

## WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

### *The Power of Storytelling in Action: Practical Field Applications*

EXT 317 (special topics)  
1-3 credits - Summer / Fall 2005

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#### **Course Description:**

The art of storytelling has applications in numerous interdisciplinary areas. This course offers students in various fields the opportunity to apply the art of storytelling to their specific areas of interest and a unique occasion to attend a wide variety of events at the annual National Storytelling Conference.

This annual conference takes place in a different location across the country each year, and in 2005 will be held in Oklahoma City, July 13-17.

Full conference details and PDF of the conference brochure can be found via [www.storynet.org](http://www.storynet.org)

Workshops, keynotes and seminars will interest those in fields such as:

- Education
- Anthropology
- Folklore
- Business Administration
- Environmental Education
- Psychology/Healing Arts
- Event Planning
- Theatre
- Creative Writing
- ...and more

In addition to attending the National Storytelling Conference students will read widely from texts on storytelling, and develop a performance-based project to put their learning into practice in their specific field of interest.

#### **Credit Options:**

Up to 3 credits is offered to students taking this course.

**\* Option A:** variable 1-3 credits (Summer Registration) – activities include:

- 1) full conference attendance,
- 2) readings in the field of storytelling and oral tradition,
- 3) practical project to be completed by August 19, 2005.

**\* Option B:** variable 1-3 credits (Fall Registration)

- 1) full conference attendance,
- 2) readings in the field of storytelling and oral tradition,
- 3) practical project to be completed by November 30, 2005.

**\*Please note:** Options are offered to provide registration flexibility to students who have different needs for credits. For example; this will assist educators by providing them with the opportunity to claim 2 credits by the end of the summer (conference attendance and readings) and then to complete their practical project in their classrooms by November. Students may also opt to simply attend the conference for 1 credit.

## Learning Goals and Objectives:

Students taking this course will:

1. read widely in the field of storytelling, building their knowledge of how storytelling is applied to their interdisciplinary area.
2. attend a variety of storytelling events and workshops at the National Storytelling Conference, expanding their knowledge of theory, history, cultural issues, current trends, performance techniques, oral traditions, practical applications, etc  
For a full schedule of conference events, go to: [www.storynet.org](http://www.storynet.org)
3. learn how to choose, retell, or write stories, and that they discover the best methods of learning and performing/telling the story while increasing their confidence and skills.
4. discover a creative/practical application of storytelling within their own field, producing a performance-based project showing storytelling in action in a specific area.

## Required Text and Materials / Recommended Reading:

There is no required textbook for this class. Students will read at least 300 pages from a variety of sources. Bibliographies of possible reading materials will be provided (grouped by various interests, such as; Storytelling in the Classroom, Storytelling in Organizations, Storytelling in Environmental Education, etc.). Further resources may be recommended by conference workshop presenters.

## Assignments:

### **Book Report** (15 points)

In place of textbook reading each student is expected to read a *minimum of 300 total pages* from *at least 6 different sources*. This reading may be from books, magazines, journal articles, etc.

In order for you to document and evaluate your readings, you will produce a 3-4-page (single spaced) report, focusing on your *personal reactions and applications* of the material you are summarizing. Please include all the bibliographic details at the top of your discussion of each book, chapter, or journal article, including # of pages read from each source.

### **Story File** (15 points)

Each student will create a file of stories that they enjoy and might consider learning/performing at a future date. These stories may have been found in print or may be ones you have heard performed live or on cassette tape, CD or video. For each story you choose you will want to provide as much of the following information as possible:

**Title of Story:**

**Author (or) Reteller:**

**Title of Anthology:**

**Editor:**

**Illustrator:**

**Publisher:**

**Copyright Date:**

**Time Length:**

**Cultural Origin:** (applicable only to folklore)

**Age Range:**

**Theme:**

**Synopsis/bones of Story:** (paragraph)

**Performance Notations:** (paragraph)

- Entries should be single-spaced, printed 2 sided, and should be about ½ page in length. Entries may be longer if you wish to include details about multiple versions of the story and a discussion of the traditional variations.
- Your story file may also include bibliographic lists of stories, books, anthologies, websites and other materials you have found to be particularly useful and wish to remember in future.

### ***Attendance at the National Storytelling Conference and Implementation Report*** (30 points)

Students must attend at least 20 hours of events at the National Storytelling Conference. This may include pre-conference sessions, workshops, presentations, intensives, keynotes, evening performances, “storyswaps” and discussion groups.

Attendance will be recorded on the attached attendance sheet that students will have signed at each event they go to.

Students will meet with the instructor, Rosemary Scott Vohs, during the conference. (TBA)

Students will write a 2-3 page (single spaced) report on their experience at NSC, focusing on the application/implementation of storytelling to their own field or interest, using the information, competencies, skills, and strategies they have learned at the conference. This report will include a list of the events attended.

### ***Practical Project*** (30 points)

Students will create a performance-based project that displays the use of storytelling in their specific interest area. Examples of projects may include (but not limited to):

- Classroom storytelling performance with curriculum links.
- Teaching storytelling to children/teens with subsequent performance.
- Storytelling presentation at an environmental education center/event.
- Storytelling performance at a summer camp, senior center, community group, etc.
- Inclusion of storytelling into a business presentation, or public speaking event.
- Delivery of a storytelling workshop or informational presentation.
- Implementation of storytelling into existing educational or business strategies.
- Etc.

A 2-3 page report outlining the planning, presentation, and evaluation will be submitted. If possible a videotape of the presentation will also be submitted.

### **Course communications and information:**

This course will be offered using “Blackboard” online technology. This will allow students to have access to all course materials, references, and an opportunity to participate in discussions, chat-rooms, etc. It is not required that you participate via “Blackboard” in order to take this course. Material will also be available on the instructor’s website and via email. Occasional conference calls may take place.

### **Course Fee:**

- \$48 per credit, plus conference registration fees\*\*
- Students will register through WWU’s Extended Education and Summer Programs office.
- Questions regarding credit or clock hours registration may be directed to:  
Extended Education and Summer Programs (EESP)  
Phone: 360-650-3308 - ask for Ariel  
Email: [eesp@wwu.edu](mailto:eesp@wwu.edu)
- Registration materials will also be available onsite at the conference registration area.

**\*\*Please note:** Conference fees are assessed separately.

See conference registration information at [www.storynet.org](http://www.storynet.org) to register for the conference directly with the National Storytelling Network.