

INLS 490 Telling Your Story: Representing Yourself in a Business Setting

1.5 Credits

Fall 2016

August 24-October 12

Monday/Wednesday, 12:20-3:05pm, Manning Hall Room 208

Instructor: Sarah Beth Nelson

Email: sbnelson@live.unc.edu

Office: Manning Hall Room 016 aka The PhDungeon (knock for entry)

Office Hours: Immediately after class and by appointment

Course Description

Students will learn how and when to use personal stories during presentations, collaborations, and workplace conversations. Some of the types of stories covered will include: stories that inspire trust or confidence, stories that give insight into your character and motivations, and stories that tactfully give advice. This course will contain a performance element.

Purpose

Your performance in almost any career will be enhanced by some forethought on how you talk about yourself and tell your life story. Whether you are being interviewed, meeting new colleagues, or giving a presentation, artfully choosing the types of stories you tell about yourself will make you a more effective communicator. The purpose of this course is to explore the different types of personal stories and when each type of story is most appropriate, and to practice telling some of our own personal stories.

Goals

- Explore different types of personal stories
- Apply knowledge of personal stories to solving problems or accomplishing results in particular work situations
- Practice telling personal stories

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Appreciate the power of personal stories to unite us.
- Craft an anecdote into a story (with a beginning, middle, and end).
- Perform a personal story.
- Strategically choose a personal story to tell in order to achieve a particular effect.

Materials

We will be reading from the following sources throughout this course. The readings are referenced in the schedule by author. All readings are available in the "Resources" section of our class Sakai site or online...

*Except for *The Story Factor* by Simmons. We will be reading almost all of this book so please acquire a copy for your personal use. The first edition does not have all the readings. Get the second edition. There is one copy of (the second edition of) *Story Factor* available from Davis Library. You can also read it online through the UNC Libraries. It is \$12 to get it on Kindle, \$11 as a new paperback from Amazon, and as low as \$3.50 used. It is available at the University Bookstore for \$17 new, \$12.75 used, \$13.60 as a new rental, \$3.40 as a used rental, and \$16.95 as an ebook.

Green, W. C. (Trans.). (1803). *Egil's saga*. Retrieved from http://sagadb.org/egils_saga.en

Haven, K. (2007). *Story proof: The science behind the startling power of story*. Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited.

Niemi, L., & Eliis, E. (2001). *Inviting the wolf in: Thinking about the difficult story*. Little Rock: August House.

Radiolab. (2015). *La Mancha screwjob* [MP3]. Retrieved from <http://www.radiolab.org/story/la-mancha-screwjob/>

Radiolab. (2015). *Smile my ass* [MP3]. Retrieved from <http://www.radiolab.org/story/smile-my-ass/>

*Simmons, A. (2006). *The story factor: Inspiration, influence, and persuasion through the art of storytelling* (2nd edition). New York: Basic Books.

Conduct of the Course

We will explore the topics in this course primarily through class discussion, small group exercises, and performances in front of the class. There are chapters and book sections (all of which can be found in Sakai, online, or in *Story Factor*) that are meant to be read before each class meeting so we can all make informed contributions to the discussions and activities.

During our time together we are learning from each other. Please consider that not only will you get out of the course what you put into it, but also other students are counting on your input to make this a rich experience for us all.

Attendance

I will not take attendance, but I will be taking note of class participation, as you will read below. If you are not in class, you can not participate. Should you have to miss multiple class sessions and feel concerned about your participation grade please make an appointment to talk with me about this.

Assignments

Participation

20% of your grade will come from in-class participation. Adequate participation would be making meaningful contributions to class discussions without dominating the conversation. Participation will also involve contributing to small group exercises, both practicing storytelling techniques and giving feedback to classmates.

Personal storytelling in the real world (2)

10% of your grade will come from your observations of personal storytelling in the real world. Post on Sakai and/or bring up in class at least 2 examples of personal storytelling you have witnessed. Talk about how you or someone else used a personal story in conversation. Share a story that was part of a conference presentation or job talk you attended. You will likely hear stories in your other classes you could use. The possibilities are endless. Write and/or tell us about the story, what you think the teller's purpose was in telling the story, and whether or not the story accomplished that purpose. Make sure you have shared/posted at least twice by the end of the semester. I recommend not waiting until the final week of class to take care of this. Try to notice stories as they happen and share them with us right away.

In class storytelling performances (2)

40% of your grade will be based on performance. You will have two opportunities to present rehearsed personal stories to the class. You will choose a situation in which a personal story might be called for (types of stories discussed in *Story Factor* are listed below). Let the class know what the situation is before beginning, so we can put ourselves in the correct frame of mind. There will be a time limit based on the number of people in the class, with some time after each story for feedback. Your peers will fill out a rubric to highlight areas of strength and areas that need improvement as well as provide written feedback. I will collect the rubrics, compile the written comments only, and return them to you. I will determine your final grade on each performance, taking

peer comments into consideration. Effort and evidence of learning are more important to your grade than perfection in performance. I will expect to see some improvement between the first performance and the second.

Types of stories from *Story Factor*

- Chapter 1
 - Who I am
 - Why I am Here
 - The Vision
 - Teaching
 - Values-in-Action
 - I Know What you are Thinking
- Chapter 3
 - One-D to Three-D
 - Bear-Trap Questions
 - Tunnel Vision
 - Saying it Without Saying it
 - Stop Asking ME!
 - Giving a "Demo"
 - Telling Your Superior He is Wrong
 - Don't Tell Me What to do
 - Reasons Why
 - Did Somebody Die?

Short papers on performances (2)

30% of your grade will come from short papers that will accompany your performances. In each paper, go into more detail about the situation in which you imagine you might tell your story. Refer back to Simmons to support your decision to use your story for that situation. State the length (in time) of your story and discuss how you edited the story in practice to ensure that it fit within the time limit. How might you make it longer or shorter to fit different situations? List the scenes of the story and give a summary of the plot. In the second paper only, also discuss emotion: the emotions of the characters in your story and the emotions you hope to evoke in your audience.

Grading

Most students should expect to receive a P (pass) in this class. H (high pass) is reserved for students who go above and beyond expectations. L (low pass) and F (fail) indicate

inadequate and/or incomplete work. If a student is heading down this path we will work together to try and correct it before the end of the course.

UNC Honor Code and Campus Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

It shall be the further responsibility of every student to abide by the Campus Code; namely, to conduct oneself so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

Schedule

n.b. This schedule may change as we move through the course for reasons such as accommodating student interests that are not currently represented or working around cancellations due to weather.

Date	Topic	Readings / Class Preparation
August 24	Introduction to course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haven Ch 7 (pp. 75-80)
August 29	Vikings!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egil's Saga (http://sagadb.org/egils_saga.en) Ch 58-64
August 31	Power of personal storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simmons Ch 2 • Haven Ch 9 excerpts (pp. 102-103, 118-122)
September 5	Labor Day - No Class	
September 7	Representing yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simmons Ch 1 • Simmons Case Study (pp. 259-269) • Simmons Ch 3
September 12	How to tell a good story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simmons Ch 4 • Niemi and Ellis Ch 6 (pp. 91-114)

September 14	How to tell a good story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simmons Ch 9 ● Niemi and Ellis Ch 7 (pp. 115-130)
September 19	Performance 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short paper on first performance is due
September 21	Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Niemi and Ellis Ch 9 (pp. 157-182)
September 26	Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simmons Ch 5 ● Simmons Ch 6
September 28	Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simmons Ch 7 ● Simmons Ch 8 ● Haven "Advice for Leaders" (pp. 126-127)
October 3	Truth and reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simmons "The Truth" (pp. 229-230) ● Simmons "Live Your Story" (pp. 238-240) ● Simmons "Reality-Based Storytelling" and "Just Tell Them What Happened" (pp. 252-256) ● One of the Radiolab episodes (<i>La Mancha Screwjob</i> or <i>Smile My Ass</i>)
October 5	Performance 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Turn in paper on second performance today, or on October 12
October 12	Final, 1:35-4:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paper on performance 2 is due by 4:35pm ● You may finish up paper in person during final exam time