THR 260 Storytelling: Our Cultural Voice
Summer 2017
A GER Arts/Cultures & Communities Course

Dates: 7/24/17-8/18/17
Place: Online (100%)
Instructor: Dr. Robin Mello,
   Email: rmello@uwm.edu,
   Website: www.robinmello.com
   Cell phone: 414-469-9279
   Office hours: Office Hours are virtual and by appointment in summer through D2L, Skype, or Face-time.

What to do if you have an emergency? Email, call or text Robin’s cell: 414-469-9279 ASAP. If you send me a text be sure to include your name in the text.

Important information for students regarding university policies:
http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU

Expected time-investment: 20 hrs per week x 4 weeks = 80 hrs

Catalogue Description: Development of skills to locate, clarify, and tell stories.

Course Description: This course is Theatre 260 explores the world of sharing stories. We engage in sharing our own and listening to others’, play with myths (such as The Odyssey), analyze folktales (like Cinderella), and explore how stories from our diverse cultures to help build identity and community connections. Students also have opportunities to develop their personal voice and storytelling performance skills.

Guidelines:
- Use your common sense and be compassionate to yourself and others.
- Empathize: We can’t do this without you so let’s work together.
- Participate online frequently.
- Organize your work ahead of deadlines.
- Meet the deadlines.
- Be curious and communicate frequently.
- Feel free to ask questions (questions are encouraged) in private or during class.
- If you do have a problem do not panic. D2L sometimes breaks down. Computers don’t always work the way we want them too. Just keep in contact with Robin, which brings us to:
  - Back up your data.
- Storytelling learning happens through feedback conversations, humane interactions, empathic listening, thoughtful reading and reflection, discussions, or creating works/projects.
- If you need a standing ovation, ask for it. We’ll send you a virtual one.
Course Goals:
- Expose students to the storytelling art form;
- Impact students' abilities to tell, communicate, and perform stories aloud;
- Examine stories from multi-cultural and diverse perspectives;
- Engage in Creative storytelling as a community building practice.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:
Students will...
- Demonstrate storytelling and story listening fundamental communication skills.
- Collect, express, and reflect on personal stories from their lived experience.
- Reflect on pluralism and diversity as it relates to the stories they tell, hear, and collect.
- Practice storytelling in community settings and through service-learning.
- Hone their storytelling skills.
- Interpret and analyze their own and others’ storytelling performances.
- Craft story performances and devise theatrical or (in the case of online courses) performative presentations that integrate, incorporate, and reflect their own and others’ stories.

Required Texts

GER Learning:
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. These are assessed by the Final Performance Assignment and using the Final Performance rubric (at end of this syllabus).

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 and collecting 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—it’s 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 and from a storytelling presentation/performance so that students explore effective communication between listeners and speakers.

**Assignment:** Final presentation

**Assessment:** rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceptional A Full points</th>
<th>Distinctive B 75% of points</th>
<th>Successful C 65% of points</th>
<th>Substandard D 50% of points</th>
<th>Failing F 0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive and clear</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Parts unclear</td>
<td>Unfocused</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative[1] Somewhat collaborative</td>
<td>Weak unfocused Collaboration</td>
<td>Little or no collaboration</td>
<td>No collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Work Some original work</td>
<td>Limited original work</td>
<td>Little or no original work</td>
<td>No original work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative choices strong and clearly defined</td>
<td>Creative choices limited in scope</td>
<td>Creative choices unclear</td>
<td>Creative choices nonexistent or inappropriate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses all aspects of storytelling performance formats: narration, characterization, gesture, flow/timing, movement, voice,</td>
<td>Uses most aspects of storytelling performance formats</td>
<td>Uses some aspects of storytelling performance formats</td>
<td>Uses little of storytelling performance formats</td>
<td>Uses no storytelling formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evocative use of imagery and descriptive language Interesting use of imagery and descriptive language</td>
<td>Little use of imagery and descriptive language</td>
<td>Very little use of imagery and descriptive language</td>
<td>No use of imagery and descriptive language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization is clear and delineated</td>
<td>Characterization is clear and somewhat delineated</td>
<td>Characterization is marginally delineated, choppy, or disjointed</td>
<td>Little characterization used</td>
<td>No characterization used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive[2]</td>
<td>Involves audience</td>
<td>Limited use of audience</td>
<td>Little or no use of audience</td>
<td>No audience participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated use of movement or gesture</td>
<td>Some use of gesture and movement</td>
<td>Limited use of gesture and movement</td>
<td>Little use of gesture and movement</td>
<td>No use of gesture and movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated use of voice and vocal range</td>
<td>Some use of voice and vocal range</td>
<td>Limited vocal range and use of voice</td>
<td>Little use of vocal range</td>
<td>No use of vocal range</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress made since first rehearsal Some progress made since first rehearsal</td>
<td>Limited progress made since first rehearsal</td>
<td>No or little progress made since first rehearsal</td>
<td>No progress made</td>
<td></td>
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How to succeed: You will succeed if you do all the work in an exemplary fashion, explore the subject, actively participate, and post your work before on on the deadline. Please note that ALL WORK IS REQUIRED.

Grades and Assessment: Guess what? By registering for this class, you already get an A (20 points). Why? Because all humans are already storytellers. You are already an expert in the content of this course. Congratulations.

All work is required. You can’t pass the course without doing all the work. You can, however, ask for an extension on any assignment. You are also invited to suggest alternative formats. But you must ask for extensions ahead of deadlines not after they have come and gone.

Grades:

- All work is required. You can’t pass the course without doing all the work).
- Points are awarded for each learning activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points/Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative, original, and high quality work</td>
<td>requisite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation/Attendance that is inclusive and responsive</td>
<td>requisite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-prepared and focused responses</td>
<td>requisite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registering for the course (you are already an expert)</td>
<td>20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td># 1. Getting to Know You Post</td>
<td>20/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2. A Baker’s Dozen Post</td>
<td>20/40</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3. Story sharing 5 posts &amp; 10 responses</td>
<td>20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3. Cultural Exploration w/posts</td>
<td>20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td># 4. Essay</td>
<td>20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5. Worksheet/Telling a story</td>
<td>20/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#5. Service learning report</td>
<td>60/60</td>
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<td><strong>200</strong></td>
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Calendar (how it works and what to do when):

Section #1 Getting to Know You: Examines your personal stories and voice. It also focuses on communication and compassionate listening.

Section #2 A Baker’s Dozen: Examines communicating with and through stories as well as listening and speaking, negotiating relationships, and building shared meaning.

Section #3: Sharing our Stories & Exploring our Cultural perspectives: Addresses developing reflectivity and critical perspectives by analyzing stories through a variety of lenses.
Section #4: Reflecting on sharing our cultural voices: Addresses developing reflectivity and critical perspectives by analyzing stories through a variety of lenses.

Section #5: Choice Section
EITHER OPT TO PERFORM A STORY (and video it) OR DO A SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT.

Choice A: Performing Stories: Requires students to develop skills for performing stories in face-to-face and virtual environments.

Choice B: Service-Learning & Storytelling in Education/community: practicing and working in community to implement and explore how storytelling builds community and how it influences learning.

7/24-7/27 Section 1—Getting to Know You

Why we do this? The first thing do in a storytelling course is connect with each other. We ‘exchange’ our stories-identify ourselves-and consider other people’s perspectives.

What will we be doing? Learning to communicate and to listen to others’ stories is the first step toward reflecting and understanding how stories are used to build cultural identity and community. In this course we are a learning community. We learn about each other by expressing stories.

What are we learning? Interpreting and expressing our own stories. Reflecting and attending to others’ stories.

DATE TASKS (20 points)
7/24- 7/27 • In D2L there is information and directions for module 1. Review this information.
• Watch/listen to the Introductory PowerPoin.t
• Watch the TED talks and other videos assigned in this module.
• Read syllabus
• Look at the first assignment "getting to know you." Make sure you have reviewed the questions you need to respond to.
• Make sure that your technology works and that you can access everything in this course.
• Begin a draft of first assignment (use the template!!!)
• Find a photo of yourself you can upload
• Submit the assignment in Dropbox

7/27 “Getting to Know You” is due by 11:30 PM
Deadline!
7/28-8/2 Section 2-Baker's Dozen

Why? This module is about how performance tellers tell stories. The tellers in the videos represent the breadth of storytelling performance (dramatized, aloud, and unscripted) that is being done in our culture today. Here are multiple models for you to critique and also so you have a sense of the variety and diversity of storytelling communities.

Doing? You get to be the audience and interact with the stories and the tellers you choose to watch. As an audience you are also part of the stories. Think about what connects you to the stories and what does not.

Learning? Exploring techniques and material, such as myths and legends from diverse cultures and sources.

DATE TASKS
Choose at least 6 Storytellers in D2L, (and yes, you get extra credit if you watch more than 6),

Read the following chapters from Storyteller's Guide: Introduction; How do I find the right stories; What makes a story strong or weak; How do I memorize and rehearse; what mistakes are frequently made; What are the ethics of storytelling?

After you have watched them and read the text, write a response. Spelling and writing mechanics (grammar) should be correct. In your post include responses to ALL the following:

- Short (2-4 sentences) review of what you thought of each teller.
- Storytellers that caught your interest (explain why/how).
- Storytellers you did not enjoy (explain why/how).
- Discuss in some depth variety of techniques and approaches you observed--how did the storytellers, on the whole perform and communicate the story? Were these techniques successful?
- Relate the information and approaches to things you read about in our text.
- If you could give these storytellers advice, what would it be? (be wise)
- What, if any, of these videos/storytellers would you recommend to others? (explain your ideas)
- How did these videos connect with what you have read in the texts?

Due 8/2 @ 11:30 PM
8/3-8/9 Section 3- Sharing our Stories

Why? This is a simulation. It is designed to build your experience of oral history collection (a folklore and storytelling skill). We are simulating a purposeful learning community (we already are in many ways) and exploring how storytelling helps us build a shared identity.

Doing? In the Discussion we’ve created a thematic story library. You will post your experiences, collect and read the stories of others.

Learning? Demonstration of fundamental communication skills. Collecting, expressing, and reporting on personal stories of lived experience. Honing storytelling skills.

DATE TASKS
8/3-8/9
- Look at the story prompts in the Discussion Forum (there’s a long list).
- **You MUST post in the first forum (which is about culture).**
  After you post in the first forum you can choose any forum you like.
- Post 5 more stories and then respond to at least 10 stories from others in this course.

8/10-8/14 Section 4-Reflective Writing

Why? We want to be able to make sense of our stories—so they have more meaning for us. We are using interpretation and narrative inquiry skills so that we can examine what our stories might mean and why they might be important.

Doing? You are going to create a theory about storytelling and an analysis of how your stories and cultural narratives link (or don't) with others' in this class. You will write a short analysis (using the steps that are outlined in the PowerPoint) to evaluate and explain your ideas about our stories.

Learning? Interpreting, expressing, and analyzing the stories of others.

DATE TASKS (20 points)
8/10-8/14
- Please read the required reading and take notes: what do you agree with, what do you not agree with, what do you already know, etc.?
- Next, look at the Assignment directions and Ppt
  - This assignment is an essay about our archive of collected stories. You are going to reflect on what our stories mean when we put them together. What do they say about the people in this course? Also, you are going to develop a theory about storytelling using these data.

Deadline
8/14 11:30 PM
8/10-8/18 Section 5-Choice A: Performing

Why? It’s a storytelling course—storytelling performance is one of the core skills this course explores.

Doing? The only way to learn more about performing and telling story is to do it.

Learning? Demonstration of fundamental communication skills. Honing storytelling skills & crafting a story performance.

Date Tasks (80 points)
1. Read the directions.
2. Look around and find a story that you think reflects something about your cultural perspective.
3. Make sure it is a story you want to share.
4. View all the PowerPoints for this module, read the final presentation directions
   • Work out a work plan and rehearsal process for the story. It is your final project for this course.
   • Begin to fill out the worksheet
   • Rehearse your story.
5. Figure out how your technology will work and how it will interface in D2L.
6. Video capture your storytelling
7. Storytelling video and worksheet are due in the dropbox by 11:30 PM.
   • Check in to see your video successfully downloaded and you can access and see it.

OR.....
8/10-8/18 Section 5-Choice B: Service-Learning

Why?  Stories have been the primary way that people learn, build communities, and explore who they are. Now, apply this idea to a service-learning (S-L) project.

Doing?  Service-Learning. This assignment is a bit different from the ones we've done so far. But for those of you who have worked on service projects before you will feel right at home.

Date  Tasks (80 points)

This is more open ended than many service-learning projects you might encounter in other courses. Not to worry. Explore, challenge yourself, and design something you want to do for YOUR learning.

FIND A SITE: Look around and locate a learning community that you are a member of or that you are connected to. I STRONGLY suggest you think about a school, community center, library, religious group, preschool, coffee group, playgroup, blog, online group, Boys & Girls Club, organization you are part of, family group you are part of, neighborhood group you are part of, etc. The real trick is to look around your every-day life and figure out where there is a 'classroom.' Someplace where learning happens. Remember too: schooling and learning are different. Learning groups take place everywhere. It should be a) connected to you, b) a place where learning already happens, c) a group that will allow you to involve them in this 'assignment.

B- CREATE A PLAN. Expect to work about 10 hours on this project (including the hours spent working on the planning portion) Work out how you will incorporate storytelling with this community and at this site. How can you best meet the needs of the organization and also weave in story? One of the simplest ways is to tell some stories to others then video record it. Or you might want to do an oral history collection, asking people to tell you the story of their lives or to respond to story questions. Report on this plan using the plan worksheet.

8/15-8/17  PUT THE PLAN INTO ACTION. Keep a log and a journal of what you did and how you did this.

8/18  Submit a report of what happened in the dropbox-due AUGUST 18TH.