

English 270: Introduction to Folklore
Monday & Wednesday, 11:30-1:18, PAES Building A0103

Instructor: Kate Parker

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 11-2, first floor of Thompson Library (by Buckeye Bar)

Course Description

This course explores forms of traditional, vernacular culture--including verbal art, custom, and material culture--shared by men and women from a number of regional, ethnic, religious, and occupational groups. At the same time, we will consider various interpretive, theoretical approaches to examples of folklore and folklife discussed. Recurring central issues will include the construction of personal and group identities, the nature of creativity and artistic expression, and the dynamics of tradition. Students will learn to identify, collect, represent ethically, and offer sophisticated analyses of different forms of vernacular culture.

Required Texts

- Martha C. Sims and Martine Stephens, *Living Folklore: An Introduction to the Study of People and Their Traditions* 2005 (available at campus bookstores)
- All other readings for the course will be accessible on Carmen (carmen.osu.edu). Be sure to bring these assigned readings to class on the day they are due (either printed out or on your laptop). Information about course assignments and other announcements will also be available on Carmen.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

- 30% Collection and Analysis Project
See assignment for details (due Wednesday, 11/30)
- 20% Midterm Exam
In class written exam (Wednesday, 11/2)
- 20% Final Exam
Written comprehensive exam (Monday, 12/5, 11:30am to 1:18pm)
- 15% Reading Quizzes
You will take seven short quizzes based on the assigned reading(s) for that day. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class and missed quizzes will not be available for make-up, so be sure to arrive on time. I will drop the lowest out of your seven quiz grades.
- 15% Participation
The success of this class depends on your active participation. Your grade will reflect not only your attendance, but also your preparation of materials, engagement in discussion, and respectful interaction with me and with your classmates.

GEC Arts and Humanities

Goals/Rationale: The purpose of courses in this category is for students to evaluate significant writing and works of art. Such studies develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

Learning Objectives: Students develop abilities to be enlightened observers or active participants in the visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical or written arts. Students describe and interpret achievement in the arts and literature. Students explain how works of art and literature express social and cultural issues.

Course Policies

- **Attendance** is required. You are allowed no more than two unexcused absences. Additional absences will lower your participation grade. Please document excused absences (e.g., medical reasons). If you must be absent, make arrangements with one of your colleagues from the class to get the notes you missed.
- **No late assignments** will be accepted.
- **If you miss an exam** without a valid excuse (e.g., a doctor's note), you will not be allowed to make it up. On the exams, you will be responsible for all materials covered in the readings, lectures, films, and class discussions.
- **Academic misconduct:** Any student suspected of engaging in academic misconduct as set forth in section 3335-23-02 of the Code of Student Conduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. Academic misconduct is defined in the code as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university, or subvert the educational process." Examples include but are not limited to violation of course rules, submitting plagiarized work, knowingly providing or receiving information during exams or quizzes, and other such acts of academic dishonesty.
- **Class Cancellation Policy:** In the unlikely event of class cancellation due to emergency, I will contact you via email and the homepage of our course Carmen site, as well as request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the classroom door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

Resources

- **Writing Lab** peer tutors offer students individual, confidential help with all aspects of writing. The Lab maintains a walk-in service, and you can schedule appointments by calling 366-9411. If you are interested in on-line writing advice, visit the OWL (On-Line Writing Lab) at www.cstw.osu.edu.
- I will gladly modify this course to make accommodations for differing abilities, but you must first register with the **Office for Disability Services (ODS)** at 226 Warner Center, ext. 441. After you receive your authorized accommodation from ODS, you should show me your access plan and discuss your needs with me. Ideally, we should meet within the first week of class.

Daily Schedule

	Topics/Activities	Reading due	Assignments
Wednesday 9/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Overview of the syllabus and Carmen 		
Monday 9/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and major concepts 	LF 1-20: "Folklore"	In class: Quiz #1
Wednesday 9/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is "lore"? • Examples of verbal lore 	Excerpt from <i>Mules and Men</i> (19-37) on Carmen	
Monday 10/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does folklore work, and why should we care? 	"Folk Narratives" and "Kentucky Fried Rat" both on Carmen (read 229-236 for "KFR")	
Wednesday 10/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are "the folk"? • Film: <i>The Art of Ironworking</i> (16 minutes) • Guest speaker: Elo-Hanna Seljamaa 	LF 30-63: "Groups"	In class: Quiz #2
Monday 10/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradition • Film: "David Holt Plays Mountain Music" (25 minutes) 	LF 64-93: "Tradition"	In class: Quiz #3
Wednesday 10/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More on tradition • Film: <i>Painted Bride</i> (25 minutes) 		
Monday 10/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ritual 	LF 94-126: "Ritual"	In class: Quiz #4
Wednesday 10/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More on ritual • Film: <i>Gathering Up Again: Fiesta in Santa Fe</i> (46 minutes) 		
Monday 10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance • Guest speaker: Mara Penrose 	LF 127-152, 167-173: "Performance"	In class: Quiz #5
Wednesday 10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More on text & context 	"Stalking with Stories" on Carmen	

Monday 10/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review for midterm Halloween lore! 		
Wednesday 11/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Midterm exam (in class) 		
Monday 11/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Collection and Analysis Project Basic fieldwork guidelines and practice with equipment 		
Wednesday 11/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretive frameworks Mini analysis: jokes 	LF 174-201: “Approaches to Interpreting Folklore” and “From Jock to Joke” on Carmen	In class: Quiz #6
Monday 11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Folklore and worldview Guest speaker: Cassie Patterson 	“Folklore and Cultural Worldview” and “Thinking Ahead” both on Carmen	In class: Quiz #7
Wednesday 11/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More on worldview 	Excerpts from <i>The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down</i> (3-11, 21-37) on Carmen	
Monday 11/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reciprocal Ethnography Project check-in 	“I was afraid someone like you...” on Carmen	
Wednesday 11/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NO CLASS (Work on Collection and Analysis Projects) 		
Monday 11/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Folklore in the Digital Age: E-lore 		
Wednesday 11/30 (last day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn in Collection and Analysis Project Final Exam Review 		Collection and Analysis Project Due in class

Final Exam: Monday, 12/5, 11:30am to 1:18pm