

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Discipline: Communications
Fall 2008
Digital Storytelling: creating global cultures
Lower Division
Erika Paterson

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The first step in effective intercultural relations is actually to meet someone from another culture -- face to face. John W. Friesen

We are the stories we tell ourselves. Thomas King

In this course we will be exploring techniques for digital storytelling (creating narrative, story-boarding, film editing). You will learn how to work collaboratively to compose and produce digital stories and web spaces that work to create community and communicate across cultural boundaries. Stories open a door for students to understand different ways of coming to knowledge, and through storytelling we will begin to understand how culture is performed. We will look deeper into how we make meaning and create community through cultural performances with an ethnographic eye on 'social dramas,' rituals, and celebrations. We'll observe the connectedness between *what* we believe and *how* we believe. Against this background, we'll traverse across disciplines and read a range of contemporary ideas about computer mediated communication (CMC) and emerging global cultures. We will experiment with the potential of digital storytelling as a new medium for communicating across cultures. The Field Components of this course will include photography, filming, interviewing and data collecting. Students will need a mini DV or Hi 8 digital video camera (**not** a mini-disk camera), a portable external drive, a lap top computer with photo-shop and an editing application (i-movie or windows media are fine).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To understand how stories give shape and meaning to our lives and our communities
- To study ways of interpreting cultural differences through an understanding of culture as performance and through observation, encounters, and storytelling
- To study storytelling communities on the www and explore how this ancient art is flourishing and transforming with digital technologies
- To read and discuss differing perspectives on the how computer mediated communications (CMC) work to create global cultures and in the process trace the development of CMC globally
- To ask questions about how culture is performed on the www
- To create digital stories that will communicate across cultures and develop an interactive space on the www

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE:

AT SEA: Nassau to Salvador, Brazil (9 days)

Topic: Digital storytelling & Global Communities

Aug 31/ A1: Stories: telling, listening, and watching.

Read: Chamberlin, *'Where are your Stories?'* 1-46
Atkinson: Understanding the transforming function of stories
1– 28

McLaren, *Interpreting Cultural Differences* Ch 1-3

Explore: [The Center for Digital Storytelling](#)

Sept 02/ A 2: Global communities

Read: *Brazil's Museum of the Person*, Thom Gillespie

www.indiana.edu/~slizzard/museum/brazil.html

Dean, *Unspun*: Ch. One: Community

[My Journal page](#)

Sept 04/ A 3: Technicalities: Setting up online working spaces & exploring cameras and editing tools

AT SEA: Salvador to Walvis Bay, Africa (7 days)

Topic: Images & Interview & Story

Sept 12/ A 4: Reflections of Brazil: editing and narrative

Sept 14/ A 5: Interviewing and Story telling

Read:

McLaren, *Interpreting Cultural Differences*: Ch. 4 -6

Krazt, *African Voices: Conversations and Lives* p 127 – 162

Sept 17/ A 6: Workshop on Listening & Seeing **& Quiz #1**

Read: [My Journal](#)

Explore: [Engenderhealth : Digital Stories South Africa/ Connect Africa / Namibia forum](#)

AT SEA: Walvis Bay to Cape Town: (2 days)

Topic: Computer Mediated Culture: Identifying the Issues

Sept 24/ A 7: Ethics and the Internet in Africa

Read: Ethics and the Internet in West Africa 1 - 19

McLaren, *Interpreting Cultural Differences*: Chapter 6 -9

AT SEA: Cape Town to Chennai: (11 days)

Topic: Building the Web and Community building

Oct 03/ A 8: Reflections of Africa: editing and narrative

Oct 05/ A 9: The story of the World Wide Web

Read: Bernrs-Lee: *Weaving The Web*

Oct 07/ A 10: Web communities in Chennai & Penang

Explore & be prepared to present community websites hosted in Chennai & Penang

Oct 10/ A 11: Workshop class: Strategizing & Designing our web space

Read: My Journal page3

Oct 12/ A 12: Workshop class continued **& Quiz # 2**

AT SEA: Chennai to Penang (3 days)

Topic: Images and Reflections through an ethnographic eye

Oct 19/ A 13: Reflections of Chennai: editing and narrative

Oct 21/ A 14: Imagining Vietnam

Read: My Journal page

Explore: [Viet Nam Digital Stories Since the War](#)

AT SEA: Penang to Ho Chi Minh (3 days)

Topic: Images & reflections of Penang

Oct 28/ A 15: Reflections: editing and narrative

Read: My Journal page

AT SEA: Ho Chi Minh to Hong Kong (2 days)

Topic: The Internet in China

Nov 04/ A 16: Building Web communities in China

Read: The Internet in China 255 – 292
My Journal page

AT SEA: Shanghi to Kobe (2 days)

Nov 12/ A 17: **Quiz #3**

AT SEA: Yokahama to Honolulu (8 days)

Topic: Workshops

Nov 19/ A 18: Reflections & Images Hong Kong to Yokahama: editing and narrative

Nov 21/ A 19: Workshop: Building our Digital Stories website

Read: Atkinson, 'Seeing our own stories as sacred'

Nov 23/ A 20: Workshop: Building our Digital Stories website

Nov 25/ A 21: Workshop: Editing

AT SEA: Honolulu to Puntarenas (9 days)

Nov 28/ A 22: Workshop: Strategies to sustain our Digital Stories web site

Nov 30/ A 23: Reflections on our journey together.

FIELD COMPONENT:

The field requirements of this course will include capturing video, conducting interviews, and collecting artifacts (pamphlets, posters, postcards, bus schedules and much more) in each and every port we visit. This material will be presented in class and utilized to enrich our discussions on digital story telling and interpreting cultural differences. This material will also be utilized for the production of a final digital story project. In addition to these field requirements, students will be required to attend THREE practica. Two of these should be field trips led by me. Of the field trips led by me, I am especially eager to see you participate in the field trip in Salvador (Rhythm of Hope) since it comes early in the voyage and will give you a chance to practice with me the techniques you will need to practice more on your own later in the voyage. The second field practica should be one of the other field trips led by me (listed below). The third practica may be chosen from the suggested practica listed below. In preparation for each practica, students will present story ideas, interview questions, and a storyboard for filming before our arrival. These story ideas must relate directly to your chosen practica, be concerned with our studies in interpreting cultural differences, and be presented well in advance.

Students will maintain an online journal that will include written observations and insights, images and video from each and every port we visit. Excerpts from these journals will be presented in class and the total value of these journals and class presentations is 30%.

SUGGESTED PRACTICA:

BRAZIL:	Projecto Cultural Arte Consciente, a visit to Saramandaia (FDP)
INDIA:	Welcome Reception (FDP)
MALAYSIA:	Welcome reception and Shadow puppet performance
VIET NAM:	Cu Chi Tunnels (FDP)
HONG KONG:	International Student Exchange; Chinese University of Hong Kong
CHINA:	Shanghai Jiao Tong University Reception (FDP)
JAPAN:	International Student Exchange: Kansai University, Ritsumeikan University

METHODS OF EVALUATION

- Students will create and present 4 Digital Stories evaluated on an increasing percentage (5% - 8% - 12% - 15 %) for a total of 40%
- Students will maintain an online working journal that will include all assignments as well as brainstorming ideas for stories and journal evidence of their collaborative contributions to our class website to be evaluated throughout the semester for a total of 30%
- There will be three quizzes on our readings: 30%

REQUIRED TEXT BOOKS:

AUTHOR: Berners-Lee Tim

TITLE: Weaving the Web: the original design and ultimate destiny of the World Wide Web.

PUBLISHER: HaperSanFrancisco
ISBN: 0-06-25187-X
DATE/EDITION: 2000/1st. Edition
COST: \$15.00

AUTHOR: MacLaren, Margaret C.
TITLE: Interpreting Cultural Differences
PUBLISHER: Peter Francis, Norfolk, UK
ISBN:1-870167-29-5
DATE/EDITION: 1998 / 1st. edition
COST: \$54.00

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

AUTHOR: Atkins, Robert
CHAPTER TITLES: 'Understanding the Transforming Functions of Story'/
Recognizing the Enduring Elements of Sacred Stories' / 'Seeing Our Own Stories
as Sacred'
BOOK TITLE: The Gift of Stories
DATE: 1995
PAGES: 3 – 48

AUTHOR: Brunet, Patrick J et al
CHAPTER TITLE: Identifying the Issues: Ethics and the Internet in Africa
BOOK TITLE: Ethics and the Internet in West Africa
DATE: 2004
PAGES: 1 – 19

AUTHOR: Chamberlin, Edward J.
CHAPTER TITLES: Them and Us: 'Babblers'/ 'Doodlers'
BOOK TITLE: If this is Your Land, Where are Your Stories? Finding Common
Ground
DATE: 2003
PAGES: 1 - 46

AUTHOR: Kratz, Corinne A
CHAPTER TITLE: Conversations and Lives
BOOK TITLE: African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History
DATE: 2001
PAGES: 127 - 162

AUTHOR: Swiss, Thomas
CHAPTER TITLES: 'Community'/ 'Identity'/ 'Gender'/ 'Race'
BOOK TITLE: Unspun
DATE: 2000
PAGES: 4 - 50

AUTHOR: Tai, Zixue
CHAPTER TITLE: Online Activism, Internet Protest and Social Movements in
Cyber China
BOOK TITLE: The Internet in China
DATE: 2006
PAGES: 255 - 286

SUGGESTED READINGS:

AUTHOR: Hirsch Robert
TITLE: Light and Lens; Photography in the Digital Age
PUBLISHER: Focal Press
ISBN: 978-0-240-80855-0
DATE/EDITION: 2008
COST: \$44.00

AUTHOR: Rysinger, Lisa
TITLE: Exploring Digital Video
PUBLISHER: Thomson/Delmar
ISBN: 1-4018-4299-2
DATE: 2005
COST: \$27.00

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

Digital Director: <http://www.videoforums.co.uk/>
Digital Director's Guild: <http://www.ddguild.org/what.html>
Listen deeply, Tell stories: <http://www.storycenter.org>
The Call of Story: <http://www.callofstory.org>
Memories voices: <http://www.storycenter.org/memvoice>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES NEED FOR THIS COURSE

All students need

- a good quality mini DV digital camera with a 'still photo' option and memory card and a USB or fire wire port and cable for uploading
- a lap top with at least 20 gigabytes of available dedicated memory
- Students will also need a portable external drive for storing files, a 120 gigabyte drive will be perfect
- Either i-movie and windows movie- maker editing programs. If you have final cut or another similar program, that is fine.
- Either i-photo or Photoshop Elements for storing and image editing /processing.
- An external microphone for your camera will also be useful, but is not required.