

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*4310	Course Title: Special Studies in English: Folk Narrative	Date of Offering: W'19
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Course Instructor: J. Schacker	Course Format: seminar
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Brief Course Synopsis:

This seminar serves as an introduction to the study of verbal art and oral traditions -- modes and forms of expression that are both part of everyday life and can also carry profound cultural and personal meaning. We will study some of the classic oral narrative genres — including proverb, folktale, and legend — while emphasizing forms of storytelling and verbal creativity that currently emerge in everyday conversation, in our own communities. Our discussions will distinguish between orality as a trope, used in various kinds of writing, and orality as a medium of communication; we will also talk about the practical, ideological, and ethical questions surrounding the entextualization of oral traditions (the practice of rendering them in written form), including their (frequently problematic) use in children's literature. Along with discussion of key readings in the history, theory, and practice of folklore study, students in this course will be introduced to the fundamentals of folklore fieldwork, transcription, and discourse analysis. We will explore some of the ways in which theoretical frameworks current in literary studies intersect with or differ from those in the fields of folklore and sociolinguistics. As a double-weighted seminar, this is a discussion-oriented class and our meetings will often serve as workshops -- a space for sharing research discoveries, rehearsing and debating ideas, trying out theoretical models on specific examples, and practicing skills and techniques before applying them to individual assignments. Research tasks in this course are both library-based and field-based. Students will be completing the online CORE tutorial (Course in Research Ethics).

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

[subject to change; be sure to check the course outline at the beginning of the semester]

seminar participation (includes general participation & presentations) 15%

in-class writing activities 15%

essay 1: personal narrative project 20% (transcription and essay of min 900 words)

essay 2: folktale project 20% (essay of min 1500 words)

final essay: legend project 30% (collection, transcription, prelim analysis, final paper of min 3000 words)

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

most readings will be on ARES/electronic course reserve

Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*

Richard Bauman, ed. *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments*

Burt Feintuch, ed., *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*

Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research Practices*

Barbara Johnstone, *Stories, Community, and Place*

+ selected articles

Other information that you wish to share about the course (optional):

For students completing an English specialization under the old academic calendar, this course can serve as 1 credit of 20th/21st c. literature.