

COM 4930 Communication & the Storied Self Course Syllabus ~ Spring 2020 (Sect 1G78/11307)

Professor: Dr. Jade Williams

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Office Hours:
M 4:30-5:00 pm & T 4:00-6:30 pm by appt
Virtual Office Hours: T 9:00-11:00 pm & by appt

CLASS MEETING INFORMATION

DAY/TIME: Mondays, periods 10-E1
LOCATION: 207 Rolfs Hall

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this introductory course, students use personal and public writing as tools for understanding the relationship between and influence of intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication and social discourse on the construction of Self and self-narratives. Class discussions focus on the Self as a "storied self" and on the importance of our life stories. To that end, journaling and creative non-fiction writing are used as a primary vehicle for self-exploration and narrative expression.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Understand and discuss the roles of communication in the construction of Self and self-narratives;
2. Explain the relationship between Self and self-narratives;
3. Explain the relationship between and impact of intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication and social discourse on the construction of self-narratives;
4. Articulate the importance of stories to the overall construction of Self and wellbeing;
5. Use personal writing as a communication tool for the discovery and expression of Self and self-narratives;
6. Identify the physiological, psychological and social implications of stories;
7. Recognize the many ways that we "share our stories" in daily communicative interactions, as well as the impact of those stories on one's construction of Self.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Readings are assigned each week by your instructor. See Canvas.

CANVAS REQUIREMENT

Check your UFL.edu email and our Canvas course site frequently. If you have computer/internet or Canvas-related problems or questions, you can contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email helpdesk@ufl.edu. Your instructor is unable to assist in these matters, so please contact the Help Desk directly.

INSTRUCTOR OBLIGATIONS

You should expect that Dr. Williams will:

1. Convey passion for course material.
2. Conduct the class in a manner that is engaging.
3. Assign meaningful work that allows you to engage the course, its content and material.
4. Grade assignments and provide helpful feedback in a timely manner.
5. Reply to your emails within 48 hours.
6. Attempt to relate material in this course to your everyday life and relationships, as well as to relevant global, social, and political contexts.

STUDENT OBLIGATIONS

Students who give themselves to and engage this course fully will embark upon an enlightening and empowering journey of self-discovery and expression. To help accomplish this, you are expected to:

1. Journal daily (at least 5 days each week).
2. Complete and spend time contemplating the readings before class each week.
3. Complete and submit all assignments in advance of the deadline.
4. Participate actively in discussions and classroom activities.
5. Contribute positively to the classroom and group climates.
6. Take a self-motivated approach to the course, including personal accountability for your behavior and academic progress in the class.
7. Stay in contact with me throughout the semester. Communicate with me about the course and its content. Come to me and let me help you any time you have questions, problems or concerns related to your personal journey in this class.

COURSE WORK

Self Stories

Most Self Story assignments are due to Canvas no later than Sunday night before class. *Always bring a printed copy of your Story assignment to class on Mondays.* Detailed descriptions for each assignment are provided in the textbook and/or class.

Final Project, Presentation & Proposal

Details on the final project and related assignments will be provided in class.

In-Class Activities

We will do in-class activities (ICs) during many class periods. If you are absent from class, Although there are 9 ICs assigned this semester, only your top 8 IC scores will count toward your final grade. This means that you can miss or do poorly one one IC without penalty. ICs must be completed in class on the day they are assigned and cannot be made up for any reason.

Quizzes

Quizzes cover material discussed in the readings and in class.

COURSE GRADES

GRADING

36% = 9 Self Stories @ 4% each

30% = 2 Quizzes @ 15% each

18% = Final Project

16% = 8 ICs* @ 2% each

100% = Total

*Although there are 9 ICs assigned this semester, only your top 8 IC scores will count toward your final grade.

LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

A/- = Excellent! In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an “A” exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

B+/- = Very good! A grade of “B” indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of “B” or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average.

C+/- = Good! A grade of “C” indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D = Passing...but below average. The assignment’s minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor.

Special Note Concerning Final Grades of Incomplete

A grade of “Incomplete” is given only to a student with extreme circumstances that prevent the student from completing course requirements during the semester in which s/he is enrolled. Please be forewarned that an “Incomplete” can only be given to a student who has completed at the 50% of the class and who is passing the course with a grade of “C” or better at the time the Incomplete is negotiated. See the University’s policy for more information.

GENERAL ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

DEADLINES & LATE WORK

Assignment deadlines are listed on the Course Calendar. All Public Writings (PWs) that are to be submitted to Canvas are due before 11:59 p.m. EST (before midnight) the Sunday night prior to class.

Assignments submitted to Canvas have a 12-hour Extension Period during which late work will be accepted with no penalty (until 11:59 a.m. on the morning after the deadline). **After the Extension Period, no assignments will be accepted.**

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

Although you will bring a typed copy to class, most written assignments will also be submitted through Canvas. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignment has been successfully received by Canvas prior to the deadline. Submit only doc, docx, rtf or pdf files.

ATTENDANCE, UNIVERSITY-SANCTIONED EVENTS & RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

There are no excused or unexcused absences; so, there is no need to ask for my permission to miss a class. I view you as an adult who makes your own choices, including whether or not to attend classes. It is each student's responsibility to submit assignments in advance of the deadline, regardless of one's reasons for missing class; please plan accordingly.

Attendance requirements: Attend class only after having read the assigned readings, completed the assignments and prepared yourself to make meaningful contributions to class discussions that demonstrate familiarity with the readings.

IMPORTANT: Due to the importance of our in-class discussions and activities, if you will be absent from class frequently for any reason, you should withdraw from this course and enroll in another course that is scheduled on days you can attend.

Please note that In-Class (IC) assignments must be completed in class on the day they are conducted to earn points; no exceptions.

For more on UF's Attendance Policies, please go to the following website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. .

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

All submitted work during the course, written or oral, will be the student's personal, original work, with credit being given to sources used. If a student violates this understanding, evaluations of work must be affected accordingly and if necessary, adjudication will be processed by procedures approved by the University of Florida Honor Court.

GETTING HELP

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in

distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 911.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Dial Center for Written and Oral Communication strives for a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Students are expected to behave according to the UF student code of conduct in their classes. This means treating their instructors and fellow classmates with respect. Public Speaking can be a stressful course and it can be a positive experience. To ensure a positive learning environment, students should not: make complaints publicly (in front of other students); attack the instructor verbally, physically, or in written form; or express reactions in the classroom that would bring harm to other students. Failure to meet the UF code of conduct can impact a student's class participation grade or result in referral to the UF judicial office. Class atmosphere can be made or broken by the approach that students take to the challenges of the course. Students that support others, show good humor in the face of obstacles, show dedication in the face of setbacks, and show grace when others are not doing as well will help to create a positive communication climate.

In a communication class, it is especially important for each of us to:

- Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students;
- Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities;
- Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom;
- Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.).

NO COMPUTERS & NO CELL PHONES

Computer and/or cell phone use is disruptive in the classroom and is therefore prohibited in this class, unless explicitly stated otherwise by your instructor. Repeated violation of this rule is subject to a 5% deduction from your final grade and may lead to disciplinary action. If you must use your cell phone or computer during class time, please leave the room and return when finished.

DISABILITY AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me privately, as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure a successful and educational experience. It is your responsibility both to notify me and to make the first contact with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Additionally, you must provide written documentation from the DRC at least one week prior to the date in which you are requesting accommodations.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that your student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. I will not release your grades to anyone other than you or school officials who are given permission to view your progress. Anyone other than you (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about you, your progress, or your status as a student in my class – this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see the University of Florida website for The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER SYSTEM

As a student in this class you're subject to the Acceptable Use Policies for UF's computer systems. Anyone violating these policies will receive an automatic grade of "E" for the course and will be referred to the University for Disciplinary Action as deemed appropriate by the University of Florida Honor Court.

CHANGES TO COURSE SYLLABUS/CALENDAR

I reserve the right to update or change portions of this course syllabus and calendar in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. This may be in response to suggestions from students, from my own observations, or as the result of requirements by the Department, College, or University. Changes will be posted to the course site on Canvas.

COURSE FEEDBACK

I welcome feedback about the course. If we wait until university evaluations at the end of the semester, I cannot make changes that will help you. I regularly ask the class for feedback and suggestions regarding the tests and assignments. Please share your thoughts with me in an open and constructive manner during the semester. You can make suggestions in class, with me privately during office hours, or via email.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COURSE PROBLEMS

If you have any concerns regarding the course, contact me via e-mail immediately. I am always willing to assist you in any way that I can. However, please do NOT contact me for computer, internet and/or Canvas-related problems. Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email to helpdesk@ufl.edu for these matters. Computers do act up, so plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time before deadlines to complete and submit your work.

HAVE FUN WITH IT!

Feel free to play with the material, share your ideas, and contribute to the class. The more you engage the material and your fellow classmates, the more everyone will enjoy and benefit from the course.