Student's Name

Broadcast Journalism

Self-Determined Major Proposal

3.0 or higher GPA

phone number

Advisors: Paul Benzon and Jeffrey Segrave

date of submission

Description of Proposed Self-Determined Major:

I propose a self-determined major in Broadcast Journalism. Broadcast Journalism is the field of news that is broadcast digitally through media such as radio, television, the internet and print. This field has increased in popularity tremendously in the last decade due to the surge in advanced technology. People around the world are getting news by simply turning on their televisions or looking at their phones. I want to be able to take advantage of our technologically-advanced society and study the world of Broadcast Journalism so that I can prepare myself to work in this field.

What I want to do, exactly, is prepare myself to be the face in front of the camera. More specifically, I want to use this major to concentrate on Sports Broadcasting. I want to do half-time reports, pregame and postgame talks, conduct interviews, and talk in front of the camera. Other responsibilities I might have include researching game statistics, analyzing sports news stories, learning about sports history, writing scripts or articles, and announcing play-by-plays. I will provide live on-air coverage of sports to capture the feeling of the game, which ultimately makes or breaks the enjoyment of a game for the audience. I will also be involved with preparing, writing, and presenting news coverage or analysis of sports events to inform fans of the latest happenings in the sports world. This major emphasizes hands-on learning and critical thinking in areas that will prepare me for the field of Broadcast Journalism. By the end of my four years at Skidmore, I want to know what information in the sports world is most important to select for reportage, how to obtain that information, and how to broadcast that information in the most effective and professional way possible. I want to have the skills and knowledge to be able to speak in front of the camera.

In order to achieve this goal, I want to take courses from a variety of the different

departments at Skidmore. Broadcast Journalism is a field that requires a breadth of knowledge from a variety of different areas. For instance, a journalist must know how to write efficiently. In articles about sports or athletes, there is a level of intrigue that writers put in their work. We, as readers, are captured by headlines, by certain words and phrases, and by stories as a whole. The writing courses in this major will provide me with the skills necessary for me to be able to write nonfiction pieces about sports. I will be taking in-depth nonfiction writing courses, as well as Prose Bootcamp, which allows students to simulate being a news writer. Broadcasters and journalists must also have a strong voice that is clear and precise. Broadcasters can be the voice of games. They have to provide the play-by-play action throughout the game, and therefore must be able to speak clearly, have conversation with co-announcers, and be able to improvise. I will be taking courses that will provide me with these skills. I will understand the power of language and develop a free and natural speaking voice, which is necessary for speaking in front of a camera. In the world of Sports Broadcasting and Journalism, knowledge of sports is also crucial. Knowing the culture of sports and the politics behind sports is the basis of Sports Journalism. I will be taking courses that will provide me with the knowledge of sports that I need. Additionally, this field is digitally advanced. It is centered around the media and technology. Sports Broadcasters and Journalists must have knowledge of the media, communications, and digital software.

Syracuse University and Michigan University both have top Broadcast Journalism programs in the country. I want to model my major after both of their Broadcast Journalism majors. Below I have listed courses that are required for Michigan and Syracuse Broadcast Journalism students and Skidmore courses that align with them.

- **Michigan**
    - **JASS 312 - Media Performance:** This course focuses on voice, diction, and

movement for the various media of electronic and digital production. The emphasis is on developing skills in announcing, news reading, on-camera stand ups, voice-overs as well as dramatic interpretation and performance. Students will be exposed to a variety of projects and assignments, along with strategies for developing on-air personalities, voices, and characters. Basics of professional dress and makeup will also be discussed. Students will be expected to submit a professional portfolio of their on-air work at the end of the semester.

    - **Skidmore's Voice and Speech in the Theater TH101 -** The student will learn voice production techniques and theories principally for the actor. This course seeks to develop a free and natural speaking voice in the student and will provide the fundamentals of natural voice placement. Extensive exercises in breathing, support, resonance, flexibility, and projection will be learned toward the development of a personal vocal warm-up.

- **JASS 345-Audio Production:** JASS 345 introduces students to the fundamentals of sound and basic to intermediate audio production. The course includes a theoretical exploration of sound and listening, a foundation in recording technique and technology, audio editing and mixing using digital audio workstations, audio documentary and narrative construction, and sound design for visual media.
    - **Skidmore's Intro to Audio Documentary DS210:** An introduction to the technologies, tools, and skills of creating audio documentaries. Working individually and in small production teams, students will produce original sound works for radio broadcast and podcast and listen to and critically analyze examples in the medium. Students will also learn to research and report a story, observe ethical guidelines and legal norms of permissions, and apply different methods of sculpting an audio experience, telling stories, and representing reality. The course assumes no prior knowledge of audio technologies.
- **JASS 330 - Feature Writing:** An introduction to the writing of feature stories for newspapers and magazines. Students study methods of gathering information and of preparing a manuscript for publication.

        - **Skidmore's EN280 Introduction to Nonfiction Writing:** An introduction to the writing of nonfiction. Writing and reading assignments are geared to the beginning writer of nonfiction prose. Sections may focus on a range of nonfiction genres or on one specific form, such as the personal essay, travel writing, literary journalism, cultural critique, science writing and the arts review.
    - **JASS 457 - American Cinema:** This course will analyze how Hollywood as the nation's dream factory has manufactured fantasies and cultural myths that have constructed the image of American citizenship, both for Americans and non-Americans. It will establish the ideological function of Hollywood texts as providing unifying symbols for a fragmented society.
        - **Skidmore's AM 356 Sports Cinema:** An exploration of feature films and documentaries about sports to understand and appreciate-aesthetically, historically, culturally-the visual discourse of sports. Students will interrogate the cultural context of sports as expressed through visual media and will critically assess films as modes of communication that have their own codes and conventions. Films include Leni Riefenstahl's Olympia (1938), which chronicles and celebrates the 1936 Berlin Olympic games, and several "classic" sport films-among them, Raging Bull (1980) and Hoop Dreams (1994). Students are required to attend a weekly evening film screening.
- **Syracuse**
    - **COM 107 - Communications and Society:** Mass media and their functions.

      Contemporary problems of the media; legal, social, economic, and psychological implications of their relationships with society. Required of all students in the school.
        - **Skidmore's SO 221 Media Sociology:** An exploration of social, political, and economic forces that influence contemporary mass media. Students will examine a range of social scientific methods that have been used to document the nature of media content and understand how it is produced. Topics include the consequences of

concentration in media ownership, the dynamic relationship between producers and consumers of media, and the study of class, race, and gender inequalities in media content.

- **COM 117 - Multimedia Storytelling:** Working in collaborative teams, students write, design and produce short fiction and non-fiction stories using digital media and the Internet. Emphasis on how story structures change with audience and delivery system.
    - **Skidmore's DS113 A or B Storytelling Toolkit: Interview**- Fundamentals of storytelling. Any storyteller, whether evidence-based or creative, needs a toolkit of skills to present a story. These skill-up classes offer students an introduction to basic production and/or post-production skills used in evidence-based or creative storytelling. Students will either bring existing content and apply the new skill, or work with project materials supplied by the faculty member.
    - **Skidmore's DS251D Documentary Film Editing** - The world is full of stories waiting to be told, but what makes a story worth telling, who should tell it, and how one should tell it, are some of the most crucial questions any documentarian must answer. From initial concept through to the final edit, this course will ask students to grapple with this process of documentary development, in order to acquire a robust set of practices from which to tell the stories of the world around us. Major topics include:

      •How to develop, nurture and test a story idea: when to know it has 'legs'

      •The value of Loglines, Treatments and Pitches for conceptualizing story

      •Form and Methodology: is this story best told as a short? Feature? Does it require •archival research? Interviews?

      •How to ethically obtain access to a story

      •Finding the story in the footage—the importance of the editing room

      This course requires no pre-existing knowledge or experience of

documentary practice or technical expertise, and will be of interest to anyone curious about telling documentary stories. Students will work with an archive of previously shot footage to craft a final project, learning basic editing techniques with Adobe Premiere Pro.

- **BDJ 311 - Broadcast and Digital Newswriting:** Basic style and construction of broadcast and digital news stories. Composing and writing radio, television, and web news stories under deadline pressure. Techniques of broadcast interviewing and information gathering.
    - **Skidmore EN228 Prose Bootcamp**- When the essayist Joan Didion was in her twenties, she wrote editorial copy for Vogue magazine on a wide range of subjects. In her forties, she noted that it is "easy to make light of this kind of 'writing,' [but] I do not make light of it at all: it was at Vogue that I learned a kind of ease with words... a way of regarding words not as mirrors of my own inadequacy but as tools, toys, weapons to be deployed strategically on a page." Inspired by Didion's on-the-job apprenticeship, this course will ask you to undertake the work of a professional copywriter or ghostwriter. What might you be asked to compose? The introduction to the documentary "extras" for a television series. The "Our Story" blurb for the website of a local restaurant. A capsule biography for a mayoral candidate. A C.E.O.'s response to a request from Forbes: "Tell us about the biggest mistake you ever made as a leader." The instructor will furnish you with material; with her guidance, you will shape it into publishable or, as the case may be, presentable prose. Expect frequent short assignments, most of them graded.

In short, this major should consist of courses from the following departments: American Studies, English, Health and Human Physiological Sciences, Media and Film Studies, Sociology, and Theater. These departments all contain at least one course that will give me the knowledge and experience I need to become a Broadcast Journalist. American Studies will give me the knowledge I need on sports and sports culture. Media and Film

Studies, along with Sociology, will give me the background I need about the media as well as the ethical understanding of the media. English and Theater courses will work together to provide me with the skill I need to write and produce stories, both written and orally.

Required Courses (*= Already taken):

1. * HP 101 Intro to Exercise Physiology
2. AM 234 American Sports/American Culture
3. AM 356 Sports Cinema
4. TH 101 Voice and Speech in the Theater
5. DS 210 Intro to Audio Documentary
6. MF 101 Intro to Media and Film Studies
7. DS 251D Documentary Film Editing
8. DS113 A or B- Storytelling Toolkit: Interviewing
9. SO 221 Media Sociology
10. SO 227 Social Research Methods
11. EN228 Prose Bootcamp
12. EN 280 Intro to Nonfiction Writing
13. EN 378 Nonfiction Workshop
14. SD 374 Self-Determined Major Final Project Prep
15. ID 371 Self-Determined Major Final Project

Sequences of Courses:

1. Concentration in Sport
    a. HP 101 Intro to Exercise Physiology
    b. AM 234 American Sports/American Culture
    c. AM 356 Sports Cinema
2. Voice/Audio
    a. TH 101 Voice and Speech in the Theater

   b. DS113 A or B- Storytelling Toolkit: Interviewing
   c. DS 210 Intro to Audio Documentary

3. Media and the Studio
   a. MF 101 Intro to Media and Film Studies
   b. DS 251D Documentary Film Editing
   c. SO 221 Media Sociology
   d. SO 227 Social Research Methods

4. Writing
   a. EN228 Prose Bootcamp
   b. EN 280 Intro to Nonfiction Writing
   c. EN 378- Nonfiction Workshop

Disciplinary Breadth of Required Courses:

American Studies, English, Health and Human Physiological Sciences, Media and Film Studies/Documentary Studies, Sociology, and Theater

Semester by Semester Outline:

Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Alt Second Semester Spanish SO 227 Social Research Methods MF 101 Intro to Media and Film Studies ED 334 Curriculum and Instruction	AM 234 American Sports/American Culture EN 280 Intro to Nonfiction Writing SO221 Media Sociology EN228 Prose Bootcamp	AM 356 Sports Cinema EN 378 Nonfiction Workshop DS 210 Intro to Audio Documentary TH 101 Voice and Speech in the Theater SD-374/Self-Determined Major Final Project Prep: SDM Prep Seminar	DS 251D Documentary Film Editing DS113 A or B-Storytelling Toolkit: Interviewing ID 371

HP111 Intro to Exercise Physiology - 4 Credits

- An introduction to the scientific basis of physical activity. Emphasis is placed upon the study of the physiological change and adaptations that occur because of the stress of exercise. Students will be active participants in laboratory experiments that examine the body's response to exercise. Three hours of lecture, two hours of laboratory per week.
- *To focus on Sports in my field, it is necessary to know the ins and outs of the Sport world. To do this, I should have a basic level of knowledge of the human body when it comes to exercising. This class will also make me more knowledgeable on the topic of injury, which happens a lot in sports. This course will provide a knowledge base for someone reporting on injuries, as well as give me knowledge to understand what the human body is capable of and not capable of with the proper training and practice.*

AM 234 American Sports/American Culture - 4 credits - Theory

- A historical examination of 300 years of sport in America as an important expression of culture, conflict, and meaning. Special attention is devoted to the ways in which contemporary sports provide a window into politics, economics, racial and ethnic relations, class formation, and gender identity. Students analyze the ways in which Americans have played, watched, and understood sports and will focus on some of the recurrent cultural values, trends, and symbolism associated with American athletes and public life.
- *This course will give me the experience I need in the concentration of sports. An overview of the sports culture and the history of sports in the United States*

will give me greater knowledge of what I will be broadcasting. I can even bring some of these ideas, such as symbols and trends, into my broadcasts and interviews. I think this foundation on sports is critical for my future career in Sports Broadcast Journalism. I labeled it as a "Theory" course because it will provide me with the critical thinking I need to understand the culture of sports. This course will lead me to think about sports in a newer, and deeper, way. Rather than discussing rules of sports, or scores and stats, this course dives into the cultural, political, and economic drive behind sports.

AM 356 Sports Cinema - 4 credits

- An exploration of feature films and documentaries about sports to understand and appreciate-aesthetically, historically, culturally-the visual discourse of sports. Students will interrogate the cultural context of sports as expressed through visual media and will critically assess films as modes of communication that have their own codes and conclude Leni Riefenstahl's Olympia (1938), which chronicles and celebrates the 1936 Berlin Olympic games, and several "classic" sport films-among them, Raging Bull (1980) and Hoop Dreams (1994). Students are required to attend a weekly evening film screening.
- *Like AM 234, this course will provide me with greater knowledge in the sports area. It is different from AM 234 in the way that it focuses on how sports are portrayed in the media. This aligns with my idea of sports and the media in Journalism. After gaining the understanding I need about sports in AM 234, AM 356 will allow me to use that understanding to write about films based on sports. I will critique and assess movies and films based on sports, using the knowledge I have previously learned.*

TH 101 - Voice and Speech in the Theater - 3 credits - Methodology

- The student will learn voice production techniques and theories principally for the actor. This course seeks to develop a free and natural speaking voice in the student and will provide the fundamentals of natural voice placement. Extensive exercises in breathing, support, resonance, flexibility, and projection will be learned toward the development of a personal vocal warm-up.
- *This course will help me practice more free and natural speaking, which is something that is necessary for on-air jobs such as broadcasting. I labeled it as "Methodology" because speaking well is a skill that is necessary to be a sports broadcaster.*

DS 210 Intro to Audio Documentary - 3 credits – Methodology

An introduction to the technologies, tools, and skills of creating audio documentaries. Working individually and in small production teams, students will produce original sound works for radio broadcast and podcast and listen to and critically analyze examples in the medium. Students will also learn to research and report a story, observe ethical guidelines and legal norms of permissions, and apply different methods of sculpting an audio experience, telling stories, and representing reality. The course assumes no prior knowledge of audio technologies.

- *This course does a lot with audio technology and studio production, which is necessary for my field of inquiry. The catalog description states that the course will teach how to "research and report a story, observe ethical guidelines and legal norms of permissions, and apply different methods of*

sculpting an audio experience…", which are all aspects of Broadcast Journalism. Therefore, I think this course will prepare me for what I will be doing in the field.

DS113 A or B- Storytelling Toolkit: Interviewing - 1 or 2 credits - Methodology

- Fundamentals of storytelling. Any storyteller, whether evidence-based or creative, needs a toolkit of skills to present a story. These skill-up classes offer students an introduction to basic production and/or post-production skills used in evidence-based or creative storytelling. Students will either bring existing content and apply the new skill, or work with project materials supplied by the faculty member.
- *This course is a methodological course that will give me the skill I need to conduct interviews. As a person in front of the camera, I will be conducting interviews a lot and I need to know which questions should be asked, how I should ask them, and how to respond. This course will teach me how to do this efficiently and consistently.*

MF 101 - Intro to Media and Film Studies - 4 credits - Foundation

- An introduction to multiple forms of modern and contemporary mass media. The course examines film and at least two other forms of mass media (such as television, radio/audio, digital media, print mass media). Students will learn how to analyze media images, texts, and systems and understand how media both informs and is informed by social structures and forces.
- *This course discusses mass media. Broadcasting is a form of mass media and therefore it is a foundation course for the proposed major. This course teaches about television, radio, audio, and digital media, which all fall right*

into my field of inquiry. This is a "Foundation" course because broadcasting is a form of mass media, therefore this can be considered an introductory course for my major.

DS 251D Documentary Film Editing - 4 credits - Methodology

- In many ways, documentary stories aren't so much written as discovered. Our world is already full of stories waiting to be told, but what makes a story worth telling, and how one should tell it, are two of the most crucial questions any documentarian must answer. From initial concept through to the final edit, this course will ask students to grapple with this process of documentary discovery, in order to develop a robust set of practices from which to tell the stories of the world around us. Major topics include: • How to develop, nurture and test a story idea: when to know it has 'legs' • The value of Loglines, Treatments and Pitches for conceptualizing story • Form and Methodology: is this story best told as a short? Podcast? Feature? Interactive project? Does it require archival research? Interviews? • How to ethically obtain access to a story • Finding the story in the footage—the importance of the editing room This course requires no pre-existing knowledge or experience of documentary practice or technical expertise, and will be of interest to anyone curious about telling documentary stories in a multitude of forms. Students will work with an archive of previously shot footage to craft a short documentary film, learning basic editing techniques with Adobe Premiere.
- *This course will teach me how to complete a project "from initial concept to the final edit." It will give me the skills I need to pick which stories are most*

important to publish and which ones are not as important. I will learn skills to research, select stories, interview, evaluate materials, and use different strategies and resources to investigate. This is a methodology course because it will give me a variety of methods to use to report and pick the best stories as a journalist.

SO 221 Media Sociology - 3 credits - Theory

- An exploration of social, political, and economic forces that influence contemporary mass media. Students will examine a range of social scientific methods that have been used to document the nature of media content and understand how it is produced. Topics include the consequences of concentration in media ownership, the dynamic relationship between producers and consumers of media, and the study of class, race, and gender inequalities in media content.
- *This course is a theory course for the major because it discusses the ethics and all the forces that drive media today. In order to be in the media field, which is what I want to do, it is imperative for me to understand the social, political, and economic forces that influence my field of inquiry. Learning about class, race, and gender inequalities in media will be especially helpful to me because when I am a reporter I want to report these deep, societal issues. I want to learn how to use my field to make a difference.*

SO 227 Social Research Methods - 3 credits - Methodology

- Examination of methods employed in the investigation of sociological problems. This course analyzes the research process as an integral whole

including political and ethical issues in conducting research. Topics include conceptualization, measurement approaches, design of surveys, and methods of interviewing and observation. Students design studies using various methodological techniques.

- *This course will give me the skills I need to perform and conduct interviews, as well as gather research. Journalists are constantly conducting research and using the information that they find to publish important stories. This course will give me knowledge in these areas. This course will introduce me to the technical, social, and ethical practice of research.*

EN 280 Introduction to Nonfiction Writing - 4 credits – Methodology

- An introduction to the writing of nonfiction. Writing and reading assignments are geared to the beginning writer of nonfiction prose. Sections may focus on a range of nonfiction genres or on one specific form, such as the personal essay, travel writing, literary journalism, cultural critique, science writing and the arts review.
    - *This course is important for me to take because it emphasizes the writing portion of Journalism. In the field of Journalism, there are writing aspects such as reports, interviews, and articles. This course will help me achieve a strong and distinctive voice in the writing field. It will also make me more confident and comfortable writing Nonfiction. I labeled it as a "Methodology" course because I will be learning and practicing how to write non-fiction. This is a very hands-on course where I will be learning the methods of writing.*

EN228 Prose Bootcamp - 4 credits - Methodology

- When the essayist Joan Didion was in her twenties, she wrote editorial copy for

Vogue magazine on a wide range of subjects. In her forties, she noted that it is "easy to make light of this kind of 'writing,' [but] I do not make light of it at all: it was at Vogue that I learned a kind of ease with words... a way of regarding words not as mirrors of my own inadequacy but as tools, toys, weapons to be deployed strategically on a page." Inspired by Didion's on-the-job apprenticeship, this course will ask you to undertake the work of a professional copywriter or ghostwriter. What might you be asked to compose? The introduction to the documentary "extras" for a television series. The "Our Story" blurb for the website of a local restaurant. A capsule biography for a mayoral candidate. A C.E.O.'s response to a request from Forbes: "Tell us about the biggest mistake you ever made as a leader." The instructor will furnish you with material; with her guidance, you will shape it into publishable or, as the case may be, presentable prose. Expect frequent short assignments, most of them graded.

- *This course will help my writing skills tremendously. This is a course that teaches and promotes strict deadlines, which is something that Journalists are always under the pressure of. This course will also teach me how to write a variety of different things, such as blurbs for websites, the introduction to documentaries, a biography, etc. It will help me be able to write things that are publishable and presentable, which is necessary for my field of inquiry. It is a "Methodology" class because it I will be doing hands-on work to write and submit different forms of writing each week.*

EN 378 Nonfiction Workshop - Credits - Methodology

- Intensive practice in writing nonfiction. May be repeated once for credit. As with the Introduction to Nonfiction Writing, sections may focus either on a range of genres or on a specific nonfiction form.
- *Writing is an imperative part of broadcast journalism, even if I am in front of the camera. I need to write down what I want to say and how I want to say it. I have to know how to write interviews and stories. There are times I might also produce articles for the company I work with. This course goes more in depth into the writing aspect of my field of inquiry. Additionally, I can focus on a specific nonfiction form, which could be sports articles, interviews, or other forms of writing that I may be producing as a broadcast journalist. As a result of this being a writing workshop it is a "Methodology" course.*

Advisors:

- Professor Benzon pbenzon@skidmore.edu
- Professor Segrave jsegrave@skidmore.edu

SDM Senior Capstone Ideas

One idea that I have is to create a radio show on WSPN, which is Skidmore's radio. I would do weekly recaps of Skidmore sports games, including athletes of the week. I would do the top 10 moments of the week as well. I would also do predictions for the games happening in the week to come. Athlete/Coach interviews are another aspect that could be a great addition to my show.

Another possible capstone project is to Co-Report for Skidmore games. For games such as hockey, basketball, and baseball, there is usually at least one announcer, discussing

the play-by-play action. I could potentially co-report these games, which would be an amazing experience.

In order to be able to do these proposed projects, I will be starting a show on the WPSN radio starting in the Fall 2022 semester. I have also created my own podcast series and have been working on producing episodes. It is a podcast about female sports that includes discussions about games and tournaments, as well as ethical issues such as mental health in sports and the lack of pay that female athletes receive. Here is the link to my podcast:
I will be continuing to work on this and upload episodes weekly or biweekly.