

Podcasts Assignment

Overview

You will create two podcasts: one individual podcast in which you will deploy the style and conventions of the self-help genre to present your own instance of self-help; and one group podcast in which you will engage in collaborative analysis of an instance of self-help media.

Assignment Part I: Individual Podcast Episode

Having now read literary, critical, and practical accounts of self-help as a genre—and having personally tried out and reflected on a self-help approach of your choosing—you will now have the opportunity to design and execute a podcast episode in which you advise your audience in helping themselves.

Choose a self-help practice—anything from a practice in which you regularly engage yourself to one that you would never consider actually doing—and make a podcast advising others in the deployment and benefits of this practice. You may play this exercise “straight”—in all seriousness—or as a satire, or as some other creative alternative (hosting in the persona of Smiles or Foucault or Pip? staging an interview with an expert? possibilities abound!). In any case, your episode should conform to the conventions both of podcasts and of the self-help genre.

Your individual episode should run **eight to ten minutes** in finished, edited length. You’ll submit the below elements:

- Episode outline
- Episode recording
- Reflection of 400–600 words

For detailed instructions, see the “Elements and Procedures” document.

Assignment Part II: Group Podcast Episode

Now that you have become familiar with the process of conceiving, planning, recording, editing, and publishing a podcast episode, you will work as part of a team to develop an episode in which you will act as a cultural critic analyzing an instance of self-help media.

As a group, you will choose a cultural media object that represents an instance of the self-help genre. This object might be a literary or non-literary text, a film, a series of advertisements, a work of visual art, a podcast, a musical album, or any other form of media that in some way engages in the work of advising or commenting on a process of self-fashioning. Your podcast episode will take the form of a discussion among cultural critics (you!) as you present an analysis of your media object for its engagement with theories of self-help.

Your group podcast should run **twenty to twenty-five minutes** in finished, edited length. You’ll submit the below elements:

- Episode outline
- Episode recording
- Show notes

For detailed instructions, see the “Elements and Procedures” document.