

English 2367.05: The U.S. Folk Experience
The Stories We Tell
Meets WF 12:45PM-2:05PM| Denney Hall 213

Syllabus

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Office Hours: WF 11:00AM-12:30PM | Denney Hall 449



[Image by H. Thompson]

Course Description

2367.05 is a second-level composition course with a focus on the US folk experience. In this three-hour writing course, for which English 1110 is a prerequisite, you will continue to develop and refine the skills in analysis, research, and composition that you practiced in English 1110. This course emphasizes persuasive and researched writing, revision, and composing in various forms and media. In addition, you will build upon and improve your mastery of academic writing with and from sources; refine your ability to synthesize information; create arguments about a variety of discursive, visual, and/or cultural artifacts; and become more proficient with and sophisticated in your research strategies and employment of the conventions of standard academic discourses.

For this course, we will use the core concepts and methods of the field of folklore as the basis for reading assignments and writing projects. Folklorists study cultural expression that is presented in a variety of different forms, but our focus here will be on folk narrative – what are the stories we tell each other in America and how do we use them in our daily lives? How do folk narratives – fairy

tales and folktales, personal and family narratives, legends, and myths – give meaningful shape to ambiguous realities, affect audiences, help us celebrate our diverse traditions, but also bind us together?

Skills we will draw on include analyzing complex sources, conducting academic research, conducting ethnographic fieldwork, integrating the ideas of others with your own ideas, understanding the structure of written compositions, and using appropriate conventions and style for a given writing situation. Habits of thought such as valuing complexity, accepting ambiguity, and keeping an open and curious mind are essential for writing strong papers in this course.

GEC Requirements

As a second-level writing course at OSU, English 2367 fulfills the following GEC categories:

Writing and Communication coursework develops students' skills in written communication and expression, reading, critical thinking, and oral expression, and visual expression.

Level Two (2367) courses have the following Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Through critical analysis, discussion, and writing, students demonstrate the ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively.
2. Students apply written, oral, and visual communication skills and conventions of academic discourse to the challenges of a specific discipline.
3. Students access and use information critically and analytically

Diversity coursework foster students' understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Social Diversity in the United States courses have the following Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students describe and evaluate the roles of such categories as race, gender and sexuality, disability, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

Required Materials

Rosenwasser, David and Jill Stephen. *Writing Analytically* 7th Ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2014.

Yolen, Jane. *Briar Rose*. New York: Tor, 1992. Print.

- any edition

Additional readings posted to Carmen site

Please Note: You will need to have access to all assigned readings during each class meeting, either in hard copy or digitally. Failure to bring required materials restricts your ability to participate fully in class, and may be treated as an absence.

Course Requirements

Ethnographic Project.....	40%
Research Proposal	10%
Transcript and Reflection	10%
Analytical Paper	20%
Oral Presentation.....	10%
Short Response Assignments (3).....	30%
Short Response #1	10%
Short Response #2	10%
Short Response #3	10%
Participation.....	20%
Reading Quizzes/Free Writes	10%
Engagement in Class	10%

Grade Scale

A	93	B+	87	C+	77	D+	67
A-	90	B	83	C	73	D	60
		B-	80	C-	70		

Course Goals

Students will both recognize the diversity and richness of folklore in America and understand why traditional narratives remain important in our contemporary society.

Students will be able to critically analyze folk narratives as powerful cultural materials.

Students will thoughtfully consider the ways in which folk narratives interact with race, gender and sexuality, disability, class, ethnicity, and religion.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

- Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, each unexcused absence after *three* will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade. Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not affect your grade. It is your responsibility to contact your instructor as soon as possible if you miss class. Six unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.
- Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

Email Policy

- Email is my primary method of communication with you outside of class. I expect you to check your email at least once every 24 hours, including weekends. You will be held responsible for information that has been sent via email within this time frame.
- Email is also the most reliable way to contact me. I will check my email at least once every 24 hours (often more.) Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions or concerns.

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Faculty Rule 3335-5-487 states, "It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term 'academic misconduct' includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee." In addition, it is a violation of the student code of conduct to submit without the permission of the instructors work for one course that has also been submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of another course. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resources/>).

Late Work Policy

- Late submission of an assignment will result in the deduction of one full letter grade for each day past the due date (i.e. a B+ becomes a C+).
- Your grade will not be affected when an assignment is late for reasons that would

result in an excused absence. It is, however, your responsibility to contact me about extensions on assignments. If you fail to do so, your grade will be affected.

Class Cancellation Policy

- If class is cancelled due to emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note 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.

Electronics Policy

- I understand that electronics are sometimes helpful in the classroom – this said, please be respectful of our time and refrain from texting, surfing the web, etc. Disrespectful use of technology disrupts your instructor’s ability to teach, your classmates’ ability to concentrate, and your ability to succeed in the course. Please turn off your cell phones and restrict computer/tablet use to course-related activities. Failure to do so will affect your participation grade.

Classroom Community Policy

- In this class, the discussion of readings, ideas, and your writing is at the center of everything we do. We will frequently work with sensitive issues, and these issues demand that we discuss and interact with respect and maturity. Everyone should feel welcome, respected, and safe in our classroom.



[Illustration by John Batten]

Resources

The **Ombudsman of the Writing Programs**, Debra Lowry (lowry.40@osu.edu), mediates conflicts between instructors and students in Writing Programs courses. Her Autumn 2015 walk-in office hours in Denney Hall 441 are Monday, 1-3PM, and Thursday, 9-11AM. All conversations with the Ombudsman are confidential.

The **OSU Writing Center** is available to provide free, professional writing tutoring and consultation. You may set up an appointment by visiting <http://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center> or calling 688-4291.

Leila Ben-Nasr is the **Research Tutor** for OSU Libraries. Leila is available to provide help to students during any stage of the research process. She is available for tutoring sessions at the Writing Center in Thompson Library located behind the reference desk in Thompson 120. Research tutoring hours are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 1PM-3PM and 4PM-6PM. Thursday tutoring hours are from 1PM-3PM. All sessions are walk-in appointments. Leila can be reached at ben-nasr.1@osu.edu. Another excellent place for research assistance for this class in particular is the **OSU Center for Folklore Studies**, located in the Ohio Stadium Room 218. Visit their website at <http://cfs.osu.edu>.

Students with documented disabilities who have registered with **the Office of Student Life Disability Services** will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. SLDS is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; Tel.: 614-292-3307; VRS: 614-429-1334; Email: slds@osu.edu; Web: slds.osu.edu

The **Student Advocacy Center** empowers students to overcome obstacles to their growth both inside and outside the classroom and helps them maximize their educational experience while pursuing their degrees at The Ohio State University. The SAC is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. You can visit them in person at 1120 Lincoln Tower, call at (614) 292-1111, email advocacy@osu.edu, or visit their website: <http://studentlife.osu.edu/advocacy/>.

Schedule

Week One:

Wednesday, August 26th

Topics: Introduction/Syllabus Overview, Ethnographic Project Overview, What is Folklore?
Reading Due:
Writing Due:

Friday, August 28th

Topics: Defining and Exploring Folklore, The Analytical Frame of Mind, The 5 Analytical Moves
Reading Due: Schoemaker – “Basic Concepts of Folkloristics” [Carmen], Key Terms Handout [Carmen], *Writing Analytically* (1-33)
Writing Due:

Week Two:

Wednesday, September 2nd

Topics: Fairy Tales in America – Fairy Tale Structure

Reading Due: Aarne and Thompson – from *The Types of the Folktale* [Carmen], Propp – from *The Morphology of the Folktale* [Carmen]

Writing Due: Free Write – “What is a fairy tale?” (1-2 pages) (*due in class*)

Friday, September 4th

Topics: Fairy Tales in America – Disney, Contemporary Storytelling

Reading Due: Grimm – Zipes – “Breaking the Disney Spell”

[Carmen], Stone – “Once Upon a Time Today: Grimm Tales for Contemporary Performers” [Carmen]

Writing Due:

Week Three:

Wednesday, September 9th

Topics: Fairy Tales in America: Davenport’s *Willa: An American Snow White*

Reading Due: Grimm – “Snow White” [Carmen], Zipes – “Tom Davenport’s “From the Brothers Grimm” Series” [Carmen]

Writing Due: SR #1 – “Fairy Tales in Contemporary Society” (2 pages) due in Carmen Dropbox by *midnight*

Friday, September 11th

Topics: Fairy Tales in America: Jack Tales

Reading Due: Lindahl – “Jack Tales” [Carmen], Chase – “Old Fire Dragaman” [Carmen], Gutierrez – “The Jack Tale: A Definition of a Folk Tale Sub-Genre” [Carmen], De Certeau Handout [Carmen]

Writing Due:

Week Four:

Wednesday, September 16th

Topics: Storytelling and Experience – Fairy and Folk Tales

Reading Due: "Sleeping Beauty" [Carmen], Yolen – *Briar Rose* [Ch. 1-10]

Writing Due:

Friday, September 18th

Topics: Storytelling and Experience – Fairy and Folk Tales

Reading Due: Yolen – *Briar Rose* [Ch. 11-20]

Writing Due: Free Write – "How is Yolen weaving together elements of the "Sleeping Beauty" fairy tale and the Holocaust?" (1-2 pages) (*due in class*)

Week Five:

Wednesday, September 23rd

Topics: Storytelling and Experience – Fairy and Folk Tales

Reading Due: Yolen – *Briar Rose* [Ch. 21-33 (end)]

Writing Due:

Friday, September 25th

Topics: Storytelling and Experience – Fairy and Folk Tales → Personal Narratives

Reading Due: Grimm – "The Story of the Youth Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was" [Carmen], Barzak – "The Boy Who Went Forth" [Carmen], Grimm – "The Girl Without Hands" [Carmen], Gordon – "The Powers of the Handless Maiden" [Carmen]

Writing Due: Free Write – "If you had to apply one fairy tale to your own life, which would it be and why?" (1-2 pages) (*due in class*)

Week Six:

Wednesday, September 30th

Topics: Storytelling and Experience – Personal Narratives

Reading Due: Tangherlini – Selections from *Talking Trauma* [Carmen]

Writing Due:

Friday, October 2nd

Topics: Introduction to Ethnographic Interviewing, Writing Research Proposals, The Evolving Thesis, Short Response #2 Briefing

Reading Due: Sims and Stephens – "Collecting Data: The Nuts and Bolts of Fieldwork" [Carmen], *Writing Analytically* (147-161)

Writing Due:

Week Seven:

Wednesday, October 7th

Topics: Ethnography and Personal Narrative, Interviewing, From Transcript to Analytical Paper

Reading Due: Brunvand – “The Research Paper” (selections)

[Carmen], Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein – “Fieldwriting: From Talk to Text” (selections) [Carmen], Questions to Consider About Oral Narratives Handout + Interview Questions One [Carmen]

Writing Due: Peer Interviews (2 pages) (*due in class*)

Friday, October 9th

NO CLASS

Week Eight:

Wednesday, October 14th

Topics: Family Storytelling

Reading Due: Yocom – “Family Folklore and Oral History Interviews: Strategies for Introducing a Project to One’s Own Relatives,” Yocom – “Blessing the Ties That Bind: Storytelling at Family Festivals”

[Carmen]

Writing Due: Short Response #2 – “Story From Childhood” (2 pages) due by class time Oct. 9th in HARD COPY

Friday, October 16th

NO CLASS

– Autumn Break

Week Nine:

Wednesday, October 21st

Topics: Local Character Anecdotes and Tall Tales

Reading Due: Mullen – “Local Character Anecdotes and Tall Tales” [Carmen]

Writing Due: Research Proposal (2 pages) due in class in hard copy

Friday, October 23rd

Topics: Historical Legends, Supernatural Legends
Reading Due: Alver – “Historical Legends and Historical Truth” [Carmen], Grider – “How Texans Remember the Alamo” [Carmen], Milligan – “The “Truth” About the Bigfoot Legend” [Carmen]
Writing Due:

Week Ten:

Wednesday, October 28th

NO CLASS

– Brittany will be away: please select and print your favorite ghost story for class on Friday (you can also write out your own story if you’d like!)

Friday, October 30th

Topics: Supernatural Legends, The CFS Archive

Reading Due: Ellis – “The Fast Food Ghost” [Carmen]

Writing Due: Bring in a ghost story to share!

Week Eleven:

Wednesday, November 4th

Topics: Supernatural Legends, Fixing Weak Thesis Statements, Context and Interpretation

Reading Due: Grider – “Children’s Telling of Ghost Stories” [Carmen],

Bird – “Playing with Fear: The Adolescent Legend Trip” [Carmen],

Writing Analytically (119-126), *Writing Analytically* (175-179)

Writing Due:

Friday, November 6th

Topics: Urban Legends, “The Vanishing Hitchhiker,” Evidence vs. Claims

Reading Due: Brunvand – “Urban Legends” [Carmen], Brunvand –

Selections from *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* [Carmen], *Writing*

Analytically (89-96, 103-109)

Writing Due: Bring in an urban legend to share

Week Twelve:

Wednesday, November 11th

NO CLASS – Veteran’s Day

Friday, November 13th

Topics: Myth, Oral Presentation Assignment Discussion, Transcript and Reflection Assignment Discussion

Reading Due: Bright – “A Coyote Reader – Preface” [Carmen], Bright – “A Coyote Reader – The Mythic Background” [Carmen], Tyler – “Coyote Places the Stars” [Carmen], Starritt and Bright – “Coyote Steals Fire” [Carmen]

Writing Due: Short Response #3 – “Urban Legends” (2 pages) due *by class time*

Week Thirteen:

Wednesday, November 18th

Topics: Myth and Ethnographic Quandaries

Reading Due: Toelken – “The Yellowman Tapes, 1966-1997” [Carmen], Final Paper Assignment Discussion

Writing Due: Free Write – “What do you think of how Dr. Toelken handled his unique situation? What would you have done?” (1-2 pages) (*due in class*)

Friday, November 20th

NO CLASS

– Brittany will be away: please work on your transcript and reflection assignment

Week Fourteen:

Wednesday, November 25th

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

Friday, November 27th

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

Week Fifteen:

Wednesday, December 2nd

Topics: Individual Conferences [Optional]

Reading Due:

Writing Due: Ethnographic Project Transcript (at least 1 page) and Reflection (2 pages) due in Carmen Dropbox by *midnight*

Friday, December 4th

Topics: Oral Presentations

Reading Due:

Writing Due: Oral Presentation due *by class time*

Week Sixteen:

Wednesday, December 9th

Topics: Evaluations, Sum Up, Final Paper Reminders, Celebration!

Reading Due:

Writing Due: Final Analytical Paper (5-6 pages) due in Carmen Dropbox by *midnight*