

**COMM 204:01E Community as Story**  
Spring Session 2014 - T & TH 2:30-3:45 - IC 230

**Scope of Course**

The purpose of this course is to understand the intersection of narrative, community and identity. It uses children's literature, specifically picture books, as a means of understanding urban community and individual identities within that community. One underlying presumption is that every person's life can be understood and appreciated in terms of narrative [story, play, monologue, film] and that the writing and performance of such narratives are ways to comprehend and value others' lives as well as one's own. Another presumption is that children's literature is an important means of community support since it can provide early building blocks of self-concept and self-esteem.

Students in this course will explore communities surrounding the Lake Shore campus of Loyola University Chicago [Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Uptown] in terms of their multi-dimensional diversity. This exploration will consist of community service, interaction with local experts, ethnographic research and, literally walking around. Students will also explore the richness of urban life through reading, discussing and performing children's literature. They will use their observations to create their own children's picture books in collaboration with experienced student artists.

This course satisfies the University Core Requirement for Engaged Learning.

**Faculty**

Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy

Office Hours: T-TH 12:30-2pm - Cuneo 306

or by appointment 773.508.8431 [bmurphy@luc.edu](mailto:bmurphy@luc.edu)

**Texts**

- *Reading Across Borders: Storytelling and Knowledges of Resistance* - Stone/Mediatores[SM]
- *The Grammar of Fantasy* - Rodari [R]
- *Writing Ethnographic Notes* [2011 edition] - Emmerson, Fretz, & Shaw [EFS]
- Additional readings posted on Sakai
- Selected picture books [on reserve in the library]

FB Page - COMM 204:Community as Story

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/COMM-204-Community-as-Story/192428094295326>

## Evaluation

### **ethnographic notes**

**20%**

- Weekly notes that chronicle experiences in the specified communities and service site. These should include detailed descriptions of people, places artifacts, events, situations, and encounters. Some more particular assignments [e.g., “block mapping”] will be posted on Sakai.
- Criteria: appropriateness, level of detail, comprehensiveness
- Purpose: to become familiar with the breadth of human experience in the Rogers Park/Edgewater/Upton neighborhoods

### **Preparation/performance of 4 children’s texts**

**24%**

- Analyses and in-class performances of children’s texts
- Criteria: accuracy of analysis and effectiveness of performance [rubric will be provided]
- Purpose: to learn about narrative structure through close analysis and embodiment

### **Examinations**

**30% [15% each]**

- Take home essay examinations based on readings and service reflection
- Criteria: accuracy regarding course readings, clarity of explanation
- Purpose: to encourage/ascertain understanding of basic concepts

### **original children’s text proposal**

**6%**

- Proposal for original children's work [picture book, artwork, play, video]
- Criteria: originality, appropriateness, clarity
- Purpose: to establish groundwork for original text

### **original text**

**20%**

- Original children’s text [picture book, play, video] based on the urban experiences chronicled in the student’s ethnographic notes
- Criteria: originality, appropriateness, coherence, aesthetic value

## **Additional Requirements**

**Participation is required.** Much of the learning in this class occurs as a result of discussion. Failure to participate deprives all students of potentially beneficial interaction. It also deprives the individual student of certain assignment experiences. Thus, lack of substantive participation in in-class group activities, whether through absence or ill-preparedness will be penalized through grade reduction.

**Late work will be penalized** unless *prior* arrangements have been made. I can be contacted through phone, voice mail, email, office hours and appointment.

**Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable** and will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines stated in the undergraduate studies handbook. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism. Penalties range from a grade of zero for the specific assignment involved to failure in the course and notification of the appropriate dean[s] with the possibility of further action.

## Proposed Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/Assignment</u>
January 14-16	Introduction/Overview nature/scope of children's picture books	R:Intro[ix-15] - 3
January 21-23	narrative & identity nature & function of performance	R:4-6, SM:intro
January 28-30	ethnography Chicago as context	R:7-11, EFS 1-2
February 4-6	narrative structure Rodari exercises	R:12-14, EFS 3-4
February 11-13	nature/function of illustration	R:15-22
February 18-20	what stories need to be told? initial story ideas	SM:1-3, EFS 5 Mid-term distributed
February 25-27	performance #1	R:23-26 Mid-term Due
March 4-6	<i>Spring Break</i>	
March 11-13	performance #2	R:27-29, EFS 6
March 18-20	narrative as power	R:30-32, SM:4-6
March 25-27	performance #3	EFS 7
April 1-3*	intersection of story, sight & sound *team project consultations outside of class	R:36-38
April 8-10	ethnographic presentations	R:39-41
April 15-17	ethnographic presentations cont'd	
April 22-24	performance #4 [original work]	Final Exam distributed]
May 1 Final Exam time [9-11am]	performance #4 [original work]	Final exam due

