

HC 168 The Stories We Tell
Subject to change prior to and during the class

Instructor:

Paula Bartholome
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9:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Central Time, Monday – Friday and by appointment
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Course Description:

Stories are everywhere! They are part of what makes us human and they provide a way for us to make sense of the world around us. This is as true in today’s workplaces as it was for our ancestors around a fire in the wilderness.

This course will examine stories that exist in organizations and what they can tell us about the organization. We will also explore the various ways that stories can be used they can be useful in that setting.. How can stories can help us understand why an organization acts as it does? How can stories be used to more effectively facilitate the inevitable changes that organizations face? How can stories help foster more effective communication and collaborative environments?

The course is a hands-on process of discovering and interpreting stories in the context of specific workplaces. In addition to material presented by the instructor students will learn from each other’s experience and insights, through readings, field work, full class discussions and reflection on and application of the concepts and ideas of the class.

Competencies:

FX – Can identify at least two distinct opportunities to use story in a workplace to accomplish organizational objectives and provide examples of appropriate stories.

H-2-X – Can provide a basic interpretation of results from an organizational assessment including discussing barriers to change and possible change strategies.

L7 – Can learn collaboratively and examine the knowledge, skills and values that contribute to such learning. More detailed information about each competence will be presented in class.

Required Text and Resources:

The required texts are: *The Story Factor* by Annette Simmons and *The Character of Organizations* by William Bridges. Additional readings may be distributed during the class and may be augmented by video tapes, guest presenter(s), web resources and fieldwork.

Class Map

Experiences/Activities	Deliverables and Specifications (for the next week)
<p>Week 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review syllabus, competencies and expectations about the class and deliverables/specifications • Review BlackBoard • Presentation: Why pay attention to stories? Provide examples of stories and not stories. • Class exercise: view video and identify stories within it. • Participate collaborative during the entire class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write at least one page in reflection/application journal on insights and understandings from readings, class presentation and conversation. • Complete self assessment (L7 only) • Post at least one question for class next week on BlackBoard by January 12th at 5PM • Read: Chapter 1 & 2 in Bridges • Answer the questions on p. 31
<p>Week 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings and BlackBoard questions • Presentation: Linking stories to organizational character. • Class exercise: Complete full organizational assessment and discuss. Pair up with one or two people whose organization is different and learn about how differences are expressed in behavior. What stories did you hear? How are they the same/different as the ones you told? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue reflection/application journal. What did you learn from classmates? How did you help them learn? • Read: Chapter 2& 3 in Simmons • Post at least one question for class next week on Blackboard by January 19th at 5PM
<p>Week 3</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review readings and BlackBoard questions) • Presentation: What you hear depends on who and where you are. Context, meaning and hearing different messages in the same story. • Class exercise: Listen to organizational stories and identify as many different meanings as possible for the same story. • Presentation/pairs conversation: Finding stories in your organization. Human subjects discussion. • Minute paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your reflection/application journal consider a story you are aware of in your organization and reflect on the context in which the story originated, how you reacted to it and the meaning you understood. Identify at least one other possible point of view and discuss why that individual or group would have “heard” it differently. • Submit your journal of the first three weeks by class time Week 4. • Submit a one page plan of how you are going to approach individuals in your organization. Include specific information on how you will ensure their protection as human subjects. Submit by January 25th at 5PM. You will receive written feedback within 48 hours. • Read: Chapter 3 Bridges.
<p>Weeks 4 & 5 <i>Note: Class will meet on BlackBoard.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have five conversations in your workplace with people from your work area/department. • Have five conversations in your workplace with people from outside your work area/department. <p>The purpose of these conversations is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elicit one or more stories from them ○ Ask for their participation in completing an organizational assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the two weeks participate in conversations on BlackBoard about the readings and your experiences in the field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare and contrast in your reflection/application journal how the people you spoke with view the organization through the assessment. Reflect on why the similarities or differences may exist. • Compare and contrast in your reflection/application journal how the stories you gathered support the assessment the person provided. Reflect on why the similarities or differences may exist. • Contribute to the discussion each week Postings must for each week must be completed by the end of the class meeting for the week. • Read: Chapters 4& 7 in Bridges
<p>Week 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reading • Field work update questions • Presentation – Stories with a purpose - uses of story in organizations • Class exercise – review stories and discuss how they would be received by/fit in organizations of different types. • Group exercise – identify types of story that you want to explore in more depth. Partner with one or two others who have a similar interest. Create a plan to look for and share information on this type on BlackBoard during Week8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on and discuss an opportunity to use a story to help foster learning and/or change among groups in your work setting. What is the organizational goal? Who do you want to learn? What would be a helpful story to use and why? • Read: Simmons Chapter 5 • Work with partner(s) to locate information on story type/use you are interested in. Post results in appropriate location on BlackBoard by Week 8 start of class.
<p>Week 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reading and results of web searches • Presentation: storytelling skills for people in organizations • Practice: Students tell a brief story and receive feedback. (75 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with reflection/application journal. • Read: Simmons Chapter 7 • Students with final conversations Week 9 review with instructor Week 8.
<p>Week 8 <i>Note: Class will meet on BlackBoard.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reading • Complete any incomplete fieldwork • Clarifications of expectations for final conversations and review final conversations with instructor. Submit outline/draft by email and have a conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in discussions on BlackBoard • Students with final conversations Week 10 review with instructor Week 9.
<p>Week 9</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review reading • Fieldwork conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on and discuss answers to the questions posed at the beginning of class for your particular competence as well as the “tying together” questions. • Students with final conversations Week 11, review with instructor Week 10.
<p>Week 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fieldwork conversations • Complete written course assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final entry into reflection/application journal. What have you learned about your organization from taking this class? What did you learn about yourself? Submit by March • Each student discusses the results of their fieldwork in the context of their competencies (15 minutes per student) • Final reflection/application journal due by class time Week 11. • Final self assessment due by class time Week 11 (L7 only)
<p>Week 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fieldwork conversations • Class debrief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last date to submit written work – must be received by class time.

Expectations for Deliverables:

Reflection/Application Journals

Journals are to be kept electronically and submitted via email as an attachment. Please name your document with your last name and “SWT” as an abbreviation for the class. , e.g. Bartholome SWT. Journals are to be written in standard English, clearly and concisely. The purpose of the journal is to both reflect on and apply what you are learning and to do so in the context of your competencies. The expected length of the journal is 1-2 pages per week for one competence, 2-3 pages per week for two competencies. Thus at the end of the class the expected length of a single competence journal would be 9-18 pages; a two competence journal would be 18-27 pages. Pages are to be double spaced, 12 point type. Journals that do not meet the formatting or length expectations will be returned for adjustments. If you need assistance with writing, please contact DePaul’s writing center:

<http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>

Fieldwork

Talk through strategy for engaging 10 people in your organization to gather stories and have organizational assessments completed for comparison purposes. You must review your strategy with the instructor prior to week four. You will be expected to ensure the confidentiality of your work with the people in your organization. Specific guidelines will be discussed in class.

Final Conversations

Can be presented any time starting week 9. Each student will have 10 minutes to engage the class in a conversation about their organization including telling a story. All students must submit a final conversation outline/draft and talk through this with instructor to receive feedback prior to sharing with the class.

Learning Collaboratively

Students are expected to engage with each other in the class in a collaborative manner throughout the 10 weeks by contributing comments, examples and questions to the class and group conversations in class and on BlackBoard. This requires having done the reading and being prepared to participate. Students taking the L7 competence will also complete and submit a self assessment at the beginning and end of class to determine the degree to which they have enhanced their ability to learn collaboratively during the quarter.

Assessment Criteria:

Feedback will be provided by the instructor throughout the course as well as at the end. Feedback will be provided clearly, with integrity, flexibility and empathy. In order to achieve a passing grade, students will be expected to participate fully, submit all required deliverables and take responsibility for their own learning, including catching up from any absences. See attached matrix.

Instructor's Biography:

Prior to her current role as a principal in her own firm, Parallax , Paula Bartholome was part of various organizational stories for more than 20 years, holding policy-level positions in marketing and communications. Currently, she helps clients challenge assumptions; identify and eliminate communication barriers; and communicate openly and honestly. She graduated cum laude from Indiana University with a BS in business received her MS in organization development from Loyola University Chicago. She has written on organizational communication, teamwork and leadership for national, state and local publications. Her most recent article appears in the May issue of *The Listening Professional* a publication of the International Listening Association. She is also Vice Chairperson of the National Storytelling Network's Special Interest Group on Storytelling in Organizations.

SYLLABUS ATTACHMENTPolicy on Incompletes

It is expected that students will complete course assignments and evidence by specified due dates within the quarter. In circumstances which the instructor determines to be exceptional, when a student is unable to complete required coursework by the established due dates, the student may request that a grade of Incomplete (IN) be issued. This request must be made formally, in writing, by completion of an IN Request Form that the student signs. The form specifies the final date by which all outstanding coursework must be completed. Failure to submit outstanding work by the specified due date will result in a grade change from IN to W or FX for each enrolled competence, along with serious academic and/or financial consequences. **After the final submission deadline, the student will have no further opportunities to submit work for a passing grade.**

Policy on Plagiarism

Students are expected to observe the University's established guidelines regarding academic integrity, including the following statement regarding plagiarism, as quoted from the University's "Handbook for Undergraduate Studies":

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.

Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement.

Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.

The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion. Actions taken by the instructor do not preclude the College or the university taking further punitive action including dismissal from the University.

Assessment Matrix
The Stories We Tell – Winter 2004

Deliverable:	Fieldwork & Final Conversation	Reflection & Application Journal	Collaborative Learning (includes self assessment for L7)
Assessment criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly communicates ideas • Demonstrates competenc(ies) • Demonstrates understanding of the course content 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently and actively contributes knowledge, questions, opinions and skills. • Values the knowledge, questions, opinions and skills of others and encourages their contribution. • Helps group identify necessary changes and encourages group action for change.

Each criteria can be accomplished:

Very well = 10 points; Well = 8 points; Satisfactorily = 6 points; Needs improvement - 4 points

Total possible points for class:

Fieldwork discussion:	30
Final conversation	30
Journal submission (2x)	60
Participation/self assessment	30
TOTAL	150

Grading Scale:

95+%	136+ points	A
90		A-
85		B+
80		B
75		B-
70		C+
65		C
60	90 points	C-