This course will meet in person and use the UO Canvas Learning Platform. Our work together will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays during our scheduled class time of 12 - 1:20 p.m. in 373 MCK.

Instructor: Emily Simnitt, PhD

Office Hours: T 1:30-3:30 p.m., F 3-4 p.m., and by appointment esimnitt@uoregon.edu

Access Zoom Office Hours with this link: https://uoregon.zoom.us/my/emilysimnitt

Find up-to-date information about the class in announcements that will appear on the course web page. You will also course receive announcements through email via Canvas. Be sure to set how you receive notifications from Canvas so that you will be able to manage information in a way that works best for you.

This course offers you the opportunity to engage in Community Literacy Fieldwork. You will need to enroll in one credit of Community Literacy Internship (ENG 404, CRN 33649). This will give you transcripted credit for the project you will work on as part of ENG 413.

Overview and Objectives

ENG 413: Theories of Literacy explores the history of and current ways in which reading and writing work in our global, digital world and what that means for diverse stakeholders in local communities.

For Spring 2022, ENG 413 will count for any of the minor categories (writing, public speaking, critical reasoning) – your choice!

In addition to the learning objectives (listed below), I am committed to helping you develop as a critical communicator and community leader. You can expect opportunity to:

- Practice your listening, speaking, and writing skills in class and in the community.
- Develop “emergent strategy” leadership skills to transform your communities.

This course will expand your understanding of “literacy” to include the variety of ways that groups of people develop to listen and read and to speak and write. We will apply a critical lens to our study by asking: Whose voices are privileged? Whose voices have been left out? What changes can we advocate for to ensure that all members of a community have the opportunity to learn and contribute?

A key “text” of the course is the hands-on Community Literacy Fieldwork you will participate in. You will have the opportunity to design your own fieldwork and related project with my help or choose from a list of ongoing projects that support developing public speaking skills, empowering young people to make a difference, and building print, digital, and spoken literacy skills in the community.

By critically engaging with the material of this course, you will:

- Inquire into literacy as a social and cultural practice that allows communities or groups of people in “real” and virtual spaces to use material objects and a full range of senses to understand and communicate about their world(s);
- Examine how structures in addition to schools “sponsor” literacy and how those sponsorships perpetuate or change the distribution of power and access to resources in society;
Analyze how individuals and communities have demonstrated agency and resilience in literacy through published counterstories and accounts from community partners;

Reflect on one’s own literacy practices and how those have been formed and located in relation to power and access.

Formulate recommendations to develop awareness of and take action to support community literacy.

Career Readiness
An objective of this course is to provide you hands-on experience in research and resume-building skills. This will prepare you to write about, for, and with communities in your future careers.

Specifically, you will have opportunity to work on the follow career competencies identified by the UO and the National Association of Colleges and Employers. We will work on:

**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

**Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

**Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

**Digital Technology:** Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

Course Materials
We will study literacy using three sources of information: theory developed by interdisciplinary researchers, literacy counterstories that demonstrate how individuals and communities who have been marginalized or excluded from access to literacy exhibit resilience and regain agency, and direct learning from communities.

Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass* will be a central text for our course. I will provide you with a copy in the first week of class, and we will decide together how we will read from Kimmerer’s work.

You will not need to purchase any materials for this course. All material you will read, watch, and listen to will be provided as links and/or pdf files. Links and advice for how to engage with course materials will be included in weekly overviews in each week’s module.

Course Learning Methods: Compassion, Curiosity, Commitment
Success in ENG 413 will depend more on your openness to and curiosity than on your previous academic experience or existing knowledge about the topics we will explore together.

Your grade will be determined by the labor you put in and your own engagement with course material, activities, the writing of your peers, and the course learning goals.
I ask that you:

- Be a compassionate member of our class community — challenge yourself to take risks and support your classmates as they take risks.
- Be curious and open to new methods, ideas, and perspectives. You’ll do this by deeply and respectfully reading and responding to assigned articles and the work of your classmates. Sometimes this material will require watching and/or listening.
- Be willing to write, read, and respond to the best of your ability.

I commit to:

- Checking your understanding of key concepts about literacy.
- Deeply and respectfully reading your work and taking your ideas seriously.
- Challenging you to go further and take risks by giving feedback, asking questions, and providing additional material.

Together we will repeat this process until you feel more confident drawing on and responding to theories of literacy and imagining how you will could apply those theories to writing for, about, and with communities in the future.

I am committed to making adjustments as we figure out together how to learn remotely.

What You Will Do

Overview of Course Assignments
Instructions and criteria for evaluation will be provided with each assignment so you know what is required for it to be considered complete. Grading comments will be provided to give feedback and let you know if your work is incomplete and whether it may be revised and resubmitted.

The assignments below provide ample opportunity for you to practice your critical communication skills and develop as leaders.

1. Class Session Activities, “Exit Tickets,” and Attendance
Includes tasks completed in preparation for and during class:

- Carefully reading/watching/listening to assigned material in advance of class sessions
- Participating during in-class speaking, listening, writing and reading activities
- Completing “exit tickets” (short reflective surveys) at the end of each day’s session
- Sharing insights from your Fieldwork

**Completing the session “exit ticket” is how I will assess your engagement with the material. "Exit tickets" will take multiple forms throughout the term to help you practice your critical communication and reflection skills.**

Expect that we will have two sessions most weeks of the term.

Our class is small. Your presence in class is valued and necessary for us to succeed in our collective classwork!

Limited make-up work will be available for days when you are ill. You can complete up to two “enhanced” Exit Tickets to make up for missed class. After that, your final grade will start to be affected.
A = 18+ "Exit Tickets" completed
B = 16 "Exit Tickets" completed
C = 14 "Exit Tickets" completed
P = minimum of 13 "Exit Tickets" completed

2. Fieldwork Notebook
You will engage in an average of about 3 hours a week of fieldwork (may be more or less each week — see Fieldwork Opportunities). This assignment is based on your Fieldwork experience and will count toward the final grade for ENG 413. Your Fieldwork Notebook will also become one of the major texts of the course.

Each week, you will report on your fieldwork in a "notebook" entry. This series of assignments supports you in identifying key terms and passages, establishing a "personal" relationship with the concepts of the week, and making connections between theoretical concepts, your individual experience with literacy, and the communities we are engaging with. Each week, you will complete:

- A log sheet (time, date, location, activity, supervisor signature if applicable)
- Field notes (what you did/observed)
- 250-500 word critical analysis of what you did/observed using the week’s theoretical framework
- 250-500 word personal reflection -- what was challenging? how did you grow? what surprised you?

A = 9+ entries
B = 8 entries
C = 7 entries
P = 6+ entries

3. Fieldwork Presentation and Report
Drawing on your notes and reflections in your Fieldwork Notebook, you will create a short presentation or poster suitable for sharing at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and submit a Final Report and Reflection at the end of the term. Your final report may take the form you think best represents the work you’ve done during the term and the insights you’ve gained as we’ve used a critical lens to study theories of literacy (e.g., Technical Report, Counterstory, Podcast, Memoir, Research Paper, etc.). Work on this project will be due throughout the term and includes the following:

- Counterstory Exploration
- Project Abstract
- Presentation at the Undergraduate Research Symposium
- Final Report and Reflection

We will review each component together and you will give/receive feedback to/from your classmates. I'll provide feedback, too. We will develop criteria for evaluation as a class, including what is required for each grade pathway.
4. Class Facilitation

You and a partner will facilitate one class period during the term. Prior to your facilitation, at least one of you will meet with me to go over your plan. You will also be responsible for assigning additional material for us to read/view/listen to in preparation for your facilitation day.

ENG 404: Community Literacy Fieldwork

As part of ENG 413, you are enrolled in one credit of ENG 404: Community Literacy Fieldwork. This provides you transcripted credit for getting out of the classroom to engage in and observe community literacy in action. To receive a "P" in ENG 404 and to complete the Fieldwork Notebook and Fieldwork Report and Presentation assignments in ENG 413, plan to spend about 20-25 hours participating in one of the projects and about 4-6 hours in additional Fieldwork Opportunities as described on the Literacy Fieldwork Opportunities page on Canvas. I’ll ask that you commit to one of the Community Literacy Projects by the end of the Week 1. I’ll work with you to identify additional Fieldwork Opportunities no later than Week 4.

Attendance Policy

You will get the most out of the course by attending the majority of sessions and engaging in class activities and the associated "Exit Tickets." In addition, you will have the opportunity to talk with others in the class and share ideas and writing. Without you, this important work can't happen! All of us need to show up in the best way we can!

You can miss two "Exit Tickets" without penalty and complete two additional Enhanced Exit Tickets as "make-up" assignments for two additional class periods. After that, each missed in-class Exit Ticket will lower your final grade by 1/3.

Late Work Policy

- An automatic 48-hour extension is available for all assigned work.
- You do not need to contact me.
- After 48 hours, I can no longer accept your work without hearing from you. It will be considered unsubmitted and incomplete unless we come to an agreement.

Please make every effort to submit group discussion posts on time so your classmates have adequate time to respond.

Shared Responsibilities and Extenuating Circumstances

I will do my best to be clear about assignment expectations and how I will assess your work. It’s your responsibility to contact me when you are confused, overwhelmed, or unsure about class expectations. Talk to me before an assignment is due, not after, if possible.

That way I can help you talk through your confusion, brainstorm ideas, consider possibilities, give you resources, and discuss your work with you—that’s an integral part of my role in our class! I can’t make exceptions or extend grading deadlines unless you talk to me before the assignment is due.

I am only able to help you be successful in the course if we are in communication!

Other Course Policies

Find a complete list of policies for all WR courses -- which also apply to ENG 413 -- on the Composition Program website at composition.uoregon.edu.
Grading + Evaluation Principles

The grading policy for this course is built on the following principles:

You control your grade by deciding what work to complete.

Learning happens through steady engagement and reflection over time.

Assignments are the place where I encounter and respond to your ideas and learning.

The overall work of the course is more important than the subjective quality of any single assignment. Assignments build on each other.

All work will be evaluated as “complete” or “incomplete” using assignment-specific rubrics. Completing assignments as designed leads to the achievement of course learning goals.

"Incompletes" are my way of indicating your work isn’t satisfactory. Submitting unsatisfactory work repeatedly will start to lower your final grade. I’ll let you know how to improve and succeed.

"Stuff” happens and some work just needs to be excused.

Traditional grading systems require subjective evaluations of writing. Research has shown letter grades are not correlated to learning, achievement, or long-term motivation. Further, there is ample evidence illustrating how traditional grading marginalizes students from many different backgrounds and is, in fact, a racist practice.

Grade Pathways

You choose your own path through the course based on your motivation and commitments. The "A" Pathway provides the most opportunity for you to engage in and practice behaviors and skills of Community Literacy Researchers that you can use in future community situations. I'll check in with you about the pathway you are on three times during the term: in week 2, week 6, and week 10.

"A" Pathway

Complete 18 Exit Tickets, 9+ Fieldwork Notebook Entries, "A" requirements for the Fieldwork Presentation and Report series of assignments (we will determine as a class).

"B" Pathway

Complete 16 Exit Tickets, and 8 Fieldwork Notebook Entries, "B" requirements for the Fieldwork Presentation and Report series of assignments (we will determine as a class).

"C" Pathway

Complete 14 Exit Tickets, and 7 Fieldwork Notebook Entries, "C" requirements for the Fieldwork Presentation and Report series of assignments (we will determine as a class).
"Pass" Pathway

Complete 13+ Exit Tickets, and 6+ Fieldwork Notebook Entries, "C"requirements for the Fieldwork Presentation and Report series of assignments (we will determine as a class).

Wild Cards + Completing the Course

You will learn the most by attending all class sessions (hopefully in person!) and completing all of the assignments, and, in the best-case scenario, you will be able to do just that. However, if something happens, you will start the course with 1 WILD CARD that can be used to excuse a missing or incomplete assigned Exit Ticket, Fieldwork Notebook, or missing element of the Fieldwork Presentation and Report series of assignments.

If you need an additional assignment excused, you can complete an additional Fieldwork opportunity and notebook entry.

I will provide feedback on your work and offer a limited window for unsatisfactory or incomplete work to be revised and resubmitted.

Our class is small. I am available to work with you individually to ensure that you are working toward the grade you want to earn for this class!

What You’ll See In Grades

Wild cards will "show up" as "excused" with a note in the comments.

All assignments will be marked as "complete" or "1," "incomplete" or ".5," or "missing" or "0."

Two "incomplete" assignments add up to the same as one "missing" or "unsubmitted" assignment.

You will have a limited window to revise and resubmit "incomplete" assignments.

Most important, you will see feedback from me when you go to grades.

I use three methods to provide feedback:

- **Comments:** I'll summarize areas of strength and opportunities for growth for each assignment. I might also use comments to react to the content of your writing. Think of this as a place where we can have a "conversation." Feel free to reply!
- **Rubrics:** Most assignments will have a rubric. I'll note which assignment criteria you are meeting and which still need work.
- **Feedback Directly On Your Assignment:** If you select "view feedback," you should see some comments directly on your submission. Most of these comments will be related to specific passages in your writing. I'll ask you questions, point out awesome sentences, and make suggestions about how to reword passages for clarity and purpose.
How To Use My Feedback

Be sure you review my feedback after every assignment. Each assignment builds on previous assignments, and you may find yourself re-using a passage I’ve commented on in future assignments. I encourage you to reflect on what you learn from reading my response to your assignments and how you might use that in future writing assignments.

Tentative Course Calendar

Find up-to-date information about the class in announcements on the home page.

Below is a schedule of assignments for the course. I reserve the ability to change the schedule but only after notifying you in advance by an announcement on Canvas.

Week 1: Introductions and Definitions

Read: Syllabus and Course Information on Canvas for ENG 413: Theories of Community Literacy and ENG 404: Community Literacy Fieldwork/Internship; Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from Braiding Sweetgrass -- a copy of the text will be provided to you in class; Babb: “America Is Facing A Literacy Crisis;” Martinez: “Prologue: Economium of a Storyteller.”

Complete: Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned

Week 2: Critical Theories and Literacy

Read: Selections from Betina Love We Want To Do More Than Survive; Baker-Bell: “For Loretta;” Martinez: “A Plea For Critical Race Theory Counterstory.”

Optional: Brandt: "Sponsors of Literacy”; Heath: "Protean Shapes in Literacy Events”

Complete: Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned

Week 3: Assets of Literacies

Read: Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from Braiding Sweetgrass; selections from Reitz and Higgins: Speak Up: Say What Needs To Be Said and Hear What Needs To Be Heard.


Complete: Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned, Fieldwork Report and Presentation: Exploratory Drafting.

Week 4: Histories of Literacies

Read: Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from Braiding Sweetgrass; Boney: “The Indomitable Language;” Monea: “A Gallery of (Re)Imagined Interfaces;” selections from Betina Love We Want To Do More Than Survive.

**Complete:** Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned, Fieldwork Report and Presentation: Abstract

**Week 5: Bodies of Literacies**

**Group 1 Class Facilitation**

**Read:** Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass*; Rifenburg: “Student Athletes, Prior Knowledge, and Threshold Concepts;” Jha: "How To Tame Your Wandering Mind" (podcast with transcript).

**Complete:** Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned

**Week 6: Materials of Literacies**

**Group 2 Class Facilitation**

**Read:** Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass*; Hill: “Food For Thought: Constructing Multimodal Identities Through Recipe Creation;” Millman: Podcast of your choice from Design Matters.

**Complete:** Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned

**Week 7: Locations of Literacies**

**Group 3 Class Facilitation**


**Complete:** Fieldwork NotENG 413ebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned

**Week 8: Community Literacy In Action, Part I**

**Read:** Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass*; Matthieu: “Reflections On Community Writing.”

**Complete:** Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned, Fieldwork Report and Presentation: Materials For Practice

**Week 9: Community Literacy In Action, Part II**

**Read:** Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass*.

**Complete:** Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned, Fieldwork Report and Presentation: Reflection
Week 10: Reflections And Projections

Read: Robin Wall Kimmerer: Selections from *Braiding Sweetgrass*.

Complete: Fieldwork Notebook Entry, Exit Tickets as assigned, Final Literacy Counterstory