



**Television News  
Spring 2012**

**Q&A REPORTING ASSIGNMENT**

Script and You Tube Posting Due Thursday, Feb. 16

You are producing an interview segment for our “C of C Scene” program. The interview segment is called “Campus Conversation.” Total running time of the interview should be in the two-to-four minute range.

You should record an on-camera introduction and closing to this segment. In the intro, say your name, then say something like: “Hi, I’m (your name). It’s time for this week’s ‘Campus Conversation.’ Today we’re going to hear from/talk with (name of guest, position, etc) who is going to tell us about (briefly say what the topic of the interview is).

In the on-camera closing, have some “tag” information...another bit of information to wrap up the segment such as, “Thanks so much to Rip Ripcord for that interview. Rip says the next meeting of the Parachute Club is Friday at 2 o’clock in Maybank Hall, Room 100. Be sure to drop in. For Campus Conversation...I’m (your name).”

Script examples will be posted and you will see examples of what the “final product” should look like.

The interview subject and topic should be newsworthy, timely and interesting. The guest should be talking about an upcoming event, an issue of interest to students, a new program or policy, or perhaps a professor’s newsworthy research or expertise. Or it could be a profile-type interview about a CofC professor, a student leader, or a staff person. Human interest stories are good too- a student overcoming obstacles, or with a unique skill, hobby or job.

Suggestions for shooting and editing this interview:

1. First, shoot a two-shot of the reporter and the guest with the reporter saying something like: “I’m here at (give location) with (name and position/title of the guest). And we’re going to talk today/learn today about...” Say something different from what we just heard you say in your on-camera introduction. Or just say something like: “I’m here in Randolph Hall with school President George Benson. President Benson...thanks for being our guest on Campus Conversation.

Note: This part can be shot after the interview. It is up to the reporter and videographer to figure out the best time and way to do this.

2. Next, have the camera behind the reporter and frame the regular “head shot” of the guest. Keep this shot steady while the guest speaks. Be careful about zooming in and out excessively. Conduct the interview with the camera shot on the guest. Have a list of questions ready. You’ll really need only about five or six key questions.

3. After the interview, reposition the camera behind the guest so the shot is on the reporter. Get a series of “listening” or “cutaway” shots of the reporter. The reporter should not be nodding or smiling too much. Get a good 30 seconds of listening shots. Can be both close ups and two shots showing the guest talking to the reporter. The idea is that you will edit-in brief “listening shots” to cover jump cuts that will connect two soundbites from the guest, or to just show the reporter during a long soundbite.

4. Now shoot your “reverse question” shots. Re-ask, this time with the camera on the reporter, four or five of the key questions asked previously. Make sure you word the questions the same way so that the responses will go with the questions.

\*\*\*Note: Be careful about the microphone position during these various shots. The mike should be seen as little as possible. We really don’t have to see it all. This is a good opportunity to use your lavalier microphones or your shotgun mics.

In summary, the edited interview that each of you will produce, must have at least seven edits to include:

- Your on-camera introduction shot somewhere on campus. Try to have an appropriate setting or backdrop for all of your standups—not just the wall of the editing room! (think of this as an anchor lead-in to the interview)
- A two-shot of the reporter and the guest in which the reporter introduces and welcomes the guest, and perhaps goes into more about what you’ll be discussing
- The regular interview close up “head shot” of the guest
- At least two “cutaway” reporter listening shots—try for one that also shows the reporter and the back of the guest’s head
- At least three “reverse questions” of the reporter asking questions
- Your on-camera close—should be the same location as your stand up open
- Report must have all of the above elements
- Don’t forget to do a proper script with the anchor lead, and the necessary supers to go with your stand ups and the name and title of your guest.

Here are a couple more ideas for your Q&A reports:

1. C of C Hot Seat: Ever seen these on ESPN, when someone is put on the Budweiser Hot Seat and asked several questions, some fun, some tough? Find a student or professor and put him or her on the hot seat.

Your on camera stand up open, you would say something like. "Now it's time for a new feature we call 'C of C Hot Seat.' We ask the questions, you give the answers. On the hot seat is (as an example) Communication Professor Patrick Harwood..." Then cut to the interview shot:

You: OK, Professor Harwood-- let's not mince words...let's cut to the chase...who are you voting for for president????

Guest: (me) Huh??? Next question please?

You: No really, inquiring minds want to know!

The idea is that this goes back and forth between a close up of the guest, then back to you on camera (reverse question) when you ask/fire your questions. Come up with five-to-eight questions. They can be on any topic...favorite things to do in Charleston...what you like best about the College of Charleston...like the least...

Have a mix of "soft" questions, but also "hard" issue oriented questions related to the world, the U.S., our school etc.

For an example, see this ESPN Hot Seat:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Luuggra0kk0>

Other Examples:

- ✓ Q&A with C of C Student about Presidential Election: (2008)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHzVHVPLcCo&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHzVHVPLcCo&feature=channel_page)
- ✓ Q&A with Married C of C Student (Harwood flashdrive)

You don't need all of the production that ESPN does with this but having suspenseful, dramatic music under the interview would be a nice touch! Add to the tension....

2. Five Questions-- this is similar to the "Hot Seat" but this segment is called "Five Questions." This interview would be with as a CofC student, staff person or professor. Come up with five questions that can help us get to know this person and that would highlight a club, organization, research, interesting hobby, etc. You can call it Cougar Profile. You can have the numbers 1-through-5 come up with each question. Again, we see you on camera asking each of the five questions (reverse questions).

3. More Q&A examples:

- ✓ Author Patrick Green PKG by Danielle Hershon (2006)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOmtA3rrOzw>
- ✓ Q&A with Theatre student Lucy McNerney by Stewart Mann (Fall 2010)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vypoP4S-MM>

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