

INFO 5440 | Storytelling for Information Professionals

Course Syllabus

Dr. Tonda Bone

"Those who tell the stories rule the world."
~ Hopi American Indian proverb

Hi, everyone, and welcome to the course! My name is Dr. Tonda Bone, but you'll see me refer to myself as Dr. T. Feel free to do the same! I am thrilled you have elected to take this course. The course focuses on two aspects of storytelling: 1. training in the art of storytelling in practice (this component will have an emphasis on technique, performance, and audience dynamics) and 2. cognitive development in the foundations of history, theory, methods, and bibliographic resources related to storytelling.

The goals of this course are to assist students with the development of story selection, preparation, and telling skills; planning programs and projects in schools, libraries, corporate, and other settings; and developing a deeper understanding of the nature of story and its applications in research, the student's work, or personal endeavors. Online class discussions will center around assigned readings and videos, stories told by students, and instructor-led topics.

Course Description

The official course description is:

Storytelling ethnography, history, theory, methods, and bibliographic resources. Story research, analysis, selection, adaptation, and preparation. Oral performance development and audience dynamics. Program planning, implementation, evaluation, and grant writing for schools, libraries or other information settings.

Pre-Requisites

There are no pre-requisites to take this course.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the psychological impact of communicating through story sharing and story telling.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the origins and structure of story and storytelling.
- Describe methods for using storytelling for specific audiences and purposes.
- Demonstrate ethical practices in story collecting and storytelling.
- Describe plagiarism considerations and copyright issues.
- Use digital media to create and publish online storytelling performances.
- Demonstrate story editing and development techniques to meet performance requirements.

- Demonstrate storytelling skills through recorded self-performances.

Course Overview

The primary focus in this course is on:

1. The cognitive and theoretical aspects of storytelling in oral history, teaching and learning, organizational environments, and communication.
2. The practical techniques of storytelling performance to achieve specific goals and objectives.

While a general category may be assigned (e.g., autobiographical story as opposed to fairy tale or picture book adaptation), in general students are allowed to select the stories they choose to perform. Story performances are not directly related to particular module content. Each module considers an aspect of storytelling, from history to bibliographics to teaching and learning to urban legends.

Professor Information



Tonda J. Bone, Ph.D.

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WWW: <http://tondabone.com/>

Dr. T's Accessibility and Responsiveness Parameters:

I think you will find me highly accessible and responsive to you in both discussion and via email. Please use the discussion boards as much as possible for questions and problem solving so that I and your peers can all deliver assistance. Please also use discretion with email and consult with me as needed for real problems you cannot otherwise solve via assistance in the boards. For example, assignment-related questions should go in the Assignment/Peer Help forum; questions about your specific grade should be directed to me privately via course messaging.

I generally will be actively in the class every day Monday - Friday. I generally will take off all day on Saturday and Sunday, so if you have questions about assignments, please catch me during business days. For rare occasions that I am away at a conference or doing consulting, I will post messages to the class.

To ensure same-day response to questions, please post them before 5 pm Central Time.

Course Access

This course instructional content is presented online via Canvas LMS (learning management system)

technology. The course begins the first official day of classes in the semesters in which it is offered. Registered students will be uploaded into the student database and can access the course using their UNT EUID and password beginning on the first day.

If this is your first Canvas course, you may find the Canvas Student Guides (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701-canvas-student-guide-table-of-contents>) to be a helpful "got to" resource.

Course Requirements

Overview:

You will respond to weekly discussion topics related to the current module,

Over the course of the semester, you also will create and publish 3 storytelling performances of 3 - 5 minutes in length. Part of this practical storytelling component will require you review and respond to each of your group member's performances. The final aspect of the performance is a self-evaluation assignments.

The course concludes with a story journal and analysis assignment.

Please see the **Assignment List & Grading page** linked in the course menu for a full description of discussion and assignment expectations.

Grading is on a point scale based upon a goal of 100 points. Thus, the point value for each assignment/task also represents its percentage of your total grade.

Assignments:

Assignment	Points
Class Participation [Discussion; 9 modules at 5 points each]	45 points
Story Skeleton Assignment	4 Points
Video Test File	3 Points
Performance 1	6 Points
Praise & Appreciation (P&A) for Performance 1	5 Points
Performance 2	8 Points
Praise & Appreciation (P&A) for Performance 2	5 Points
Storytelling Performance #3	9 Points
Praise & Appreciation (P&A) Post for 3rd Performance	5 Points
One-Week Story Journal	10 Points
Total	100 Points

Course Evaluation Scale

A = 90 - 100 points

B = 80 - 85 points

C = 70 - 79 points

D = 60 - 69 points

F = 59 points or below

Late Work Policy

All work is due at Midnight, Central time, on the date stated on the course calendar.

Late discussion posts are not accepted.

Late assignments may be excused and accepted only by prior arrangement with the instructor or in the case of a documented illness or emergency. Any other late assignments receive an automatic 11% deduction for each 24 hours late. No unexcused work will be accepted after 48 hours past the original due date.

Students are advised that it is better to submit partial work for some credit rather than submitting nothing. Please plan accordingly.

Required Texts and Software

Super Simple Storytelling: A Can Do Guide for Every Classroom, Every Day. Kendall Haven. Libraries Unlimited. 2000.

Other readings will be provided in the course or via the UNT Library's electronic resources.

Software will be free or trial versions. Student will need to create accounts to download and or use the respective software.

Required Course Technology

The course is offered via the Blackboard Learn platform, but we also utilize other social media and Web 2.0 technologies as described below.

Reliable Internet access is required. Please do NOT take this course if you do not have access to reliable high-speed Internet in order to perform your stories and watch related videos.

Other specifications:

- 1. Hardware.** Your system's hardware must support Blackboard Learn. See the [Blackboard Learn Technical Requirements](#) to evaluate your system; please see the [UNT Helpdesk Blackboard Learn](#) page in order to ensure your computer system meets the minimum requirements to work with Blackboard Learn.
- 2. Streaming media player.** The majority of videos in this course are streamed, but you may need to download a media player for the occasional file. I suggest the [VLC media player](#) by VideoLAN.
- 3. Speakers.** Obviously, you also will need speakers in order to hear audio.
- 4. Microphone.** You will need a microphone to record your storytelling performances. **Please note:** Occasionally, integrated microphones (i.e., built into the laptop) pick up so much of the computer's internal noise that the quality of the audio is not acceptable for your presentation. In those cases, you may need to

borrow or purchase an external microphone.

5. Digital camera. You will need a digital video recording camera in order to record your storytelling performance assignments. An integrated Web camera (i.e., built into your laptop) usually is sufficient.

6. Other software. We use various technologies and software applications in the course (YouTube, wikis, etc.). You will not be required to purchase software, but you may need to create an account with the provider in order to use the software and participate in the course.

Technical Skill Requirements

Students should possess general computer skills, including how to download and move files, including graphic and audio files.

Technical Support

Student Helpdesk:

UIT Helpdesk
Sage Hall, Room 130
940-565-2324
helpdesk@unt.edu

Course Participation Policy & Expectations

This is an online class, not a self-paced course. Assignments and discussion have due dates to which students must adhere. The entire course is available to you, and you are free to work ahead. However, discussion and other collaborative work in the class must follow the due dates listed on the course calendar in order to maintain the class flow.

Participation occurs through your discussion posts and other activities submitted via the discussion forums. Work should emphasize content and the student's assimilation of knowledge; thus, discussion posts, written assignments, and other projects/tasks should be substantive, and statements and arguments should be supported by examples and/or relevant citations. Feedback will be provided to help the student recognize strengths and improve any weaker areas.

Discussion activities require frequent and timely interaction on your part. Students are required to visit the class on a regular basis to read and respond to communications, course material, and course activities/assignments.

Course business is conducted through the Main discussion forum and via course Announcements. You are required to read the Main forum regularly to keep apprised of changes and additional information related to the course, its structure, and its operation. You also are required to regularly check your email account associated with this course in order to receive course announcements.

I foster a course culture of support, mentorship, and collaboration. I provide several areas in the forums where you can share course-related and professional information, as well having social interaction and sharing. These forums are strictly optional.

Student Information Notification

Blackboard enables faculty to track where and when students visit various areas of the course site, times of first and last logins, and number of conference postings. This information is used, in part, in determining the participation grade for the course.

Late Work Policy

All work is due at Midnight, Central time, on the date stated on the course calendar. Late work may be excused and accepted only by prior arrangement with the instructor or in the case of a documented illness or emergency. Any other late work receives an automatic 11% deduction for each 24 hours late. No unexcused work will be accepted after 48 hours past the original due date.

Students are advised that it is better to submit partial work for some credit rather than submitting nothing. Please plan accordingly.

"Attendance"

The instructor reserves the right to request of the Registrar that a student be dropped from the course (W or WF) due to unsatisfactory progress. All students are expected to fully participate in all class activities. Full participation includes web-based activities.

Information about the University of North Texas' Attendance Policy may be found [here](#).

Incomplete Grades

The Graduate Catalog located at <http://www.unt.edu/catalogs/> describes and explains grading policies. A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only for a justifiable reason and only if the student is passing the course. The student is responsible for contacting the instructor to request an incomplete and discuss requirements for completing the course if an approval is agreed upon. If an incomplete is not removed within the time frame agreed upon by instructor and student, the instructor may assign a grade of F.

Withdrawal from the Course

The Graduate Catalog located at <http://www.unt.edu/catalogs/> describes and explains withdrawal policies and deadlines. The UNT semester course schedule lists specific deadlines. A grade of Withdraw (W) or Withdraw-Failing (WF) will be given depending on a student's participation and grades to date. Please note that a student who simply stops participating and does not file a UNT withdrawal form may receive an F.

Effort Expected

This is a three-credit-hour course. Students can expect to work 3 - 4 hours per week for each credit hour. This means students may spend about 9 - 12 hours a week on readings, assignments, discussions, and assignment preparation.

Netiquette

I foster a collaborative and supportive environment in this course. And, this is a professionally oriented course. I welcome all viewpoints on the course material and the course structure as long as those thoughts

and comments are presented thoughtfully and constructively. Participants are expected to treat each other with professional and friendly courtesy.

Policies

UNT takes a strong stance against plagiarism and holds its students to high standards of ethics.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism offenses can result in immediate course failure and/or removal from the University. Please review the UNT's plagiarism policy: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/academic-integrity>

ADA Information

Any student with a disability that will require accommodation under the terms of federal regulations should register with the [Office of Disability Accommodation](#). The student also must let the instructor know of accommodations on the first day of class and present a written accommodations request to the instructor by the second week of class. Information concerning specific accommodations to provide equal opportunities is available from the [Office of Disability Accommodation](#).

Dr. T's Philosophy of Hope for Good Work by All

I will give you 100% of my best as your teacher and will incorporate into my work in this class all that I ask of you: Be who you are. Do your best. Use good judgment. Trust your instincts. Participate fairly. Help others. Be kind and generous in thought and deed. Give credit where credit is due. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done.

Course Content

Content is introduced through 9 topical modules, which are divided into 3 units.

Discussion posts are due as noted on the course calendar.

Performances and other assignments are due over the span of the course as noted in the course calendar. See the Assignments section above.

Unit One

Module 1 Content | Introduction, Learning, Adapting, and Writing

Content:

- Selecting and Learning Stories
- Writing Adaptations
- Story Skeleton Creative Writing
- First-Person Experience Story Writing

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned
- Read in Text: Part II - Anatomy of a Story pp. 15 - 33 AND Part III - Learning and Telling Made Easy pp. 35 - 61.

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Module 2 Content | Performance Tips; Story Research

Content:

- Warm-up Exercise
- Rules of Storytelling
- Tips for the Teller
- Creative Dramatics
- Praise and Appreciation Process
- Story Research
- Bibliographic Resources
- Tale Type and Motif Index
- Storytelling Associations and Listservs

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned
- Read in Text:
 - Introduction pp. xi - xxvii AND
 - Part I - Natural Storytelling pp. 1 - 13 AND
 - Review p. 118
 - Appendix pp. 215 - 219

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Module 3 | Narrative Structures; Fairy and Folk Tales

Contents:

- Structures for Analyzing a Narrative
- Structure of Narrative: The Classic Theories
- Folk Narrative Research
- Structures for Analyzing a Narrative (Story)
- Structure of Narrative: The Classic Theories
- Folk Narrative Research
- The Transformation and Evolution of the Oral Tradition
- The Universality and Building Blocks of Folk and Fairy Tale
- Mythology

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Unit Two

Module 4 | Ethics

Content:

- Storytelling Ethics and Copyright
- The Use of Picture Book Folktales for Storytelling
- Ethics Exercise

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned
- Read in Text: Part IV - Telling Tidbits pp. 63 - 73.

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Module 5 | Storytelling in the Classroom, Audience Issues, and Storytelling Programs

Content:

- Audience Issues
- Storytelling in the Classroom Curriculum
- Storytelling Concert Program Design
- Grant Writing
- Props and Storytelling

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned
- Read in Text: Part V - Storytelling in the Curriculum pp. 75 - 106, Part VI - Teaching Students to Tell pp. 107 - 117, AND Part VII - Super Simple Storytelling Exercises pp. 119 - 215.

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Module 6 | Storytelling in Corporations

Content:

- Storytelling in Industry: Strategic Storytelling
- Storytelling in Knowledge Transfer
- Storytelling in Marketing and Branding
- Stories for Business

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Unit Three**Module 7 | Music, Poetry, and Popular Culture****Content:**

- Storytelling in Music and Poetry
- Poetry, Response and Education
- James Harper Song Commentary
- Stories with Musical Connections

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Unit Three**Module 8 | Life and Family Stories; Urban Legends****Content:**

- Life and Family Stories
- Developing a Family Oral History Project
- Urban Legends
- Personal Worklore

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Module 9 | Multicultural Storytelling**Content:**

- Multicultural Storytelling
- Some Insights about Mexican, Native American and Sacred Stories

- Storytelling Concert Program Design

Readings:

- Articles/web pages as assigned

Videos to Review:

- Videos of professional and student performers are assigned weekly.

Course Calendar

NOTE: All posts and assignments are due on **Monday night, 12 midnight, Central time.**

Date	Task
Mon., June 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classes begin - See University calendar for additional details on the class schedule and deadlines • Unit 1 and Module 1 open
Mon., June 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 2 opens
Mon., June 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 3 opens
Mon., June 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 2/Module 4 opens / Unit 1 closes
Mon., July 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 5 opens
Mon., July 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 6 opens
Mon., July 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 3/Module 7 opens; Unit 2 closes
Mon., July 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 8 opens
Mon., July 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 9 opens
Mon., Aug.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congrats! Your course responsibilities are complete after posting these items.
Mon., Aug. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term Ends :)

End of the Syllabus