Podcast / Vodcast Checklist

1. **Brainstorming** ☐
   Choose a broad yet niche topic. A broad topic will allow for multiple episodes. A niche topic will allow you to focus on your chosen demographic. This approach might also help establish your credibility as an expert on the topic.

2. **Research other podcasts** ☐
   Look to see if other podcasts are covering your topic. If there are others, determine how your podcast will be unique.

3. **Determine the format and frequency** ☐
   Decide how many people will be involved in your podcast. Determine each person's role: hosts, producers, editors, etc. The size of your production team can vary, and one person may hold multiple roles.

   Determine if interviews will play a part. Decide how long the average episode will last. Decide on custom audio such as intro and outro theme music. The use of sound effects or music will add atmosphere. Choose sound effects and music from royalty-free or public domain websites. Or, pay a musician friend to create music for your podcast and give them credit in the episode notes.

   Set a publishing schedule to regulate the release of new episodes. Will your episodes drop weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly? You should strive for consistency.

4. **Define your audience** ☐
   Who is your audience? What questions do you want your podcast to answer? What do you want your listeners to remember after hearing your podcast? Build a profile of your ideal listener: age, residence, work status, hobbies, podcast listening habits, and learning interests.

5. **Determine how you will build your brand** ☐
   The name of your podcast will set the tone for your production. It should be concise, informative, memorable, and related to the topic. The written description of your podcast should sufficiently inform potential listeners before they even click on the episode.

You should decide on a logo and artwork for the podcast cover. Make sure they are professional and eye-catching and fit with your brand.

Consider building a website via a host site (Word Press, WiX, etc.). You will need to create an RSS feed via a podcast hosting site (e.g., Spotify for Creators, Buzzsprout, Anchor, etc.). Create a social media presence with profiles centered around your podcast name. Select platforms that cater to your desired audience.

6. **Consider and choose tools for podcasting** ☐
   What tools and apps will you use? Spotify for Creators is recommended for those affiliated with Barton Community College, especially when the podcast furthers the institution's mission. If you are pursuing your podcast privately, you are welcome to use the College's equipment and recording/editing software, but will need to supply your own file storage. The studio laptop is a shared device, and no files may be stored in its hard drive.

7. **Determine the pacing and process** ☐
   Decide how much time you need to create and produce a podcast episode. Will you write a long-form script for narration? An outline for discussion? Improvise your dialogue? When will your personal schedule allow for recording time?

8. **Name your episodes** ☐
   The name of your episodes should relate to the topic and be uncomplicated enough to help podcast search engine optimization (SEO). The episode titles should feature guests' names if applicable.

9. **Practice your episodes** ☐
   Read your script out loud. Work on the outline with your co-hosts. Make sure you have clearly defined your individual roles in the process. Practice the questions you will ask your guest. The more you practice, the better your interactions with your co-hosts, guests, and/or audience.

10. **Start recording and editing** ☐
    Make sure equipment and tools are functioning properly before starting to record. Once recording has begun, introduce yourself and any guests. Describe each guest using their professional title or the role that is relevant to the episode. Speak clearly and naturally into the microphone and try to project energy and enthusiasm.

    When mixing, edit dialogue and sound clips in a way that sounds seamless and natural. Prioritize the steps needed to make the podcast sound its best. Mixing is time-

consuming, so give yourself sufficient time before you need to upload. Always backup your files.

11. **Write episode show notes, episode descriptions, and transcripts** ☐

    Your podcast show notes are an important and effective piece of content for each new episode. These should be found on your podcast website and are written summaries of subjects discussed in the episode, links to additional resources mentioned in the show, and calls to action (CTAs) that encourage listeners to download, subscribe to, and share the podcast. Show notes offer greater value to your potential and current audience, and are instrumental in growing your brand. They provide a central location for listeners to access links to resources, guests, and other media discussed in the episode. They vary in length, but remember more detail is better than less.

    The episode description is seen under the episode title on podcast apps. It can be shorter than the show notes, usually less than a full paragraph.

    Provide keywords to increase the chances of listeners finding you. Consider using an audio-to-text converter to provide a transcript from your recording to boost accessibility.

12. **Publish your podcast** ☐

    Upload the files to the appropriate hosting platform. Submit your podcast to podcast directories (Pocket Casts, Audible, Spotify, Apple, etc.), which allow listeners to more easily find you.

13. **Promote your podcast** ☐

    Create a grassroots campaign through personal and podcast social media. Post after each episode drops and ask followers to share with friends and colleagues.

14. **Review and revise your process** ☐

    After the first few times, and possibly more, take time to review and reflect on your efforts. Did you have enough time to prepare and record? Too much? Too little? How did the tools work for you? What does the feedback from your audience say? Is your performance statistics showing audience growth, stagnation, or decline? How could your process be improved?