

JRN275 SPRING 2021

FINAL ASSIGNMENT: Story pitch, interview & FOIA request letter

Instructions/Explanations

INTERVIEW DUE DATE: 8 a.m., Tuesday, April 26 via BlackBoard. (100 pts/10%)

FINAL STORY PITCH DUE DATE: 10 a.m., Thursday, May 6 via BlackBoard. (150 pts/15%)

For this two-part, final assignment, imagine you are an investigative reporter for a newspaper, magazine or TV station and I am your editor-in-chief or news director.

Find and research a topic and/or issue in either Hamden, the local region, Connecticut, or your hometown and provide the following:

INTERVIEW/TRANSCRIPT due 8 a.m., Tuesday, April 27

For this part of the assignment, you will conduct an in-person interview of at least 15 minutes. This interview must be with a *primary source for your final story pitch* (see below for more on that).

This part of the assignment requires you to:

- * Conduct an *in-person (or Zoom)*, one-on-one (solo) interview of at least 15 minutes
- * Interview a professional adult who is not related to you
- * Record the interview
- * Transcribe the interview, (The transcription must include the **subject's contact information**. I will be contacting them to ensure that you were professional, polite and prepared.)
- * File the transcript and attached audio or video file (or link) to Blackboard.

To succeed in this assignment, it is critical to *contact your subject immediately*. You must be professional and polite in all your dealings so as to represent the university, this course and its professor, as well as yourself in the highest manner.

You will prepare for the interview by researching the subject, as well as whatever topic this subject represents. You will dress professionally to the interview, be on time and thank the subject.

FINAL STORY PITCH DUE DATE: 10 a.m., Thursday, May 6

Use the story pitch format on [pp. 44-45 in Gaines](#). This pitch is required to be *at least three pages* and must include key details of the story:

- The most important details – Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? (include in the SCOPE and/or NEED sections),
- Identify and describe **HUMAN** and **DOCUMENTED** sources you would use for the story,
WHO DO YOU NEED TO INTERVIEW? WHY?
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO GET FROM THEM?
WHAT PUBLIC DOCUMENTS DO YOU NEED TO MAKE THIS STORY A REALITY? Be extra specific!

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO FIND IN THEM? WHERE WILL YOU GET THEM?
(Include in the SOURCES section)

- *Direct quotes* you take from the transcription of the interview with your key source to use in a published story (include in the SOURCES section, as well),
- Proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and *AP style*,
- Your account will not include bullet points, but you will write in full sentences for the pitch.

For PRESENTATION, I just want a single story. (No “three-part series,” etc.) But, I do want to know if this is a news story for the *Chronicle*, a broadcast piece for Q30, a package for a local TV news station or an article news magazine, a web piece for either and **what art/graphics/visuals you may need for it**, as well.

If you need to Google or report other information to bolster your story pitch, be sure to note from where you pulled information (*link where required, but attribute regardless*).

- 1.) **FOIA REQUEST LETTER** – Identify from where/whom you will get public documents and write an official FOIA request letter to that department/individual. (See examples in Cullier & Davis and remember the tips we talked about in class.)

As this is a final assignment, no late assignments will be accepted.