



Loyola University, Chicago
Fall 2016
COMM 405: Narrative Communication Techniques
Thursday, 7-9:30pm

Instructor: Richelle F. Rogers

E-mail: rrogers2@luc.edu (Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails.)

Office: SOC 204

Office Hours: Thursday, 3-6:30PM – (Walk in) - An appointment is not necessary.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will take a practical and analytical look at traditional and enterprising narrative communication techniques. Using a project-based approach, students will learn how to think critically about various narrative techniques and audience engagement.

Students will acquire an understanding of how narrative works across a variety of disciplines and how to evaluate and analyze a range of digital stories.

Through a collaborative classroom environment, students will enhance their understanding of narrative development, delivery and acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.

IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Developing creative capacities.
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing

TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING MATERIALS

Storycraft: The Complete Guide to Writing Narrative Nonfiction (Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing) [Paperback] Author: Jack Hart

In addition to the required text, students are required to read assigned materials during the course.

GUEST SPEAKERS

This course will occasionally feature guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions.

WRITING/PROOFREADING SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENTS

It's important that all submitted assignments are typed in a double- spaced format, stapled and proofread for clarity and organization of ideas. Submitted assignments cannot contain typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. Work that has not been properly proofread will be subject to a lower grade.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Unless specified by the instructor, assignments are due at the beginning of class (7PM) via the class Sakai website.

All assignments must be submitted online via the class Sakai website and will not be accepted after 7PM.

UNLESS INSTRUCTED, DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS.

WEEKLY UPDATES AVAILABLE VIA SAKAI

Sakai will serve as the course hub. The syllabus and updated class assignments are available via Sakai. Students are encouraged to check the class page daily.

SOC EQUIPMENT

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact apacheco@luc.edu; phone 312-915-8830).

GRADING STANDARD

A
B
C
D
F

Grades will be based on:

In-class and outside assignments (30%)
Class participation (30%)
Narrative project and blog (student's choice)(40%)

NARRATIVE PROJECT AND BLOG

Assignment: Working alone or in a group, students will create an engaging and informative narrative project.

The project will include:

- A digital project - Be creative!
- In addition, each group or student will create and maintain an engaging and informative blog that will document your project's progress.
- Each blog should link to at least one social networking site.

Narrative Project Deadlines

Students are expected to meet project deadlines. Outlines and scripts must be submitted in the correct format and proofread. If a deadline is not met, it will impact your final grade.

A significant amount of the semester is devoted to your narrative project and blog. It's imperative that students use class time in a productive manner. It's recommended that all students try to stay one week ahead of schedule.

October 27, 2015 – **Topic proposals/presentation** – Students will submit a three-page detailed proposal to the instructor and preview the topic to the class via a ten-minute presentation.

Topic proposals should include:

- **A project title** – Make sure titles are specific. A good example of a title could be, Why is Jake Homeless? or “Why Johnny can’t read” .
- **Topic background** – Briefly summarize the background associated with your topic. Also include relevance and why this topic is part of the city’s conversation. Be sure to cite sources.
- **Approach to the project** –As you consider your audience, come to an editorial consensus about your purpose: Will your topic inform, entertain, or persuade? Give careful consideration as to how you will visualize your topic.
- **A production plan** that lists what you will need to film your project. Consider the constraints of your deadline and the resources you will need as you plan your project.
- **A logistics plan** detailing your shoot schedule (allow time for reshoots).
- **A detailed story map** of audio and images.

November 17–**Rough draft of script is due**– Students will review scripts with the instructor and make revisions.

- As part of your revision process, get feedback from your target audience to gauge their interest level and to see if they understand your message.

December 1– **Presentations** - Each student will present their project to the class. Presentations should not exceed twenty minutes. After the class screens a project, the group will take questions from their peers.

NARRATIVE PROJECT CRITERIA

Final projects will be evaluated according to the following:

- Topic selection, development and execution
- Creativity
- Story Structure
- Character development
- Use of images/sound
- Blog content (Blog post quality and attention to detail)

- Overall presentation and enthusiasm
- Rigorous Q and A with classmates

Plagiarism Statement: *quoted directly from the Loyola University Chicago undergraduate online catalogue. Please see the catalogue entry for additional information:*

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g. failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours).

This is an academic community; being unformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing your sources.

It is dishonest to:

Turn in the same work for two classes; Turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students are urged to contact the instructor should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

In addition, any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentiality to me as soon as possible.

The instructor will accommodate your needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

THE COURSE (Subject to change)

Week 1: Getting acquainted/Understanding the components of narrative

September 1: Introduction to Course/Syllabus review/ Understanding the components of narrative

Assignment: Read Structure chapter, pages 20-40 from text/Construct a narrative arc of John Branch's *Snowfall*

Assignment: Read the syllabus. Please submit your questions via the class Sakai website by Thursday, September 8, 2016 at 7pm.

Week 2: Narrative Structure/ Snowfall analysis

September 8: Students will analyze and discuss Snowfall

Link: <http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/?ref=johnbranch&r=0#/?part=tunnel-creek>

Assignment: Read Character and Point of View Chapters, pages 41-61 and 75-88

Week 3: The character – There's one in every story

September 15: Understanding and analyzing character development

Assignment: Read Voice and Style Chapters, Pages 62-75 from text

Week 4: Theme/Story Selection

September 22: One in a million case study

Read Story and Theme Chapters, Pages 6-20, and 136-146

Week 5: The Art of the Interview/Profile project begins

September 29: Profile project begins – details will be discussed in class

Week 6: Profile project development continues

October 6: Students will use class time to develop/finalize profile projects

Week 7: Screen profiles/feedback session

October 13: The class will screen profile projects and offer feedback. Revised projects will receive extra credit and must be submitted by Wednesday, October 20, 2016.

Week 8: Imagery and sound in story

October 20: How pictures and sound drive narrative

Assignment: Read scene and action chapters, Pages 89-107 from text

Week 9: Technology in narrative – Final project group assignments

October 27: Exploring narrative techniques in blog posts

Groups will use class time to create blog group blogs for narrative project

Week 10: Topic proposal presentation

November 3: Groups will submit a three-page outline of their narrative project

Week 11: Final project development continues

November 10: Groups will use class time to develop their narrative projects

Week 12: Narrative project rough draft of script due

November 17: Groups will meet with the instructor to evaluate scripts and make revisions.

Week 13: Thanksgiving Break – Class does not meet

Week 14: Final project presentations/feedback sessions

December 1: Each group will present their final project to the class.

Presentations should not exceed fifteen minutes. After the class screens a project, the group will take questions from their peers. Students will have a week to amend their projects for final submission the following week.

Week 15: Revised presentations submitted online via the project blog

December 8: Final projects are due on the respective group's blog before 9:20pm.

