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# PR 703 Storytelling and Preaching

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**PR 703**  
**STORYTELLING AND PREACHING**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Intensive Course Format**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

**The overall objectives of this course are that you will:**

- **Grow in your ability to discover stories, write stories, and tell stories;**
- **Draw upon the nature and dynamics of autobiography (oral history, journal) as a means of enhancing self-confidence and oral expression;**
- **Appreciate and gain facility in using narrative imagination in the preaching process;**
- **Grow in your awareness that while the *kerygma* of authentic preaching is centered on the Jesus Story, the storyteller is a person whose very humanity is essential to telling The Story.**

**GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

**From my standpoint, you can expect me to:**

- **Keep it interesting;**
- **Keep you informed; be available**
- **Be in prayer for all of us**
- **Be open, teachable, transparent, vulnerable, and willing to take risks.**

**From you I expect:**

- **Active participation in this learning community;**
- **Faithful and timely completion of all assignments;**
- **Written work to be presented on time;**
- **That you will be open, teachable, transparent, vulnerable and willing to take risks.**

## EVALUATION

**Your course evaluation will be based upon the following:**

- **Diligent, active and timely participation in all activities of the course;**
- **Reading 1200 pages from suggested bibliography (available from professor) or other sources about narrative preaching, storytelling; this might include tapes, films, etc. equivalent to time required for reading; and the writing of a 2-3 page reflection on this reading (Having read this – so what?)**
- **Faithful keeping of a journal, with summary response;**
- **Fairy tale (a 3-page ‘once upon a time’ story);**
- **Oral presentations (favorite story; children’s story; other if time permits)**
- **Adaptation of movie for sermon**
- **Course reflection: 1-2 pages**
- **Theology of storytelling: 5-7 pages**

# **COURSE SCHEDULE**

## **DAY ONE**

### **Course Orientation**

#### **Session #1**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** The nature of storytelling begins best within the definition of self. In the process of discovering your own inner story, the storyteller emerges.

**TASK:** Construct a Collage

#### **Session #2**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** In the telling of your story, the images and the content will take on significance.

**TASKS:**

- 1. Dyad interaction/reflection. (Tell what you choose about your collage; be aware of what insights, emotions, etc. surface in the telling.)**
- 2. Group interaction/reflection, with deciphering. (Be prepared to bring your picture tomorrow.)**

## **DAY TWO**

#### **Session #3**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** “Everyone’s story is in part the story of us all.” Group work for observation and synthesis can be informative for the storyteller.

**TASKS:**

- 1. Drawing: “What is going on in my life right now?”**
- 2. Dyad interaction/reflection**
- 3. Journaling/reflection**

#### **Session #4**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Visual images are stories; images have power; the unconscious is revelatory.

**TASKS:**

1. Deciphering (collage and drawing)
2. Professor's story, collage

#### **Session #5**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Media (film, in this case) engages us; tells us stories; and invites us to interpret.

**TASK:**

1. Movie with reflection
  - Look for the illustration/story.
  - How will it show up in the sermon?
2. A one-page reflection, with dyad interaction

### **DAY THREE**

#### **Session #6**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Telling a story that you know or have experienced reinforces the confidence of telling, and shares the delight of how the story has impacted you.

**TASKS:**

1. Tell a favorite story (7 minutes, max)
2. Tell a children's story

#### **Session #7**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Telling a story in a non-traditional way enhances the teller's capacity to engage the listener.

**TASK:** Select a favorite Bible story/parable/miracle.

1. Draw a picture of it.
2. Think through the telling from three perspectives:
  - as a reporter
  - as a participant in the story
  - as an inanimate object in the story
3. Put it in your best narrative form.

## **DAY FOUR**

### **Session #8**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Creating stories stretches the imagination, enlarges the capacity to utilize the memory and the senses, and releases the teller to discover the “once upon a time” within.

**TASKS:**

1. Write a “Once upon a time” story.
2. Read the story in class.
3. Prepare for class reflection/discussion by considering:
  - What dynamics were at work in the writing?
  - Where is the ‘hook’ in the story for you?

### **Session #9**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Continued practice builds the teller’s written/oral delivery skills; reinforces the principles of effective communication; and builds the listener’s capacity to interact with the story and give insightful feedback to the teller.

**TASK:** Write and deliver an original children’s story.

## **DAY FIVE**

### **Session #10**

**SESSION LEARNING GOAL:** Giving visual expression to an idea or concept is a powerful tool for enhancing self-understanding and improving the ability to be an effective communicator.

**TASK:** A drawing: “What happened to me this week?”

- To be shared with the class, with your personal commentary.
- Dyads/group work.

**FINAL ACTIVITY:** Communion