

**CMST 4141:1 Analysis and Performance of Narrative
Spring 2014, TU/TR 1:30-2:50, 237 Coates Hall**

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(Always e-mail me through Moodle first. Allow 24 hours for a response/ 48 hours on weekends)

Catalog Description: This course assumes that performances are not just entertaining distractions from “real” life. They are a primary way in which human beings develop shared social and cultural lives. Focusing in particular on oral history and performance ethnography, this course is designed to introduce you to performance as a *research method*, a way of learning about the world around you, especially those who are different than you.

Course Objectives: After successful completion of this course you should be able to:

- L01. Craft life experiences into engaging performances.
- L02. Conduct ethical, practical and compelling ethnographic interviews.
- L03. Write essays that explicate key claims in performance scholarship and apply them to relevant social and cultural performances
- L04. Produce original works of performed scholarship that engage with the life worlds of others in ethical, practical, and compelling ways

Prerequisite: CMST 2040: Introduction to Performing Literature

Required Reading: John Bowe et al eds. *Gig: American’s Talk about Their Jobs*. (Three Rivers: New York, 2000) ISBN: 9780609807071

AVAILABLE AS A FREE EBOOK FROM LSU LIBRARY

I will post other readings on Moodle during the course of the semester.

Course Assignments: You will receive a letter grade in each of the following categories that corresponds to the "Interpreting Grades" schema below. Grades will be posted on Moodle in a timely fashion so that you will be aware of your current standing.

Assignments

	Brief Description	Learning Objective	% of Final Grade
PERFORMANCES			
1. Name Story	Tell a story about one of the names you go by or have been called. 1 minute.	L01	2%
2. Family Myth Performance	Using David Sedaris as a model/inspiration/jumping off point, recount a story that is often told in your family. 3-4 minutes.	L01	8%
3. Place Performance	Recount a significant part of the special place that one of your classmates has recounted to you. 3-4 minutes	L01, L02,	10%

	Brief Description	Learning Objective	% of Final Grade
4. Gig Performance	Represent one of the <i>Gig</i> interviews in performance. 4-5 minutes (The memorization of this piece may be time consuming and you are advised to start early)	L01, L04	15%
5. Interview Performance	Share a moment from your ongoing ethnographic interviews with someone who has a different cultural location than you do 5-8 minutes (We will talk about this ongoing project throughout the semester, but it is imperative that you allow enough time for the interview process. You will need a MINIMUM of 20 hours of fieldwork from which to draw the 4-5 minute performance)	L01, L02, L04	15%
Papers/ FINAL EXAM	You will complete short writing prompts for each of your performances throughout the semester. You will revise these based on feedback from your instructor and your peers into your take home final exam.		25%
PARTICIPATION	I expect you to come to class each week having read assigned reading, watched assigned films, and/or listened to assigned audio. In addition to regular quizzes over the material, I will also give you points for active, committed participation in class discussions and activities. I will deduct points for the behaviors listed above, and others that disrupt our ability to be a supportive, engaged learning community.		25%
TOTAL			100%

Course Grading Scale

Grade	What it means	How to earn it
A	Excellent Exceeds expectations in multiple ways, is creative, intelligent, committed and prepared.	Make the performance/paper your own. An A performance is fully embodied, committed, full of energy, and it leaves the audience seeing the world just a little bit differently than they did before they encountered it. An A paper is thoughtful, well organized, and considers counter arguments. It builds an idea that leaves the reader seeing the world just a bit differently than she or he did before reading the paper.

Grade	What it means	How to earn it
B	Very Good Demonstrates work beyond the expected level of competence and preparation	Thoroughly cover everything the assignment asks you to do as competently as possible. Dot your i's, cross your t's. Make sure that you hit every element of the performance or paper assignment guideline and that you clearly demonstrate your understanding of the concepts and ability in the skills asked for. Make sure to point your reader/audience in the right direction every step of the way so that they have a good idea where you are taking them and how all the pieces fit together.
C	Satisfactory Fulfills requirements with average competence and preparation.	Address almost everything on the assignment guidelines. Make sure that you have a working knowledge of the concepts and/or skills involved. In performance: Be memorized. Rehearse enough that you can get through the piece without blanking. Hit every single thing on the assignment list in at least a minimal way. Make at least a couple of strong committed choices. In writing: basically cover the idea asked for. Proofread for errors.
D	Needs Improvement Falls short of several criteria and/or presents major deviation from assignment.	Make an attempt to fulfill the assignment, but do your work at the last minute when you don't have enough time to cover everything the assignment asks for. Don't proofread. Don't rehearse (or if you do, make sure to do it alone and not with someone to watch and give you feedback). In performance: Have a general idea of what you want to do, but make weak choices and don't commit to them. In Writing: Have a general idea of what you want to say, but make sure that your writing meanders and leaves the reader unsure what you are saying.
F	Failing/Unsatisfactory Does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.	Do nothing at all or do work that does not meet the minimum requirements for the assignment.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please meet with me at some point during the first two weeks of class to discuss the provisions of those accommodations. See LSU PS-26 for details.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change with fair notice)

DATE	What we will do	Reading to be completed	Assignment(s) Due
Week 1			
JANUARY 11	Introduction to the course: syllabus,		

	structure of class, expectations		
Week 2			
16	Name Story Performance	Sedaris "Go Carolina" and "The Youth in Asia"	Name Story
18	Name Story Performances	Storyteller's guide Sedaris "Jesus Shaves"	
Week 3			
23		Colins and Cooper Sedaris "Shiner like a Diamond"	
25		Langelier and Peterson 1-3 Langellier and Peterson 7-18	
Week 4			
30		Langellier and Peterson 19-37	
FEBRUARY 1	Family Myth Performances		Family Myth Performance
Week 5			
6	Family Myth Performances		
8		Watch Laramie Project (available free on YOUTUBE)	
Week 6			
13		MARDI GRAS	
15	tba		tba
Week 7			
20	Oral History	Pollock Remembering	
22	Active Interviewing	Gubrium and Holstein	
Week 8			
27	Partner Place Performances		
MARCH 1	Partner Place Performances		
Week 9			
6		<u>GIG: Long Haul Trucker, Lawn Maintenance Man, Heavy Metal Roadie, Professional Basketball Player, Escort, Doula, Palm Reader, and 4 more entries of your choosing</u>	
8		<u>GIG: Wal-Mart Greeter, Workfare Street Cleaner, Slaughterhouse Human Resources Director, Crime Scene Cleaner, Bar Owner, Drug Dealer. And 4 more entries of your choosing.</u>	
Week 10			
13	Workshop		

15	Workshop		
Week 11			
20	Gig Performances		Gig Performance
22	Gig Performances		
Spring Break			
27	SPRING BREAK		
29			
Week 12			
APRIL 3	Performance Ethnography	Madison Chapter 7 PDF	
5	ONLINE Workshops		
Week 13			
10	Workshops		
12	Workshops		
Week 14			
17	Interview Performances		Interview Performance
19	Interview Performances		
WEEK 15			
24	Interview Performances		
26	Interview Performances		
FINAL EXAM			
Monday April 30 th 5:30-7:30 PM	The final exam will be a take home essay exam centering on the question: how is performance a research method?		Final Exam