

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Woodring College of Education
Library Science 409 - Advanced Storytelling
3 credits - Fall 2005

Monday evenings – 6-8pm (plus field time and coaching sessions)

Instructor: Rosemary Scott Vohs

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Office Hours: M-F 11, and by chance or appointment

Course description:

Prerequisite: Lib.Sci. 309 and/or permission of instructor. Training in public storytelling performance in community and educational settings. Emphasizes personal performance development, practical public experience, storytelling teaching methods, and advanced study of the history and current trends in the growing field of storytelling.



Instructional Methods:

Seminar format, group discussion, lecture, intensive coaching and evaluation of live and video-recorded student performance both on and off campus.

Course assignments:

It is the goal of Woodring College of Education to prepare *"thoughtful, knowledgeable, and effective educators for a diverse society"*. This class and instructor seeks to attain this goal by requiring a variety of assignments that will challenge students' own teaching/ performance skills and provide them with the ability to incorporate the K-12 Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) into classroom instruction of storytelling and oral communication skills.

Research Paper: (30%) Each student will submit a research paper of 6-8 pages that examines closely a topic of interest in the field of storytelling and the oral tradition. You may research topics pertaining to history, cultural issues, current issues in the resurgence of storytelling, teaching storytelling in the classroom, performance theory, interdisciplinary applications, etc. You are expected to read material from at least 6 different sources and produce a paper that would be worthy of submitting to an educational or storytelling journal for publication. Completed paper will be presented and discussed in class.

Oct. 17 - bibliography and synopsis/methods due. Dec. 5 - Completed paper due

Public performance: (40%) Each student is expected to spend several hours during the quarter visiting classrooms or community groups in order to gain experience telling stories to a "real" audience and teaching storytelling techniques to others. You need to schedule at least one community performance each week. These performances and teaching sessions will be evaluated by your audience (see attached evaluation form).

During the quarter you will keep a running evaluative journal of your performance experiences, practice work, observations, etc. You will share your reactions in class so that we may all learn from each other. Find the opportunity to visit a variety of groups such as: elementary and secondary classrooms, libraries, bookstores, senior centers, parks and recreation classes,

Sunday school classes, coffee shops, radio programs, etc. You will also be given the chance to perform at a more public community storytelling event during National Storytelling Week, Nov. 13-19.

You are strongly encouraged to videotape several performances for us to evaluate in class. A portion of class time is dedicated to intensive coaching of each student in order to finely polish your skills. Be prepared with stories-in-progress for us to hear and evaluate at all times. You are

expected to come to the first session knowing at least 6 polished stories and will add at least two stories to your performance repertoire each week. You will also schedule specific personal coaching times in and out of class.

Nov. 7 - Midterm journal check

Dec 5 - Completed journal due



Personal promotion: (15%) Each student will produce a personal publicity flyer which will include a 50-75 word publicity "bio" and a "headshot" photo plus additional information relevant to personal promotion. Also, compose and collect various contact letters that you might send out to those who are hosting your performances both before & after the event (included in journal).

Oct 31 - Bio and headshot due

Nov. 28 - brochure/flyer due

Event promotion: (15%) Each student will be involved in assisting in the promotion of a community storytelling event such as TELLABRATION! (Nov. 19nd. this year) or other events during the Bellingham Storytelling Festival, (Nov. 12-19). You will have the opportunity to assist in: newspaper and radio publicity, production and distribution of flyers, development of public service announcements and/or information about storytelling in general, obtaining copyright permission, preparing performance venues, etc.