

**Folklore 1000**  
**Introduction to Folklore**  
**Memorial University of Newfoundland**  
**Fall 2007**

**Instructor:** Janice Esther Tulk  
**Class Times:** MWF 9:00 – 9:50  
**Room:** ED-4011  
**Office Hours:** MWF 10:00 – 10:50 and by appointment  
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**Course Description:**

The role that tradition plays in communication, art and society will be discussed through an examination of folklore materials from Newfoundland and the English-speaking world. Readings and “listenings” 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 Folklore 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:**

Sims, Martha C. and Martine Stephens. *Living Folklore: An Introduction to the Study of People and Their Traditions*. Logan: Utah, 2005.

Additional supplementary readings will be announced in class and on the website (listed above), and placed on reserve in the QEII library.

**Recommended Text:**

Trimmer, Joseph F. *A Guide to MLA Documentation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 2005.

**Evaluation:**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Value</i>
Mid-Term Exam	15 October 2007	25%
Mini Collection Project (4 survey cards + contract for deposit)	31 October 2007 <b>Due: in class at 9am</b>	20%
Major Collection Project	30 November 2007 <b>Due: in class at 9am</b>	30%
Final Exam	TBA by Registrar	25%

***Please 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.

Late submission of assignments without prior approval for an extension will result in a penalty of 5% per day.

**Exams**

**Total: 50% of final grade**

50% of your final grade will be based on your performance in two exams valued at 25% each. Exams will include multiple choice, fill-ins, short answer questions, and essay questions. They will focus on material covered in class, during guest lectures, and in reading assignments. 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. Make a missed class/study buddy today!

**Assignments**

**Total: 50% of final grade**

Descriptions of the two assignments follow below. Assignments and possible topics will be discussed in class. Students are encouraged to attend all classes to have access to this information. Should you have any concerns about the assignments or need guidance on the selection of an appropriate topic, you can visit the instructor during regular office hours or make an appointment. Start thinking about these well in advance, as they cannot be completed the night before they are due.

***1. Mini Collection Project – 4 Folklore Survey Cards + Contract for Deposit***

***20%***

***Due: 31 October 2007 at 9am***

Students will be provided with **4** folklore survey cards and a contract for deposit, to be explained in class. Students will then consult family members and/or friends to collect and document folklore and traditions using the survey cards. Examples of topics for documentation include jokes, riddles, sayings, ways of predicting weather, Halloween customs, personal experience narratives, beliefs, Thanksgiving customs, supernatural occurrences, ghost stories, Remembrance Day customs, etc. Students will then complete the contract for deposit and submit it with the cards. These cards, after grading, will be deposited in MUNFLA archive. [If you strongly object to having these cards deposited, please discuss your concerns with the instructor before the due date for this assignment] This assignment should be submitted before or at the beginning of class (***9am***) on ***31 October 2007*** in ***hard copy***.

***2. Major Collection Project***

***30%***

***Due: 30 November 2007 at 9am***

Students must choose **one** of the following two options for their major collection project: (A) a ***photography-based*** collection project or (B) an ***interview-based*** collection project. Details for each are provided below.

The major collection project is to be entirely the work of the student alone. Collaborations are not acceptable. Projects must be submitted in ***hard copy*** at the start of class (***9am***) on ***30 November 2007***.

Students must make use of MLA style in documenting any sources used in the major collection project. Please note that 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. 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 and research results. 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.

See: 4.11.4 - Academic Offenses at <http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/>

Please note that in MLA style, there is no distinction made between an idea and a fact – any information taken from another source must be documented accordingly. Thus, even so-called "historical facts" must be attributed to the source from which the student obtains the information. Please consult *A Guide to MLA Documentation* by Trimmer.

The collection project will be graded on both **content** and **writing style**. Writing style includes proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation, as well as adherence to the MLA documentation style. 25% of the grade for the collection project will be based on writing style and 75% for content. It is strongly recommended that students who struggle with their writing visit the Writing Centre on campus for help (Science Building Room 2053, 737-3168, [www.mun.ca/writingcentre](http://www.mun.ca/writingcentre)). Students who avail of this service are encouraged to have the appropriate paperwork indicating that they went to the Writing Centre completed and forwarded to me no later than **7 December 2007**.

### ***Option A: Photography-based collection project***

Students will collect via photography a minimum of **ten** items that fit into the same genre of folklore. Choosing a specific theme, students will photograph **ten** (or more) related items of folklore (material culture or folklife in action), label and identify the contents and context of each photograph, and submit a brief **3-4 page description (double-spaced, 12pt font)** of the relationship between the ten photographs. This assignment should be submitted before or at the beginning of class (**9am**) on **30 November 2007** in **hard copy**.

Students may choose to use digital or film photography for this assignment. In the case of film photography, students are responsible for processing and printing. In the case of digital photography, colour laser printing is recommended, but black and white is acceptable (remember to take your pictures in black and white or convert them to black and white before printing for best results). Students who do not have access to a camera may purchase a disposable one for the purpose of this assignment or arrange to borrow one.

Students should obtain appropriate permissions to photograph people and/or objects as necessary and submit consent forms with their assignments. Sample forms will be discussed in class prior to the assignment's due date – don't miss it!

Note: Photographs must be **new** and taken specifically for the purposes of this project. They cannot be "collected" from old photo albums. Projects that do not comply with these guidelines will not be accepted.

### ***Option B: Interview-based collection project***

Students will interview someone about their membership in a folk group or their involvement with an item of folklore (for example: yard art, food preparation, dancing, singing, bonfire night, or story telling). Interviews must last a **minimum of 20 minutes** and must be recorded. A copy of the interview must be submitted with the final paper. Appropriate permissions should be obtained and consent forms submitted with the paper. Samples of forms will be discussed in class prior to the assignment's due date – don't miss it! Students will report on the material collected via the interview and analyse it in terms of context and meaning, while also identifying the folklore genre to which it belongs.

The interview-based project should be approximately **8 pages long, double-spaced, in 12pt Times New Roman font**. While students may find it useful to transcribe the interview prior to writing the analysis, transcription is NOT required. This assignment should be submitted before or at the beginning of class (**9am**) on **30 November 2007** in **hard copy**.

Recorders are available for loan through the Circulation Desk of the QEII Library. Please note that 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.

## Schedule

### Topic 1: Introduction

*Definitions, history, and approaches.*

Read: Text Chapter 1

### Topic 2: Folk Groups

*Who are they? And what do they do? and*

*Scholarly sources and citations.*

Read: Text Chapter 2

### Topic 3: Tradition

*What is it and how is it disseminated? and...*

*What is Plagiarism anyway?*

Read: Text Chapter 3

### Topic 4: Documenting Folklore and Doing Fieldwork

*Ethics, participant observation, interviewing, visual documentation, ethnography, archiving.*

Read: Text Chapter 7

### Topic 5: Ritual

*Rituals, Group Membership, and Identity*

Read: Text Chapter 4

### Topic 6: Performance

*Text, Texture, and Context*

Review Chapter 1 (specifically 19-20)

Read: Chapter 5

### Topic 7: Interpreting Folklore

*Various "isms" to get you there.*

Read: Chapter 6

### Topic 8: Belief

*Traditional belief and health systems.*

### Topic 9: Verbal Folklore and Narrative

*Speech, jokes, riddles, proverbs, personal experience*

*narratives, naming, Folktales, myths, and legends.*

### Topic 10: Folk Music and Dance

*Ballads, lyric song, music, and dance.*

### Topic 11: Material Culture

*Hand-made and altered objects.*

### Topic 12: Custom, Children's Folklore and Family Folklore

*Special events, calendar customs, dress, games, food.*

### *Dates to Note:*

**October 8 & 9:** mid-term break, no classes

**October 10:** follows Monday schedule

**October 11:** follows Tuesday schedule

**October 15:** MID-TERM EXAM

**October 17 & 19:** Guest lectures by Graham Blair on bluegrass and pop culture

**October 31:** MINI COLLECTION PROJECT DUE at 9AM (and random Halloween fun)

**November 2:** Guest lecture by Kelly Best, topic TBA

**November 5:** Guest lecture by Andrea Kitta on belly-dancing

**November 12:** Remembrance Day Holiday, no classes

**November 30:** MAJOR COLLECTION PROJECT DUE at 9AM, last day of classes