

THE STORYTELLER'S JOURNEY

Theatre 100_01- FALL 2024

rev. 28.AUG.24

Tue & Thu 9:30AM -10:50 AM

Instructor: Matthew Allar

Classroom: PBK 162

4credit hours

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Office Hours: Mon & Wed 10:30-11:30am

Thurs 11:30am-12:30pm and by appointment

OVERVIEW

This course explores the tradition and craft of storytelling through the investigation of a variety of media, objectives, and intentions. Just as no two individuals are alike, neither are their stories – richly shaped from a blend of life experiences and popular trends. Over the course of this term, we will try to identify what it means to share a story, and why this is critical to interpersonal interaction. From the origins of humankind to the cyber sphere of the 21st century, people have relied on a variety of tools to passionately share ideas and exploits using a wide array of resources available to them, and their peers. Where does this impulse come from and why does it continue today?

SPECIFIC GOALS

As part of the “College Curriculum” at William & Mary, this course digs into the “big idea” of storytelling as a primal component of human interaction. Over the next 15 weeks, course participants will encounter storytelling through a variety of lenses, and via several forms of communication – text, audio, video, still imagery and artwork, dance, and theatre just to name a few. We will develop a shared skillset rooted in seminar style discussion and analysis through these experiences, while also developing our own original stories in a variety of formats. Making use of classic and progressive methodologies, participants will develop a digital portfolio of work that highlights their experience with a variety of storytelling modalities.

HOW IT WORKS

The course is shaped around five “impulses” of storytelling: *Voices, Images, Film/Video, Sounds, and Words*. Within these areas, we will work with several existing stories (complete works, and selections.) Class sessions will be devoted to analysis and discussion of specific themes and methodologies found and/or associated with the previously encountered stories. Each area of inquiry will result in the creation of a shareable story in a variety of forms from each course participant, inspired by the material and methodology recently explored in the current module. Participants will specifically respond to and support the work of others in rotating small groups. Group assignments will rotate throughout the semester.

BY THE END OF THE COURSE YOU WILL...

- Enjoy a strong facility to analyze the human impulse to tell a story.
- Possess a variety of skills in text, audio, and visual analysis.
- Own a portfolio of original, personal stories, shared through a variety of mediums.
- Have investigated the digital/multimedia resources available on campus.
- Have “attended” multiple storytelling campus events on campus online.
- Have a clearer understanding of what stories are important to share, not only to yourself, but to your colleagues, as well.

ATTENDANCE

Since it's impossible to replicate the shared experience of participating in a class session, please make it a goal to attend every class meeting. **Two unqualified (no questions asked) absences are permitted during the semester.** Individual projects and presentations missed because of any other, non-medical absence(s) can only be made up by **prior arrangement** with the instructor. Each instance will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions will be made for a personal crisis or serious illness; however, such situations must be directed through the Student Affairs office. Class will begin promptly at 9:30 AM each day – **please don't be late**. **Arriving more than ten minutes late to class constitutes an absence. This includes any time you may need to prepare yourself or your materials for the day's class. Any unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by 10 points (P.A.C.) in each instance, in addition to preventing you from receiving credit for the material due that day.**

PARTICIPATION

This class demands personal and communal commitment. Storytelling is inherently a collaborative art form and therefore, so is this class. It is expected that each participant will arrive prepared for each class session – mentally, physically, and emotionally. This includes completing all assigned work for the given session, but also means arriving at the classroom meeting mentally and physically prepared. Active listening skills are as crucial to our work as verbal and creative skills. If at any time you feel as though your thoughts and opinions have been unfairly dismissed by me or by another student, please speak to me about it as soon as possible, as we can then work toward improving your class experience.

SNACKS AND DRINKS

Beverages in *closed* containers are permitted in class, provided that they do not become a distraction to anyone / portion of the class. Please, no food/eating during class.

PHONES AND DEVICES

Turn them off. Not on vibrate, off. No exceptions, No texting. Zilch, Nada, Nope. Any violation of this policy during classes will **reduce your final grade by 10 points (P.A.C.) in each instance.**

ZOOM CLASS EXPECTATIONS: Maintaining “in person” focus while meeting online can be challenging, but if we all participate in the following agreements, the entire class will collectively benefit.

- 1) Treat online class just as you would an in-person class
- 2) Dress as you would for any other WM class
- 3) Attend class in a room/area with as much privacy, and as few distractions as possible
- 4) Take care to provide alternative space for pets
- 5) Keep your camera on, but mute your microphone when not speaking
- 6) Utilize front facing or omnidirectional lighting and avoid strong side and back light
- 7) Use a separate ZOOM device from your note taking method
- 8) Minimize or eliminate non-class related communication with others at your location, or online
- 9) Refrain from the temptation to multi-task. Be present and focused!

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION

In this class, we strive to recognize the broadest representation of perspectives, ideas and expertise from all people without bias or preference toward race, color, ethnicity, creed or sexual identity. This is an anti-racist, inclusive space. Any violation of this collective understanding will not be tolerated in this course. Additionally, William & Mary acknowledge the Indigenous peoples who are the original inhabitants of the lands our campus is on today – the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway), Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Nottoway, Pamunkey, Patowomeck, Upper Mattaponi, and Rappahannock tribes – and pay our respect to their tribal members past and present.

William & Mary recognizes that students juggle different responsibilities and can face challenges that make learning difficult. There are many resources available at W&M to help students navigate emotional/psychological, physical/medical, material/accessibility concerns, including:

- **The W&M Counseling Center at (757) 221-3620. Services are free and confidential.**
- **The W&M Health Center at (757) 221-4386.**
- **To seek assistance for interpersonal, academic, and wellness challenges, please contact Care Support Services at wm.edu/care (care@wm.edu).**



- For a list of other [resources](#) available to students, see [here](#) or:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Don't cheat. Don't lie. Don't Steal. A complete description of the of William & Mary's Honor System can be found in the student handbook. If you have any questions about this policy, or what constitutes a violation of this agreement, please speak with Prof. Allar about it *prior* to choosing your course of action.

STATEMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY:

William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see www.wm.edu/sas

TEXTS, MATERIALS, TOOLS, ETC...

Required texts: Each Student must obtain their own copy of these

FUN HOME. By Alison Bechdel ISBN: 978061887171

THE NICKEL BOYS. By Colson Whitehead ISBN: 9780385537070

On Blackboard:

PIPELINE. By Dominique Morisseau ISBN: 9781559365871

ROMEO AND JULIET. By William Shakespeare ISBN: 1903436915

TOPDOG UNDERDOG. By Suzan-Lori Parks ISBN: 1559362014

FUN HOME. Music by Jeanine Tesori, Book and Lyrics by Lisa Kron

Based on the Graphic Novel by Allison Bechdel: SBN 9780573704574

THE DECAMERON PROJECT (selections) By Various ISBN: 9781982170790

MEN ON BOATS. By Jaclyn Backhaus: 978-0-8222-3642-9

Misc podcast and weblinks

Misc. Other: Additional research materials on reserve in Swem Library, sent via email, Blackboard or distributed to you in class.

*** In accordance with W&M Informational Technology policies, everyone must have ongoing access to a personal, portable computer.

GRADING

Your grade for the term is based on 1000 possible points. Points are earned in the following categories. You are welcome to schedule an appointment to discuss your class standing at any point during the semester.

450 Pts.: Small Projects(50pts & 4 x's 100pts)	50 Pts.: Production Responses
100 Pts.: Discuss. Contribution (2 parts)	100 Pts.: Partic. and Attitude (2 parts)
150 Pts.: Podcast Project	150 Pts.: Final Project

***** Occasional extra credit opportunities may pop up during the semester !

Your final grade is earned via the following distribution:

A	930-1000	B	830-869	C	730-769	D	630-669
A-	900-929	B-	800-829	C-	700-729	D-	600-629
B+	870-899	C+	770-799	D+	670-699	F	599-0

THEATRE 100_01 SCHEDULE : *SUBJECT TO CHANGE* rev. 28.AUG.24

Note: **bold type** HW assignment indicates a “small project”

1	8/29	First Class, Welcome, Adventure, Introductions : <i>HW: Order Books, Introduce yourself with a sentence, music and a photo via shared Google Doc</i>
2	9/3	Community Building via Improv <i>HW: Three story starters</i>
	9/5	Community Building via Improv <i>HW: Read <u>Decameron</u> NYT Mag <u>Stories</u> and respond to questions</i>
3	9/10	Small group assignments / Stories from the pandemic discuss., first person testimony : <i>HW: Watch and respond: Deavere-Smith, John Leguizomo, TED, Moth</i>
	9/12	First person testimonials <i>HW: Read <u>TopDog/Underdog</u>, watch Suzan-Lori Parks Doc</i>
4	9/17	Reading a play, structure, form, playwright introduction:

		<i>HW: Read Pipeline / comparative analysis with <u>TopDog/Underdog</u></i>
	9/19	Swem Library Resources #1 – MEET IN SWEM LIBRARY FORD CLASSROOM <i>HW: TBD : Small group presentations</i>
5	9/24	Small group presentations/discussions: <i>HW: Read Men On Boats</i>
	9/26	Discuss <i>Men On Boats</i> : Satirizing the past <i>HW: Create visual reaction board for <u>Men on Boats</u></i>
6	10/1	Review reaction boards: Visual storytelling and the fine art narrative <i>HW: Watch <u>Enter Through The Gift Shop</u>, develop small group POV “collage” resp.</i>
	10/3	Discuss ETTGS/New small group assignments/Narrator as fact finder, and/or maker. <i>HW: Response to the production</i>
	<i>MEN ON BOATS PERFORMANCES: 10/3 THUR, 10/4 FRI, 10/5 SAT @ 7:30PM 10/6 SUN @ 2PM</i>	
7	10/8	Discuss the production, <i>The Nickel Boys</i> Intro <i>HW: Read <u>The Nickel Boys</u> part #1</i>
	10/10	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK <i>HW: Read <u>The Nickel Boys</u> part #2</i>
8	10/15	Discuss <i>The Nickel Boys</i> parts #1 & #2 <i>HW: Read <u>The Nickel Boys</u> part #3</i>
	10/17	Final thoughts on <u>The Nickel Boys</u> / Stories of the past and influence on the future <i>HW: Audio recorded accounts and investigation: <u>The Vanishing of Harry Pace</u></i>
9	10/22	The Auditory Experience <i>HW: <u>The Vanishing of Harry Pace</u> continued</i>
	10/24	Swem Library Resources #2– MEET IN SWEM LIBRARY FORD CLASSROOM <i>HW: Utilize Reeder Media Center to develop group podcast project</i>
10	10/29	AI for music creation & composition <i>HW: Utilize Reeder Media Center to develop group podcast project</i>
	10/31	Authors/Illustrators/Artists in action: TBD Guest Artist <i>HW: Utilize Reeder Media Center to develop group podcast project</i>
11	11/5	NO CLASS - ELECTION DAY <i>HW: Go Vote! Utilize Reeder Media Center to FINISH develop group podcast project</i>
	11/7	NO CLASS MEETING <i>HW: Read/View <u>Fun Home</u>, watch Alison Bechdel clips, prepare discussion points</i>
12	11/12	ZOOM: Discuss <i>Fun Home</i> and the power of visual storytelling <i>HW: TBD – Additional Graphic Novel Experience</i>
	11/14	ZOOM: From page to stage <i>Fun Home</i> in the theatre <i>HW: Response to the production</i>
	<i>FUN HOME PERFORMANCES: 11/14 THUR, 11/15 FRI, 11/16 SAT @ 7:30PM 11/17 SUN @ 2PM</i>	

13	11/19	Discuss the production HW: <i>Read and Listen to adventure stories</i>
	11/21	Introduce the Final Project, Stories of Adventure! : Interactive Google Mapping HW: <i>Take a hike with a buddy and make a map</i>
14	11/25	ZOOM: Remote Learning Day: Develop buddy mapping HW: <i>Finish mapping project</i>
	11/28	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING HW: <i>Finish mapping project</i>
15	12/3	Present hiking maps and stories of journey. HW: Final project
	12/5	Final class / Reflections and memories HW: Final project

**FINAL PROJECT ONLINE SUBMISSION DUE:
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16th at 12:00pm (or before)**