"No, it'll not do just to read the old tale out of a book. You've got to tell'em to make'em go right."
(Richard Chase, Grandfather Tales)

INLS 558-001: Principles and Techniques of Storytelling (3 credits)
School of Information and Library Science
Manning Hall, Room 208
Thursdays, 6:00-8:45pm

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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Office Hours: By email or by appointment
Online Communication: We will use Sakai or email for any online communication we need for this course.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This course is for graduate students or upper level undergraduates with an interest in learning to perform oral narratives. The purpose is to help students gain performance and communication skills through active engagement in combining storytelling theory and skills. It is an emotionally challenging class (to create evocative performances requires a deep emotional vulnerability and a willingness to risk) as well as an intellectually stimulating one.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

None

COURSE GOALS AND KEY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Theoretical:
1. Students will come to understand the values of storytelling for different age groups: children in primary school and elementary school, young adults, and adults.
2. Students will explore storytelling through a variety of theoretical models.

3. Students will understand the power of storytelling to move or engross an audience.

Practical:
1. Students will be more competent and confident public performers and presenters, with skills that can help in myriad settings, such as job interviews, conference presentations, reference interviews, workshops, and class presentations.
2. Students will understand the power of distractions when presenting.
3. Students will learn to enunciate clearly, project their voices, and maintain compelling eye contact.
4. Students will know how to coordinate storytelling events: planning, promotion, and evaluation.

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 23rd
Theory: Introduction to storytelling and the class. Expectations, assignments, grading, online area. Definitions, kinds, and values of storytelling. Historical overview. Research resources.
Readings: Have a look at *The Storyteller's Sourcebook* – SILS Ref: GR74.6 .M3 2001 and the earlier 1982 edition.
Practice (focus): Small group reading aloud and group story creation

August 30th
Theory: Storytelling: trance, paradox, and the psychodynamics of enchantment.
Readings: first read Stallings The Web of Silence; then read Sturm The Enchanted Imagination; and then read Sturm *Power of "I"* article and *Caring for Stories* article (on Sakai)
Practice: Storytelling games

September 6th
Theory: Finding and selecting an age-appropriate story. We'll also discuss storytelling language, beginnings and endings, and child development.
Readings: Shedlock – *The Art of the Story-Teller,* pages 43-98, also available at Project Guttenberg; read Folktale Openings, Folktale Closings, and Child Development and YA Development.
Practice (focus): Storytelling card games.

September 13th   CLASS CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER

September 20th
Theory: Preparing and presenting stories & Media in Storytelling

Readings: Sturm *Process of Sharing Stories with Young People* article (on Sakai)*;* Shedlock – *The Art of the Story-Teller,* pages 31-42, also available at

[Project Guttenberg](#); Sturm *Eye Contact and the Veil of Story* article (on Sakai); **:** ["Where's the Puppet Stage?"](#); *Storytelling with Puppets*, chapters 1 &2 (Sakai or [here](#)): have a listen to Ruth Stotter on [Using Props in Storytelling](#) (it's 53 minutes long, so plan accordingly)

Practice (focus): "Theater of the Face" (eye contact, facial expression, and storytelling games), "Theater of the Body" (body language, gesture, posture, mime, and storytelling games)

September 27th

Storytelling Session #1 (Preschool): stories not to exceed 7 minutes
Cue Card #1

September 29th – [Wake County Storytelling Festival](#), 11:00am – 4:00pm. (free and open to the public at the Historic Oak View County Park)

October 4th

Theory: Guest visit by storyteller, Amy Sayle (*Storytelling Under the Stars*, director). Storytelling for Special Audiences (physically and emotionally challenged, YA, elderly)
Readings: Blankenship article; Chinen article; Setterington article (on Sakai).
Practice (focus): "The Art of Emotion" (analysis and portrayal of emotions)

October 5th - 7th – [National Storytelling Festival](#) in Jonesborough, Tennessee

October 11th

Theory: Guest storyteller, Michael Nager. Administering storytelling programs (design and evaluation)
Readings: Look at the entire *Storytelling Magazine* issue for September/October 2004 (Volume 16, issue 5) which is dedicated to Producing Storytelling Events; The [Purpose of Character Voices](#)
Practice (focus): "The Art of Imitation" (character voices, dialect, and sound effects)
After Class meeting: Morehead storytellers plan to stay and meet with Amy

October 18th

FALL BREAK – no class

October 19th - 21st – [Storytelling Festival of Carolina](#) in Laurinburg, NC

October 25th

Storytelling Session #2 (Elementary/YA) stories not to exceed 12 minutes
Cue Card #2

November 1st

Theory: Creating stories from Personal Experiences. Guest storyteller, Sarah Beth Nelson.
Readings: *Crafting Personal Stories* (O'Callahan) and *Crafting Childhood* (Harley) on Sakai. Also, have a listen to some of the stories told at *The Moth* in New York City and watch the Call of Story from BYU.
Practice (focus): "My Life in Story" (personal narrative story exercises)

November 3rd – *Tar Hell Tellers Storytelling Festival*

November 8th

Theory: Digital & VR Storytelling and Coaching Others
Readings: McMahan (2003), Lee (2004) (in Sakai). Look at the Center for Digital Storytelling website and watch some of their stories. Look at the Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling website. Read Jason Ohler's The World of Digital Storytelling. Finally scan Doug Lipman's "Becoming a Storytelling Coach" and any of his links that suit your fancy.
Practice: "Space" (staging, acoustics, microphones)

November 15th

Storytelling Session #3 (Adult) stories not to exceed 15 minutes
Cue Card #3 – we can bring potluck/munchies to complement the stories?

November 18th – Ninth annual Storytelling Under the Stars from 4:30-5:30pm in the Morehead Planetarium

November 22nd

THANKSGIVING BREAK – no class

November 29th

Storytelling Session #3 (Adult) stories not to exceed 15 minutes
Cue Card #3 – we can bring potluck/munchies to complement the stories?

December 6th – Twenty-fourth annual Winter Stories at 5:30pm in the Wilson Library

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Storytelling session 1 for Preschool	15%
2. Cue Card 1 - Preschool	5%
3. Storytelling session 2 for Elementary/YA	20%
4. Cue Card 2 – Elementary/YA	5%
5. Storytelling session 3 for Adult	25%
6. Cue Card 3 - Adult	5%
7. Live Performance Evaluation	10%

8. Class Participation (see attendance policy below)   15%
   Total   **100%**

In-class Storytelling Performances (3)

Performance evaluation is a tricky process, as each performer has a unique style. In order to tailor my evaluation to each of you, your storytelling performances will be video recorded, and we will meet one-on-one in my office to evaluate each performance. You will need to schedule a time to meet after each of your storytelling sessions (allow one hour). Our evaluation will cover story selection, vocal qualities, presentation style, timing, whether you achieved your "emotions" and "risks" for the story, and the various performance techniques we discuss in class. We will use the Student Storytelling Evaluation Rubric on Sakai in the Resources folder to help us assess your stories.

Cue Cards (3)

Please see the cue card template, accessible from the "Cue Card" links above. The cue card is your evidence of background research into your story. Spend considerable effort on this endeavor, as the more you study your story, the more you'll know its power, and the better performance you will give. Use this template to guide your thinking, and fill in the blank areas with your thoughts on your chosen story. My evaluation will include depth and extent of research, and thoughtfulness of your insights into the various aspects of your story.

Live Performance Evaluation (1)

You are expected to perform *at least one* story to an audience outside the classroom that would be appropriate for that story (i.e., a school classroom, a church group, etc.). The purpose is to expose you to the true performance setting, in which the classroom vanishes and you encounter an audience for whom the story is targeted. I want you to work in small groups for this (I'd prefer you not telling solo). You will need to figure out your action plan (where to tell, with whom, how to sequence your stories, how to advertise if necessary), conduct your performance, and then evaluate it thoughtfully. Use what you learn about story selection, preparation, and presentation along with how to administer a storytelling event in designing and presenting this public session.

Class Participation and Involvement

I will come to class prepared, and I expect you to do likewise: 1) you have read and considered the assigned readings; 2) you have prepared for the practice session (if necessary); and 3) you are willing to put your best efforts into practicing in class, and you are willing to leave your ego at the door of the classroom. This class functions on trust. We *must* build an environment of trust amongst ourselves so that we feel comfortable showing emotions, being vulnerable, and taking risks, for it is only through these three things that storytelling comes alive for the listeners.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Class participation is vital to your learning in this course, so I expect you to attend class each week. While I understand that life can get in the way of your education, this class needs your participation and input each week, so that you can build on prior knowledge, help your classmates learn and grow, and contribute to a sense of trust and inter-personal reliance that is essential to the success of the class.

CLASS NORMS or …HOW WE WANT TO BE TOGETHER AS A GROUP

1. View this classroom as a liberated zone
2. Listen to one another
3. Respect one another
4. Maintain confidentiality
5. Use "I" statements; speak about your own thoughts and experiences, not those of others
6. Focus on a broad definition of diversity
7. Bring questions/comments to the classroom
8. Pay attention to how YOU feel
9. Recognize that we are all teachers & learners
10. Attend each class and participate
11. Recognize that this class is the beginning of a journey

These norms will enable us to keep our discourse focused, respectful, and courageous.

DIVERSITY

In support of the University's diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value. We broadly define diversity to include ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to:

- Ensure inclusive leadership, policies and practices;
- Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research;
- Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse perspectives and experiences are valued;
- Recruit and retain underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff; and
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups in North Carolina and beyond.

The statement is our commitment to the ongoing cultivation of an academic environment that is open, representative, and reflective of the concepts of equity and fairness.

GRADING

Grading for your assignments will follow the H, P, L, F scale for graduate students, A, B, C, D, F for undergraduates. Performances are notoriously difficult to grade, as they are works of self-expression (i.e., art); however, I feel comfortable with the following interpretation for assigning grades to your endeavors.

1. I assume that you are all motivated students (you would not be at Carolina if you weren't); therefore, my expectations are high from the outset. I know that some of you will have past performance experience, some will have natural talent, and some will have neither, so part of my job as professor is to judge you individually (in addition to comparing you to your peers in class). Therefore, I DO grade on effort, on risks you push yourself to take, on your willingness to try new things, etc. While you may never give an Oscar-winning performance, I expect you to push yourself to improve throughout the semester in whatever ways we discuss in class and individually, and if you do so, you will do well in this course.

2. If your work is thoughtful and competent, and shows effort and care, it will receive a P, B, or C.
    If your work synthesizes ideas, draws in work from outside of class as well as ideas we've covered in class, or shows risk-taking that markedly improves your performance ability, it will receive an H or an A.
    If your work shows a lack of effort, care, or thought (whether writing or performing) it will receive either an L, D, or F.

4. There are three ways of grading performances: 1) how you do in relation to your present ability, 2) how you do in comparison to a theoretical "excellent" performance, and 3) how you do in comparison with your peer students. I will use primarily the first two of these in discussing/evaluating your work with you. I will also ask each of you to comment upon your classmates' first two performances so that if my view is biased unfairly, the class helps mitigate that bias.

HONOR CODE

This course, like all UNC-Chapel Hill courses follows the Honor Code. It is your responsibility to have read the Honor Code. It applies to this course in the following ways:

Plagiarism is one of the most serious breaches of academic integrity, and it means using other's work without proper attribution.

You may work on assignments together and share ideas, but your final work must be your own, and you must cite sources you use in written and performed work. You may use any style (APA, Chicago, Turabian, etc.) so long as you remain consistent in its use.

Plagiarism in performance means taking someone else's interpretation and performing it as if it were your own; you may tell the stories other people tell, but you must create your own performance of them.

I am available for consultation on any assignment, and if you have questions about acknowledging other people's work, please ask me.