

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE
Folklore 1000-01
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Fall 2010

INSTRUCTOR: Janice Esther Tulk
OFFICE: ED 4049
OFFICE HOURS: MWF 11am – noon, 1:00-1:45pm
 Tu 1:00-1:45pm & by appointment
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CLASS TIMES: MWF 10:00-10:50am
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

FOLK 1000 will discuss the role that tradition plays in communication, art and society through an examination of folklore materials from Newfoundland and the English-speaking world. Readings and “listeenings” will emphasize the use of folklore in context, e.g., the proverb in speech and the folksong in childrearing. Students will be urged to analyse the traditions in their own lives through special assignments. A student may not receive credit for both FOLK 1000 and 2000.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- students will be introduced to folklore as a discipline, its basic concepts, theories, and genres
- students will learn to recognize, observe, collect, analyse, classify, and describe folklore in context
- students will develop the ability to think critically and to write effectively in an academic style
- students will be exposed to the folklore of the many cultural groups that make up the mosaic of Newfoundland and Labrador, including both Euro-Canadian, Mi’kmaq, Inuit, and Innu

REQUIRED TEXT:

Oring, Elliott, ed. 1986. *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: An Introduction*. Logan: Utah State University Press.

Additional supplementary readings noted in the attached schedule of topics are on reserve in the QEII Library. Others may be announced in class and on the website (listed above) and placed on reserve.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW (see descriptions on subsequent pages for details):

	Item	Date	Value
1.	In-Class Response Sheets	5 Fridays during Term (2% each)	10%
2.	Assignment 1: Personal Folklore	29 September 2010 10am	15%
3.	Mid-term Exam	20 October 2010	20%
4.	Assignment 2: Folk Groups	29 October 2010 10am	15%
5.	Assignment 3: Fieldwork Project	29 November 2010 10am	20%
6.	Final Exam	TBA by Registrar	20%

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS IN DETAIL

1. IN-CLASS RESPONSE SHEETS (10%)

FIVE FRIDAYS DURING TERM

On five Fridays during term, students will be invited to respond to topics and issues discussed in class and through assigned readings. This response may consist of a comment or question, and may be guided by a prompt from the instructor. Each will be worth 2% of the overall grade in the course. These response sheets must be completed in class on the day they are assigned.

2. ASSIGNMENT 1: PERSONAL FOLKLORE (15%)

DUE: SEPTEMBER 29 AT 10AM (START OF CLASS)

Using the sample folklore document on page 246 of your text as a guide, detail an item of folklore from your own personal life. This may be a saying, a belief, an object, a game, etc. Provide the text of the folklore item, identify the genre into which it falls, and supply data about the informant (yourself) and the social and cultural contexts in which this folklore is found/used. You should consult the samples found on pages 247-52 of your text when completing this assignment. Give as much detail as possible, considering where, when, how, and from whom you learned this item of folklore; where, when, and how you use it (context); and why or how it is meaningful.

You will be graded on your ability to recognize and describe an item of folklore, and explain its meaning and/or purpose. This assignment must follow the format outlined in your textbook (page 246). Assignments will be graded 75% on content and 25% on style (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc). See submission guidelines below. Please be prepared to discuss your folklore item in class.

3. MID-TERM EXAM (20%)

OCTOBER 20

20% of your final grade will be based on your performance in a mid-term exam. This exam may include fill-ins, multiple choice, short answer questions, and essay questions. It will focus on material covered in class (including any guest lectures, videos, etc) and in reading assignments up to the date of the exam. Students are strongly encouraged to attend every class to ensure success in exams. If you do miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining missed material from your fellow classmates.

4. ASSIGNMENT 2: FOLK GROUPS (15%)

DUE: OCTOBER 29 AT 10AM (START OF CLASS)

In a short essay (3-5 pages, double-spaced), identify and describe a folk group to which you belong. What is it? Who or what type of person is a member? What is the history of the group? What common traits do members share? Identify one item or type of folklore used or created by the group. What is it? When, where, and why is it used? How do members learn this folklore? (How is it transmitted?) How is it meaningful to members of this folk group? What is its purpose/function? Explain why the group described can be considered a folk group, employing definitions and descriptions found in your textbook and covered in class lectures and discussions.

You will be graded on your ability to recognize and describe a folk group, and identify an item of folklore it employs and explain its meaning and/or purpose. This assignment must be submitted in essay format, following the submission guidelines listed below. Assignments will be graded 75% on content and 25% on style (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc). Please be prepared to discuss your folk group in class.

5. ASSIGNMENT 3: FIELDWORK PROJECT (20%)

DUE: NOVEMBER 29 AT 10AM (START OF CLASS)

Students may choose one of the three options below for their final fieldwork project. Specific focus areas selected by students must be approved by the instructor by October 15, either via email or in-person discussion during office hours. For those choosing topics which involve conducting and recording interviews, recorders are available for loan through the Circulation Desk of the QEII Library. These are in high demand as deadlines approach for many courses. If you wait until the week before the project is due, you can't be guaranteed that a recorder will be available for your use. Unavailability of recorders will not be grounds for an extension.

OPTION A: FOLK NAMING

The Research Process: Select an “unusual” place name in Newfoundland & Labrador or your home province for which the origins are not obvious. It may be the name of a community, a specific location in a community, or a street name. Through a combination of fieldwork and library-based research, explore the origin(s) of that place name and its meaning. Interview one or more people about their understandings of the origin of that place name and its meaning, using consent forms as appropriate. Consult appropriate library resources, such as the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland & Labrador*, the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, and other books and journals to learn more about this place name. While websites may serve as an additional source of information, this assignment cannot be entirely based on internet research. Only one third of sources cited for this assignment can be websites; the other two thirds must be interviews and/or scholarly sources.

Submission: Compose an essay of 6-8 pages, double-spaced, that identifies and situates the chosen place name in a broader context. Present the various explanations for the name of that location. Consider both official and unofficial names for places, and how folk histories and official histories may differ. Sources must be cited according to Turabian citation style (see guide available online at <http://www.library.mun.ca/guides/howto/turabian.php>). Consent forms must be submitted, along with audio recordings of interviews. See submission guidelines below. Assignments will be graded 75% on content and 25% on style (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc).

OPTION B: FOODWAYS

The Research Process: Observe an individual (friend, family member, etc) making a food item that they are particularly known for and/or for which they do not have a recipe. Document the process via audio recording, video recording, or photographs. Interview the individual about the food item, considering when it is made, how it is made, the history of this tradition (how it came about), who eats the food item, how it is eaten, when it is eaten, and any customs associated with it. Consult appropriate library resources to place this tradition within a broader context and/or identify the history of the tradition. While websites may serve as an additional source of information, this assignment cannot be entirely based on internet research. Only one third of sources cited for this assignment can be websites; the other two thirds must be interviews and/or scholarly sources.

Submission: Compose an essay of 6-8 pages, double-spaced, that describes the food item and places it within a social, cultural, and historical context. Consider the meanings associated with such foodways, and insider and outsider perceptions of and attitudes toward this tradition if applicable. Sources must be cited according to Turabian citation style (see guide available online at <http://www.library.mun.ca/guides/howto/turabian.php>). Consent forms must be submitted, along with recordings of interviews, audio-video documentation, and/or photographs. See submission guidelines below. Assignments will be graded 75% on content and 25% on style (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc).

OPTION C: GRAFFITI AND LATRINALIA

The Research Process: Choose to focus on either graffiti more generally or latrinalia more specifically. You may want to limit yourself geographically to a specific part of the city, a neighbourhood, or even a street. Locate and photograph 10 items of graffiti or latrinalia. Record the date and location for each photograph. Arrange your printed photographs into groups of like items and analyse the content, the context in which it appeared, and the style. Consult appropriate library resources to assist your analysis and place this tradition within a broader context. While websites may serve as an additional source of information, this assignment cannot be entirely based on internet research. Only one third of sources cited for this assignment can be websites; the other two thirds must be interviews and/or scholarly sources.

Submission: Compose an essay of 2-3 pages, double-spaced, that comments on similarities and differences between the “texts” you collected (considering content, context, and style) and the relationship between these local expressions and those found in other cities. Append your photographs (one per page). For each, identify the place where it was collected, the date it was collected, and contextual information as appropriate. Comment on the meanings (or possible meanings) of the graffiti or latrinalia you collected. Sources must be cited according to Turabian citation style (see guide available online at <http://www.library.mun.ca/guides/howto/turabian.php>). See submission guidelines below. Assignments will be graded 75% on content and 25% on style (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc).

20% of your final grade will be based on your performance in a final exam. This exam may include fill-ins, multiple choice, short answer questions, and essay questions. It will focus on material covered in class (including any guest lectures, videos, etc) and in reading assignments from the date of the mid-term exam up to the last day of classes. This final exam will be scheduled and announced by the Registrar. Students are strongly encouraged to attend every class to ensure success in exams. If you do miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining missed material from your fellow students.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments must conform to the following guidelines:

- double-spaced
- 1" margins
- 12pt Times New Roman font
- hard copy (double-sided preferred) – no email submission
- pages stapled or paper-clipped
- first sentence of each paragraph indented and no extra spacing between paragraphs
- Turabian format

Assignments must be submitted at the *start of class* on the day that they are due. Assignments received after this time will be considered late. Late submission of assignments without prior approval for an extension will result in a *penalty of 5% per day*. If you decide to submit your assignment late, it must be placed in the drop box outside the Department of Folklore main office (ED 4046) or handed directly to the instructor during an office hour. Students must not slide papers under office doors.

Assignments will be graded on both content and writing style. Writing style includes proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation, as well as adherence to the Turabian documentation style. 25% of the grade for assignments will be based on writing style and 75% for content.

Materials drawn from other sources and ideas that are not the student's own must be appropriately cited via in-text citations and a bibliography. This means that books, articles, encyclopaedia entries, textbooks, lecture notes, interviews, audio recordings, websites, films, and all other sources of information must be appropriately cited in assignments. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. The calendar states:

Plagiarism: is the act of presenting the ideas or works of another as one's own. This applies to all material such as essays, laboratory reports, work term reports, design projects, seminar presentations, statistical data, computer programs, research results and theses. The properly acknowledged use of sources is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without acknowledgment is contrary to accepted norms of academic behaviour. Information regarding acceptable writing or by email practices is available through the Writing Centre at www.mun.ca/writingcentre/about/.

See: 5.11.4 - Academic Offences at <http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/>

NOTE: In the case of documented medical emergency or family distress, students unable to complete course requirements as outlined will not be penalized. The value of a missed mid-term exam will be added to the weight of the final exam. Extensions for written assignments will be arranged in consultation with the student. Appropriate documentation must be presented in a timely manner – *before the due date or examination date where possible and within one week of the due date or examination date in all other cases*. In the case of illness, documentation should be written on letterhead and signed by the physician. It must indicate dates on which the student was seen by the physician, as well as the length of time and degree to which the illness would affect the student's ability to complete course requirements. See the current Calendar for guidelines.

SCHEDULE

TOPIC 1: INTRODUCTION – What is folklore? Who does it? How do they learn it? How do we analyse it? What can you do with a folklore degree?

Read: Text Preface and Chapter 1

TOPIC 2: FOLK GROUPS – What is a folk group? How are they defined? How are they formed?

Read: Text Chapter 2

TOPIC 3: DOCUMENTING FOLKLORE AND DOING FIELDWORK – How do we collect and study folklore? Ethics, participant observation, interviewing, visual documentation, ethnography, archiving

Read: Text Chapter 3

TOPIC 4: CUSTOM & RITUAL – Calendar customs, dress, rituals, group membership, and identity

Read: “I Knew it Would be a Real Bonding Experience’: Utah State University’s English Department Pig Party as an Annual Rite of Passage” by Lynne S. McNeill (on reserve at the QEII)

TOPIC 5: PERFORMANCE – Text, texture, context, repertoires, and framing

Read: “Performance” by Richard Bauman (on reserve at the QEII)

TOPIC 6: BELIEF – Traditional belief and health systems

Read: Text Chapter 3

TOPIC 7: VERBAL FOLKLORE AND NARRATIVE – Speech, jokes, riddles, proverbs, personal experience narratives, naming, folktales, myths, legends

Read: Text Chapter 6 & 8

TOPIC 8: FOLK MUSIC AND DANCE – Ballads, lyric song, music, dance

Read: Text Chapter 7

TOPIC 9: MATERIAL CULTURE – Hand-made and altered objects

Read: Text Chapter 9

TOPIC 10: FOODWAYS – food preparation, consumption, and attitudes

Read: A Welcoming Wilderness: The Role of Wild Berries in the Construction of Newfoundland and Labrador as a Tourist Destination by Holly Everett (on reserve at the QEII)

ROUND-UP AND REVIEW

DATES TO NOTE

September 17: Library Session in L2028 (don't come to ED3034B!)

September 29: Assignment 1 due at start of class

October 11: Thanksgiving, no classes

October 12: Fall break, no classes

October 15: Topic for final project must be approved; today (Friday) follows Tuesday schedule

October 20: Mid-term Exam

October 29: Assignment 2 due at start of class

November 11: Remembrance Day, no classes

November 29: Assignment 3 due at start of class

December 3: Last day of classes