THR 260 Storytelling: Mythmaking (GER)

Dates of this course: Online 100% May 30, 2022-July 8, 2022

Date when final grade is submitted in PAWS: July 15, 2023 @ 9 AM CST

Course Description: This course explores the ways stories function in daily life, are meaningful, and are told. We share stories and explore the diverse stories that communicate culture and identity.

Expected time-investment for this 3-credit course: 2 hrs per day x 42 days (6-week course) = 84 hours total. [This is a 'guesstimate' it will vary depending on students' learning style and investment]

Course expectations: Consistent participation and timeliness in submitting assignments is requisite.

Instructor: Dr. Robin Mello,
 Email: rmello@uwm.edu
 Office: Theatre 220
 Office Hours: via Zoom, Teams, or Office Hours are virtual or by appointment.

Important information for students regarding university policies: https://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf

Code of Conduct: This Code establishes the basis for safe and rewarding learning environment:
- Please do not post course content or information shared with you by others in this course. Posting info and content from this course on to other sites, platforms, etc. is disrespectful.
- Calling out or publicly shaming another student or faculty on social media without getting permission from that individual first is a serious breach of our code of conduct and the code of conduct of this university.
- Plagiarism is not OK. You are expected to create and submit only original materials you have personally developed (work that you have done only for this course and work that you have written and authored). When using or quoting the work of others (this includes information from the internet) you must cite your sources. Failure to follow this rule *may* result in a university grievance, or "INC", or "F" grade, and/or similar consequences.

Our Agreements: We are all expected to act with civility in this course—especially in our online environment, as follows:
- **Use your common sense** and be compassionate to yourself and others.
- **Empathize** & work together.
- **Participate frequently** & check in online every day.
- **Organize your schedule** so that you know and meet deadlines.
- **Be curious & communicate your questions.**
- **Ask questions** (questions are encouraged) in private or during class.
- **If you have a problem, stay calm and contact Robin** (rmello@uwm.edu or 414-469-9279 (text) or 414-251-5462 (Microsoft Teams).
- **Back up your data** so if something gets lost you have a copy and a record of what you did.
- **Challenge yourself and fully commit to excellence and engagement**. THR 260 *learning* happens through honest communications, empathic listening, and thoughtful reflection.
- **If you need a standing ovation, ask for it.** Robin will send you a virtual one.

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How do we communicate? For this online course you must **check your email** and communicate via Canvas messages or email.

Set up Canvas so it sends you info: Email and the *Canvas* course site are our major communication venues. Make sure you set your *Canvas* settings so that you receive announcements, reminders in calendar, etc. There are step-by-step directions in our course Canvas site in Module #1.

Course Goals:
- Investigation of storytelling art forms, genres, and approaches.
- Support your ability to tell, communicate, and perform stories (e.g., digitally, physically, aurally, or in written form).
- Sharing and engaging with stories from diverse cultures, identities, and perspectives.
- Engaging in Creative Storytelling as a community building practice.
- Having fun.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:
Students (you) will…
- Hone your storytelling skills.
- Collect, express, and reflect on personal stories from your and others' lived experience.
- Reflect on pluralism and diversity as it relates to the stories you tell, hear, and collect.
- Practice storytelling in community settings and/or through service learning.
- Reflect on your own and others' storytelling performances.
- Craft/devise presentations and responses that integrate, incorporate, and reflect on your own and others' stories.

How to succeed: You will succeed if you actively participate and post your work before or on the deadline. Please note that ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE REQUIRED IF YOU WANT TO EARN AN "A" GRADE.

Grades and Assessment: If you encounter a problem with completing a task on-time, please ask for an extension ahead of the deadline—not after the deadline has passed. Late submissions *may* result in lower grade. It is much better to complete assignments late than not do them at all.

If you have a real emergency let Robin know as soon as is practicable. You will work with her on a sensible alternative so that you are not penalized for a problem outside of your control.

What is a real emergency? Answer: Real and unplanned events that pertain to your personal (or your family's) safety, economic welfare, health, and other one-time catastrophic and unforeseen events (like floods or tornados) OR your work schedule changes drastically and suddenly so that completing assignments becomes impossible.

What should you do if you have a real emergency? Communicate with Robin ASAP! I will work with you to figure out an alternative solution: 414-469-9279 (text), rmello@uwm.edu, 414-251-5462 (voice mail). CONTACT ROBIN ASAP!

None of these reasons are real (i.e., excused) emergencies:
- Losing your phone.
- You forgot or misread the calendar and syllabus and "didn't realize that the assignment was due."
- Roommates and friends/family needed to socialize so you did not have enough time to focus on the course.
- Computers or other technologies broke; and/or you had no access to the Internet; and/or there was no possible way for you to find a computer or Internet connection *anywhere*; and/or your mobile data plan didn't work. [In most cases you can find alternative connections at the UWM or a local library.]
- You were on a vacation, took time off, or went on a trip.
- You had a hang over.
- Your dog/cat/pet was ill.
- Your roommate's dog/cat/pet was ill.

Grades are calculated as a percentage of total points:
- Percentage is calculated with a *denominator* of total points overall.
- At the end of the course + 1 day (JULY 9) negative points are given for missing assignments.
- Negative points will be deducted from your point total. For example, if an assignment is worth 100 points and you don't submit the assignment your score would be -100 not zero.

Grade Range:
The % range for letter grades used in this course is:
A = all learning tasks completed, all portions completed in an exemplary fashion *and on time*: 100%-93% of points.
B = all learning tasks completed, all portions completed well with high quality work *and on time*, 85%-92% of points.
C = all learning tasks completed, all portions of completed satisfactorily, 84%-78% of points.
D = all or some of the learning tasks were partially completed or work was unsatisfactory, lacking, or consistently late: 77%-76% of points.
F = all learning tasks were not completed or were completed in a way that did not meet standards (see rubrics), some portions were not completed, and/or were missing: Below 75% of points.
INC = In rare circumstances, you may want to request an extension to complete unfinished assignments. If you want to extend you must request an Incomplete (INC) grade extension (contact me (Robin).

Modules: This course is divided into weekly sections. Read through each module and then dive in. Each module has assignments and tasks for you to do.

Multi-deadlines: Most (not all) of the assignments have a range of deadlines. They are designed to match the learning styles and different needs of students and at the same time keep us on track and cut down stress. There are three types of deadlines:

- 🌅**Early dates**: If you want faster feedback from Robin or you want to work through the course without work piling up or making you stressed be early. 🌅 deadlines make things easier.
- 🕑**On Time dates** meet the weekly framework of the module and keep you current. You get graded in a timely manner and can then aim for upcoming assignments. Being 🕑is a great habit to get into.
- ⌛**Drop-Dead-Deadlines** dates are the DEADLINES: Sometimes things happen (jobs, family, or illness) if you are in a bit of stress aim for the ⌛. After that your submission is late.
- ⏰ **Late dates:** Late submissions are better than none at all. Why? Because negative points are awarded for assignments that are missing/not submitted. ⏰

- ↪ **Resubmissions:** You may, at any time, redo an assignment. When you resubmit the grade that is higher will be the grade you are awarded.

<div align="center"><u>**Course Calendar**</u></div>

5/30-6/4 Module #1 *Your Story-My Story:* **We focus on how storytelling "works," and respond to videos.**
Assignment #1: *Getting to know you* due 6/2 (🔥Early) or 6/3 (⏰On-Time) or 6/4 (⏳Deadline).
Assignment #2: *Responding to Robin's feedback* due by 6/4 (🔥Early) or 6/5 (⏰On-Time) or 6/6 (⏳Deadline).

6/5-6/11 Module #2 *Sharing Our Stories:* **We share stories and reflect on their impact and meaning.**
Assignment #3: *Sharing stories* due 6/9 (🔥)or 6/10 (⏰) or 6/11 (⏳).
Assignment #4: *Responding to others' stories* due 6/9 (🔥)or 6/10 (⏰) or 6/11 (⏳).

6/12-6/18 Module #3: *Community Storytelling, part 1:* **Plan your community service project & respond to stories we shared in Module #2**
Assignment #5: *Reflecting on our stories* due: 6/13 (🔥)or 6/14 (⏰) or 6/15 (⏳).
Assignment #6: *Your community story plan* due: 6/15 (🔥); 6/16 (⏰); 6/17 (⏳).

6/19-6/28 Module #4: *Community Storytelling, part 2:* **Implement & reflect on your community service project.**
Assignment #7: *Your community story project final report* due: 6/28 (⏳)

6/29-7/9 Module #5: Mythmaking: You create and tell an object story.
Assignment #8: *Video response* due 7/1 (🔥); 7/2 (⏰); 7/3 (⏳)
Assignment #9: *Object Lessons* due 7/7 (🔥); 7/8 (⏰); 7/9 (⏳)

GRADES SUBMITTED in PAWS by 9AM CST on Saturday JULY 15, 2023

Assignments (detailed info and resources are posted for assignments in Canvas)
1. *Getting to know you:* Submit a written response that includes: An affirmation that you have read all the pages in the Canvas Module #1; Affirm you have adjusted your Canvas settings according to the directions; Share a story about yourself; Indicate pronouns you use to refer to yourself; Discuss and reflect on how storytelling functions in your life; Share reflections on the video assigned; Select one course subject and one course goal that is important to you. (100 points)
2. *Responding to feedback:* Read the comments and feedback from your first assignment. In a few sentences (about the length of a long tweet) respond back to Robin. (100 points)
3. *Sharing your stories*: There are 8 discussion forums. Please share stories in our 8 discussion forums (food, sky stories, heroes, animals, tattoos, life lessons, joys & sorrows, and anything goes). You can post more than one story in any discussion forum. Each story you post = 30 points.
4. *Responding to others' stories*: In the discussions you need to respond to at least 3 other people's stories. Each response to someone else's story is worth 10 points.
5. *Reflecting on our stories*: Choose a discussion forum that was the most interesting to you. Reread all the posts in those forums. Think of these stories as 'data. ' Craft an essay that explores aspects of these posts and ends with summations about how storytelling functions in human culture. Please go to our CANVAS course website for detailed information. (200 points).
6. *Your community story plan:* This is a plan for how you will implement your storytelling project. Include: (a) a brief description of the community and its value, (b) how people become part of

the community, (c) how are you connected, (d) a plan for including storytelling with this community, (e) how you know if your story project is successful, & (f) questions, comments, or concerns that Robin can assist with (100 points).

7. *Your community story project report:* Submit a report on how your project went. Add photos and other materials if you like. Include: (a) description of how you went about implementing your service-learning plan, (b) examples of experiences that were especially important, (c) what went well, (d) challenges you encountered, (e) what surprised you, & (f) what you learned (100 points).

8. *How tellers tell*: Using the worksheet provided in Canvas, choose one teller from the 3 videos you choose to watch. Evaluate what you saw storytellers do. What techniques do they use to engage audiences? What were your responses to their storytelling? What did you like? What did you not appreciate and why? (100 points)

9. *Object lessons*: Submit your object story-myth. Please go to our CANVAS course website for detailed information. (300 points).

GER information: This course is approved as part of the GER Breadth requirement, satisfies the GER Arts credit requirement, and is an approved elective within the Cultures and Communities certificate program. Service-Learning plan & wrap-up report, and object stories are assignments that are assessed for GER goals.

This course addresses the Cultures & Communities Goals:
- Examine stories from multi-cultural and diverse perspectives (C&C Goal 1, 2, 6, & 7).
- Engage in Creative Storytelling techniques through engaged and/or service-learning-oriented experiences (C&C Goal 10).

This course meets the Arts GER Criteria because it:
- Focuses on the *creation and participation* of the storytelling art.
- Asks students to learn the *basic approaches to and techniques* involved in performing stories.
- Requires participants to *interpret and analyze* their own and others' performances and written narratives.

This course addresses UW System Outcomes by focusing on:
SLO #1) *Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World:* THR 260 focuses on storytelling—its practice and cultural significance in the lives of students and in the life of their community(s). It does so by infusing an exploration of cultural context and codes in stories worldwide. Also, students explore their own beliefs, conditions, and experiences in relationship to others. Reflecting and considering the conditions and perspectives of others is a core component of this course.

SLO #3) *Effective Communication Skills*: Exploring and learning about, from a storytelling presentation/performance, so that students explore effective communication between listeners and speakers.

GER Assignments: Community Project & "Object" Story

GER Assessment Rubric:

A	B	C	D	F
Cohesive and clear	Clear	Parts unclear	Unfocused	Unclear
Reflective	Somewhat reflective	Weak unfocused	Little or no reflection	No reflection
Original Work	Some original work	Limited original work	Little or no original work	No original work

Creative choices focused on assignment criteria	Creative choices clear	Creative choices limited	Creative choices unclear	Creative choices nonexistent
Addresses all aspects of storytelling assignment	Uses most aspects of storytelling	Uses some aspects of storytelling	Uses little of storytelling	Uses no storytelling
Evocative use of imagery and descriptive language	Interesting use of imagery and descriptive language	Little use of imagery and descriptive Language	Very little use of imagery and descriptive language	No use of imagery and descriptive language
Clear and delineated	work is clear	Work is choppy, or disjointed	Little clarity	No clarity