

NYU Los Angeles

Interactive Narrative

MD-UY 2314 A

Fall 2019

Instructor Information

- Professor Matthew Weise
- Office hours: by appointment

Course Information

- MD-UY 2314 A
- Interactive Narrative
- This course introduces students to the complex relationship between interactivity and storytelling. Students analyze how an interactive structure creates narrative. Works explored in this course range from nonlinear novels, experimental literature, audio narratives, theater/performance to film as narrative databases and games. The study of the structural properties of narratives that experiment with digression, multiple points of view, disruptions of time, space, and storyline is complemented by theoretical texts about authorship/readership, plot/story, and characteristics of interactive media. • Prerequisite: EXPOS-UA 2 Advanced College Essay
- Tuesday and Thursday 10:30 AM - 12:20 PM
 - Room 2MTC 811

Course Overview and Goals

This course is designed to give you more confidence, practice and proficiency as a skilled writer, engaging presenter, critical reader and adaptive researcher. Our “texts” are diverse and represent a wide breadth of experience and style so that you will be able to recognize and analyze complex relationships between a variety of source material. What we examine has been chosen for its ability to inspire thoughtful analysis of the past, present and potential future(s) because this is a class on functional analysis. By introducing you to a spectrum of contemporary and classic representations of narrative and interactivity the course will provide an opportunity to practice communicating your academic ideas verbally, in writing and through creative projects.

Goals:

- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Demonstrate skills in inquiry and analysis, including being able to systemically explore issues, objects or works by collecting, analyzing and presenting evidence
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills, including being able to give oral presentations that increase knowledge and foster understanding
- Develop skills that allow for the close analysis of and robust engagement with creative work situated within unfamiliar cultural, historic, aesthetic, economic, and technological contexts

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Develop basic understanding of narrative, interactivity and the theoretical concepts behind each
- Understand what elements may exist in the creation and realization of an interactive narrative
- Learn to objectively read, analyze and speak critically about a variety of poetry, fiction, essays, visual art, and digital creations
- Compose essays with well-supported arguments and citations in an organized progression
- Understand the revision process and be comfortable with re-writing techniques
- Find ways to incorporate their own interests into productive academic and creative discourse
- Discuss their writings and creative process with their peers in a professional and productive manner, as well as allow their colleagues to share equally in this conversation

Course Requirements

Class Participation in Weekly Discussions and Class-assignments

Due to the format of this class, participation is of the utmost importance. This is a seminar based upon active group discussion. Arrive to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading(s) or texts with your classmates, and share any questions or academic comments you might have. Your insights, no matter how small or half-formed they may seem to you, are both welcome and required in class. Your participation in our class discussions will be noted and factored into your final participation grade. Speaking at least once per class is considered good participation.

Papers

All essays submitted should also include an evocative, academic title which conveys the main focus of your essay. Due dates posted on the schedule are final unless otherwise noted by me. A "Works Cited" section or page should accompany any written assignment that includes references or paraphrases material not of your own creation. All papers should be formatted in with the following in the upper left-hand corner of the first page:

YOUR NAME MD-UY 2314 A –

Interactive Narrative ASSIGNMENT

NAME DATE

NYU Classes and Public Domain

Please bear in mind that all writing done in this course may be shared with the class if/when there is an opportunity to learn from it. This includes online posts and essays. Grades and any personally identifying information will be removed to respect the discretion of the writer.

Assigned Readings

You are expected to complete each assigned reading before the date listed on the syllabus. Coming unprepared to class will put you at a disadvantage.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
In-Class Participation	[30%]
Reflective Essay	[10%]
Close Reading	[10%]
Story Bible	[15%]
Midterm Self-Assessment	[5%]
Board game	[15%]
Videogame	[15%]

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	94-100

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	65-66
F	.00	Below 65

View Grades

Grades will be available on the NYU Classes site.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Homework	Assignment Due
Week 1 Tuesday	WHAT ARE STORIES? discuss single stories	Read The Power of Names bring your name to class	
Thursday	name presentations	Read Death of the Author Read Life Is Not A Dramatic Narrative	Assignment 1 given: reflective essay
Week 2 Tuesday	WHAT ARE STORIES? discuss authorship	Read Male Travelers, Female Bodies bring a monster to class	
Thursday	discuss "monstrous" bodies		Assignment 1 due: reflective essay due
Week 3 Tuesday	WHO GETS TO TELL STORIES? discuss "monsters"	Read Fan Writing As Textual Poaching Read Intro to The Fanfiction Reader	
Thursday	discuss fanfiction	Read Lunch and Other Obscenities bring an example of fanfiction (not a parody!!) to class	

Week 4 Tuesday	WHO GETS TO TELL STORIES? discuss fanfiction	Read Simulation and Simulacrum watch Call of Duty: WWII walkthrough read Watching History Fade Away in 'Call of Duty: WWII'	Assignment 2 given: close reading
Thursday	discuss simulations/simulacra	bring an example of a simulacrum to class	

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Week/Date	Topic	Homework	Assignment Due
Week 5 Tuesday	HOW DO STORIES CREATE REALITY? discuss simulacra	listen to the War of the Worlds broadcast watch Ghostwatch watch Darren Brown's Apocalypse	
Thursday	discuss hyperreality	watch interview with Rod Serling watch Bill Moyers interview with Dave Simon bring an example of "fake news" to class	Assignment 2 due: close reading

Week 6 Tuesday	HOW DO STORIES CREATE REALITY? discuss “fake news”	read the Stranger Things story bible/pitch document visit the website of Simon Stalenhag bring your own examples of a world to class	
Thursday	discuss worldbuilding		Assignment 3 given: story bible (for a world) Midterm assignment given: self assessment
Week 7 Tuesday	No class		
Thursday	WORLDBUILDING workshop worlds	work on worlds	
Week 8 Tuesday	WORLDBUILDING workshop worlds	work on worlds	Midterm assignment due: self-assessment

Week/Date	Topic	Homework	Assignment Due
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Thursday	world presentations	watch Game Maker's Stories Systems Toolkit: From read Play of Simulation play September 12th and Ulitsa Dimitrova	Assignment 3 due: story bible
Week 9 Tuesday	INTERACTIVE WORLDS discuss stories from systems / systems from stories (verb exercise)		Assignment 4 given: board game
Thursday	adaptation workshop (verbs)	work on game	
Week 10 Tuesday	INTERACTIVE WORLDS] adaptation workshop (prototype)	work on game	
Thursday	adaptation workshop (playtesting)	work on game	
Week 11 Tuesday	INTERACTIVE WORLDS	adaptation workshop (final) play Choice of Dragons read Taxonomy of Choices	Assignment 4 due: board game
Thursday	discuss choice design	watch/play Black Mirror: Bandersnatch	
Week 12 Tuesday	NARRATIVE DESIGN discuss	read Anna Antropy's Twine Tutorial	

	Bandersnatch		
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Week/Date	Topic	Homework	Assignment Due
		Twine: The Video Game Technology For All create prototype in Twine	
Thursday	discuss Twine prototypes	read Forget Protagonists watch Game Maker's Toolkit: Morality Mechanics	Assignment 5 given: video game
Week 13 Tuesday	NARRATIVE DESIGN discuss character driven interactive drama	bring a design challenge from your final project to class	
Week 14 Tuesday	NARRATIVE DESIGN workshop design challenges	bring a design challenge from your final project to class	
Thursday	workshop design challenges	prepare for final presentation	
Week 15 Wrap-up Tuesday	final presentations 1		Assignment 5 due: video game
Thursday	final presentations 2		Assignment 5 due: video game

15, 2019 -- Legislative Day -- Classes meet according to Monday schedule Wednesday, November 27, 2019 - Friday, November 29, 2019 -- Thanksgiving -- No classes Friday, December 13, 2019 -- Last day of Fall 2019 classes Saturday, December 14, 2019 - Sunday, December 15, 2019 -- Reading Days

Course Materials

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Required Textbooks & Materials

I will do my best to make the majority of materials available to you either in class, through email, or, most likely, through a shared folder online

- [Insert textbook or material name]
- [Insert textbook or material name]

Optional Textbooks & Materials

- [Insert optional textbook or material name]
- [Insert optional textbook or material name]

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Attending and arriving on time to all class sessions is required and expected. If you need to miss class for because of an unavoidable personal circumstance, you must notify your professor beforehand. If you need to miss class due to a medical illness or condition you must send a doctor's note to Deanna Rayment (deanna.rayment@nyu.edu) via email and cc your professor.

Unexcused absences and being late to class will lower your final grade. Three unexcused absences lower your final grade by a letter. Each subsequent unexcused absence will lower another letter grade. Two tardies will count as one unexcused absence. Arriving more than 15 minutes late to class will also count as an unexcused absence.

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion

based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

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To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor's note with that day's date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Los Angeles expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the NYU Los Angeles before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

Late Assignment

I will accept late assignments, but your grade will go down one letter a day for each day it is late. If you have a valid reason for missing a deadline, see me well in advance of the due date to work something out.

- 1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
- 2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
- 3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is

late, including weekends.

- 4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
- 5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
- 6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
- 7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Electronics

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All electronics must be turned off or silenced and put away BEFORE class begins. This does not mean, leave your phone on vibrate. Due to the nature of the seminar format, the use of laptops for note taking and writing will not be permitted. Please see me privately about this matter if you have questions or concerns. If I suspect that you are using your phones or other devices repeatedly during class I will note this each time it happens and it will affect your in class participation grade (20% of your final grade)

Eating

Food is not permitted during class sessions, though bottled water, coffee (cups must have lids) and other appropriate beverages are fine.

Contact

In this class we use Slack for our main communication. The best and quickest way to reach me is via the class Slack account through a direct private message. Email is also a good way to reach me, and please remember that students are responsible for regularly checking their University email accounts. If the matter requires a more thorough conversation, I'd be happy to speak with you in person or digitally. Note: please allow at least twenty-four hours for a Slack or email response from me. If you are at all confused about how to draft professional emails, please consult the "Writing Tools" shared file.

Respect

Be Courteous; respect your peers and your instructor. Be on time to class. You are expected to listen carefully to others. This includes the instructor. Please bear in mind that respect of one another's ideas and opinions is central to maintaining an active and fun learning environment. There will be zero tolerance for intentionally racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, or any other disparaging comments, jokes, slurs, attitudes, and inferences. Even as we disagree we will strive for respect, patience, and a willingness to responsibly discuss even our most deeply held beliefs. "Safe" is not the same as "comfortable." We may feel uncomfortable at times (in fact, this often indicates great opportunity for learning!) but any person who intentionally

threatens the safety of our classroom will be asked to leave.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An “incomplete” is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of “incomplete,” present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of “incomplete” to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site’s academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

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Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." **Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.**

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Los Angeles takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the NYU Los Angeles Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.

Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU LA, we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take

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account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and

- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Wellness

Your health and safety are a priority at NYU. If you experience any health or mental health issues during this course, we encourage you to utilize the support services of the 24/7 NYUWellness Exchange 212-443-9999.

Title IX

NYU is dedicated to providing its students with a learning environment that is rigorous, respectful, supportive and nurturing so that they can engage in the free exchange of ideas and commit themselves fully to the study of their discipline. University policies prohibit all forms of sexual misconduct as well as discrimination on the basis of sex and gender. Detailed information regarding these policies and the resources that are available to students through the Title IX office can be found by using [this link](#).

