:42 AM

Dr. Ardrey,

I wanted to let you know that I gave attribution to the Diversity Enhancement Committee. Now I am just waiting for approval to make it public. I will keep you posted.

Best,
Ian Dowty

Fri 5/9/2014 8:27 PM

Hey there Dr. Cobane,

I hope things are going well. I know you've probably been to three banquets since ours just yesterday, with it being the end of the semester. I just wanted to follow up what we spoke about over dinner. If the video is to your liking I will go ahead and make it public. I might add a WKU logo in the bottom, but I was hoping as far as attribution, I finally got it right. If you wouldn't mind and are able to find the time, I would appreciate anything you think should be addressed in the second video that I failed to touch in the first. Thank you, and I truly mean thank you for this opportunity.

Best,
Ian

Mon 5/12/2014 7:43 AM

Ian:

Couple minor tweaks.

- 1)on Thank you page, second paragraph. Instead of "Ask the Office..." say "Contact Study Abroad and Global Learning for more information about programs and funding"
- 2)Drop oip website from the page.
- 3)can you use a darker font? Maybe black instead of hollow text. The "hollowness" makes it light and is difficult to read on the light colored water and sky.
- 4)I believe Colette and Terri are not WKU, so remove their names.

Overall good job.

Dr. CTC

Sun 3/15/2015 3:26 PM

Hey Brad,

I just wanted to give you a heads up; I am editing a story right now. While I was on the ORAC canoeing trip over spring break, I found out that there were two track athletes on the program. They still had to training even though they were in the back country. I thought it was a better story than what I had so I switched my focus. I am trying to get an interview with their coach tomorrow morning. I will get the script to you as soon as possible, but I thought you should know that I am waiting to hear back from the coach. I think this will be a good one for extra point if you didn't want to run it on NC12.

See you tomorrow!

Ian

Sun 3/15/2015 5:09 PM

Did you go through the track SID?

Sun 3/15/2015 10:02 PM

I don't know what SID is. I can't just email their coach?

Sun 3/15/2015 10:42 PM

If you are doing a story with college athletes, you need to go through the athletic media office. The Sports Information Director is Jeremy Brown. Do you need his email?

Bradley Pfranger

References

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