



**English 2270 MW
Spring 2016**

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Office Hours: M/W 10 -11 and T/R 10 - 12 and by appt

This is a NO SMART PHONE ZONE.

Please be so courteous as to silence and put away your phones while in this classroom.

Required Texts:

The Study of American Folklore (AF) Jan Harold Brunvand, 4th ed.

Living Folklore (LF) Martha C. Sims and Martine Stephens. 2nd ed.

A good notebook for note-taking

Description:

In this course we will create an ongoing conversation about meaning and folklore. We will be examining "the folk" and their songs, stories, crafts, traditions and music. We will be figuring out just what folklore is and how it makes meaning for us, and how it makes meaning for the people who use it--you use it, did you know that? When was the last time you had a birthday? What Christmas carols do you know?

At its most basic level, folklore is "story about the folk." These stories give us a glimpse into the realities and belief systems of a particular culture. By looking at the stories told, the songs sung, the games played, and the jokes told by certain groups, we can theorize, deduce even, what kinds of lives people lead, and what kinds of beliefs people have. So! What are the stories, songs, traditions and who are the folk? What will our answers reveal about a particular culture? My god, that sounds fascinating!

The questions we will be asking this quarter: How do the stories, music, jokes, legends and traditions of a group reflect, create or pass on a belief system?

Why tell **that** story, play **that** game, sing **that** song? What meaning do these things make for us and for the people involved?

The goal of this course: is to foster an understanding of how folklore--in its many guises--contributes to the meaning and beliefs of certain groups and cultures. How does it help us make sense of ourselves and our world? What stories and traditions are being passed on and why? How cool is that?

General Education Outcomes

- Critical Thinking
- Effective Communication
- Community and Civic Responsibility
- Information Literacy

Course Assignments and Requirements: YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL PROJECTS IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.

1. **Attendance and participation and homework:** don't be silly, come to class. We want your input. **No late homework accepted.**
(15%)

2. **Team Teach:** At a scheduled time during the semester you and a team of your peers will teach the class about a type of folklore of your choosing. More on this in class. **(20%)**

3. Projects:

Find a Folk singer/folk music: short oral presentation and written project

For this assignment find the website and/or music by one of the musicians **from material provided**, and answer these questions in two page essay. What makes this folk music? Explain what is it about the lyrics, the music, the story, the website, the performance, and the folk the singer addresses that make this particular musician fall into this genre? I will provide you with a detailed assignment sheet in class. The material provided is from ***The International Folk Alliance***—a conference for international folklorists, folk musicians and the Library of Congress (folklife collection).

Use one of our texts for support with definitions and analysis.

(20%) 2 -3 pages

Visit Columbus (or an Ohio) Folk Event: essay project

You must visit a Columbus area (or Ohio) folk event during the first part of this semester and write up what you find. **I will give you the assignment handout in class.** There are sites listed on **Blackboard** to help you in your quest. **Remember that a folk event can happen in your own backyard, at a club meeting, at your job, or in your home.**

(20%) 3-4 pages

4. Fieldwork/Ethnography/Final Project: This project requires that you physically venture into the world of folklore. **Know that you will be collecting data in the field.** Don't worry: we'll talk about this. **25% 10 -15 pages.**

Rules you need to know:

Participation: In this folklore class, we practice **active learning**. When you are present in class or conducting your field research, **you are required to be prepared and participate.**

In your research, this means that you have brought interview questions, equipment, etc. in order to engage in a conversation. I

n class, this means that you have done the assigned reading, completed the homework, have brought course materials and homework (books, paper, pens, etc.) in order to do in-class assignments and, in particular, listen to and speak with your peers and me.

Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer and budding folklorist. You are expected to be on time and prepared for each class, partner site visit/meeting, and individual conference with me.

The following four situations, when accompanied by documentation, constitute "excused" absences: participation in a university-sanctioned event, family tragedy, religious observance, or illness. **Each unexcused absence after two will result in the lowering of your final grade by one-third of a letter.** (For example, a final grade of B- with four unexcused absences becomes a C.) Lateness—arrival to class after I take attendance—is also absence, as is leaving class early; **three unexcused lates or leaving early equals one unexcused absence.** If you must miss class for any reason, you are responsible for materials presented in class during your absence and must find out from a classmate what you missed.

Missing class is no excuse for not turning in an assignment.

DEADLINES

-- **Don't leave anything in my mailbox without talking to me first. And do not simply email me an assignment without talking to me first. (I hate that) If you do, I will flunk it.** If you need an extension, ask for one. (This is not like asking for more gruel)

--Assignments are due at the **beginning** of the class period on the day that they are due for full credit. If you are late (two minutes even) the day the essay is due, expect to lose one-half a letter grade on your essay. *Hey, everyone else was here on time..*

--**I will not accept late assignments unless you have talked to me before the due date.** If you have a problem which keeps you from completing your assignments on time, speak to me immediately, and BEFORE the assignment is due. Get it?

--**Complete the readings and homework for class by the assigned date.** If you come to class unprepared--well, what good does that do anyone?? Most likely you will find your grade affected as this counts against participation. Just read the stuff and we will all be happy. Plus you will learn some very cool stuff--which is why you are here in the first place.

Project Procedures

The final draft of each essay must meet the following requirements:

- appropriate page length per assignment (see prompts)
- double-spaced
- One-inch margins (top, bottom, sides)
- 12 pt. type/font size -- nothing fancy--no all caps, no all cursive, no all bold
- Heading: your name
class, class time
instructor's name
date
centered creative title
NO COVER PAGE
NO PLASTIC ANYTHING

ANY PROJECT THAT DOES NOT MEET THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS WILL BE HANDED BACK AND DROPPED ONE LETTER GRADE FOR EACH DAY UNTIL THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS ARE MET. Really--NO KIDDING.

Financial Aid Recipients If you receive financial aid please note that attendance is not only monitored by your instructor, but reported three times during the quarter. Failure to attend may result in being academically withdrawn from this class. This rule is not my rule. Please refer to your "Standards of Satisfactory Progress" or call Financial Aid (287-2648) if you have questions

For the purposes of financial aid reporting, a student meets the participation and attendance criteria if s/he has actively engaged in the class and demonstrated a meaningful attempt toward completion of the course. Examples of active engagement may include, but are not limited to: completing a graded course assignment (e.g., homework, quiz, essay, project, or lab); actively participating in studio or practicum sessions; making content-related contributions to an online discussion forum (including responses both to prompts and to student/instructor posts).

Plagiarism: Briefly, plagiarism is the act of copying someone else's ideas or work and claiming them as one's own. DON'T DO IT! The consequences of such an act are severe and not worth the risk. **If I discover you have committed an act of plagiarism, I reserve the right to give you an "E" for the course, and for sure the assignment.**

Bottom floor of the library: Here is where you can get one-on-one tutoring. The Writing Workshop is staffed by English Department faculty and experienced tutors, and is designed to assist you at any level and in any division with all phases of your writing process--from generating topics to revising. They do not proofread, however--**THAT** would be **YOUR** job.

Please Note the Following:

--I reserve the right to give quizzes on any assigned reading, at any time--suddenly and without warning (except for this one) particularly if I feel the reading is not being done.

--I will supplement the assigned text readings with handouts, as may the group in charge of class on certain days. Read the handout material before the assigned class meeting and be prepared to discuss it in class on that date.

--It may become necessary to modify the syllabus as the quarter progresses. You will always be notified of the changes in advance. **You are responsible for being in class on the day the changes are announced.**

--Each student will “team-teach” the class this semester. These are typically great fun and a chance for you to take control of your own education--even if you’d rather not...





English 2270

Daily Syllabus Specific Stuff you need to know

"We are symbols and inhabit symbols"

Week 3

M 2/1 **Homework:** *Groups:* Sims, Ch. 2 **(Quiz)**
For Dialog: What folk groups are you a member of?
What makes these a folk group?

W 2/3 **Homework:** *Performance:* Sims, Ch. 5 **(Quiz)**
Intro to Visit a Folk Event project

Week 4

M 2/8 **Homework:** Brunvand Ch. 11 **(Quiz)**
Folksongs and Folk music
Hoodling!

W 2/10 **Homework:** Brunvand Ch 12 & 13
What is a variant? **(Quiz)**
The Politics of Folk Music
Pete Seeger, The Smothers Brothers and Janis Ian
Intro to Find a Folksinger project

Week 5

M 2/16 **Intro to team teach: team selections**

W 2/17 Team Teach meetings

Week 6

M 2/22 **Due:** Find a Folksinger Project
Short presentations

W 2/24 Short presentations
Team meetings and planning sessions if time permits

Week 7

M 2/29 **Homework:** Sims Ch. 7 and 8 and skim 9
Introduction to fieldwork project
Team meetings and planning sessions

W 3/2 Pete Seeger: The Power of Song

Week 8

M 3/7 **Homework:** Brunvand Ch 6: Jokes, Riddles and verbal puzzles (**quiz**)
Collect a riddle or verbal puzzle from someone in your family or one of your folk groups. Be prepared to explain the context in which you collected the piece.

W 3/9 Team meetings and planning sessions
Due: Final Project proposal

Week 9

M 3/14 Spring Break!

W 3/16 Spring Break!

Week 10

M 3/21 **Homework:** Brunvand Ch. 9 Legends and Anecdotes (**Quiz**)
Bring an example to class—something that has been passed down one of your folk groups.

Due: Visit a Folk event project
Team meetings and planning/practice sessions

W 3/23 **Homework:** Brunvand Ch. 14: Superstitions
Bring an example of a superstition that you know—it could be something that has been passed down in your family or in your peer group. Where did you find the material or how did you come to know it?
The haunted **Golden Lamb!**

Week 11

M 3/28 Final team meetings and practice run-throughs. Bring handouts, props and everything else you need for your team to be brilliant.

W 3/30 **Team 1**
Homework: assigned by team

Week 12

M 4/4 **Team 2**
Homework: assigned by team

W 4/6 **Team 3**
Homework: assigned by team

Week 13

M 4/11 **Team 4**
Homework: assigned by team

W 4/13 **Team 5**
Homework: assigned by team

Week 14

M 4/18

Team 6

Homework: assigned by team

Due: Progress Report!

W 4/20

Homework: Brunvand Ch 17 --Folk gestures **(quiz)**

Bring a folk gesture shared by your family or one of your folk groups. Be prepared to explain the meaning it makes—how is it a reflection of the culture of the group?

Week 15

M 4/25

Homework: AF Ch 18 *Folk games!*

Bring an example of a folk game that you know—it could be something that has been passed down in your family or in your peer group. Where did you find the material or how did you come to know it? Can you teach us how to play?

W 4/27

Homework: Folk medicine and healing (HO)

What non-traditional cures do you know? Collect one (or more) from a friend or family member. Find out how they came to know it, and be prepared to explain how you came to know it and how it is used.

Week 16

M 5/2

Homework: Folk medicine and healing (HO)

What non-traditional cures do you know? Collect one (or more) from a friend or family member. Find out how they came to know it, and be prepared to explain how you came to know it and how it is used.

W 5/4

Homework: Brunvand Ch 23

Bring a dish or snack to share. SHORT ORAL FINAL PRESENTATION:

1. How does the dish you brought carry on traditions in your family or in one of your folk groups. Be sure to be specific—refer to text.
2. Where does the recipe come from and how has it made in your life?

CAKE WALK DAY!

Final project due: Just let it go.

