
LIFE STORIES in Fall 2020 (PY3066)

Course Code	PY3066	Professor(s)	Brian Schiff
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	Q-707
Class Schedule	M: 10:50-12:25 in PL-4 R: 16:20-17:55 in PL-4	Office Hours	Mondays 14h30-15h30 (and by appointment)
Credits	4	Email	bschiff@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	670

Course Description

Course content

Narrative is one of the most exciting developments in contemporary psychology, promising innovative strategies for understanding and researching human lives. The study of narrative has influenced multiple domains of psychology, including theories of human development, personality, social relationships and clinical practice. Narrative psychologists listen closely to how persons talk about themselves and the past in order to better understand fundamental aspects of how persons experience and make sense of themselves and the world.

Are human lives stories? How do persons make sense of the past and their identity? Is our past an actual one or a social construction? How does narrative shape our understanding of the past? How do social interactions and culture construct what we tell? How can listening to others help us to understand the basic problems of human psychology?

This course will introduce students to the theoretical tenets of and rationale for narrative psychology, the techniques of qualitative interviewing and strategies for analyzing and understanding interviews. Much of this work will be hands on. Students will design their own research interviews, consider the ethics of their research, conduct interviews, analyze them, and write up their analysis.

Course Learning Outcomes

Knowledge of basic theories on the significance of narrative for understanding human lives.
An understanding of linguistic strategies in how persons talk about the past.
Competence interpreting transcripts using different analytic strategies.
An appreciation of the influence of social and cultural forces on subjective experience.
Skills listening to others and empathizing with their experience.

General Education

[PLEASE REMOVE THIS SECTION IF THE COURSE DOES NOT FULFILL ANY GLACC REQUIREMENT]

GLACC

The Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (GLACC) degree requirements include the following categories of courses:

- Integrative Inquiry (coded CCI)
- Experiential learning (coded CCX)
- Research, Interpretation, and Writing (coded CCE)
- Digital Literacy and Communication (coded CCD)
- Disciplinary Research Methods and Writing (coded CCR)
- Quantitative Reasoning (coded CCM)
- Experimental Reasoning Course with Lab (coded CCS)
- Expression Française (coded FR)
- AUP Capstone (coded CCC)

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

Course Outline

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1		
Sept 24	Introduction	Klohn, Negotiating the middle years.

Week 2		
Sept 28	Why narrative?	Schiff, Introduction & Chapters 1 & 2.
Oct 1	Theoretical grounding	Bruner, Life as narrative. Cohler, Personal narrative and life course.
Week 3		
Oct 5	Narrative interviewing	Chase, Learning to listen. Josselson, Preface and Chapter 1.
Oct 8	Narrative interviewing	Josselson, Chapters 2-3.
Week 4		
Oct 12	Narrative interviewing	Josselson, Chapters 4 & 5.
Oct 15	Narrative interviewing	Josselson, Chapter 6.
Week 5		
Oct 19	Turning to narrative	Schiff, Chapter 3.
Oct 22	Narrative (in theory)	McAdams, Personality and modernity.
Week 6		
Oct 26	Narrative (in theory)	Freeman, p. 3-8, Chapters 1 & 2.
Oct 29	Narrative (in theory)	Freeman, Chapter 3 & 5.
Week 7		
Nov 2	Narrative (in practice)	Gee, Processing and organizing language. Norrick, Retelling stories.
Nov 5	Narrative (in practice)	Charmaz, Grounded theory.
Week 8		
Nov 9	Narrative (in theory)	Schiff, Chapters 4 & 5.
Nov 12	No classes	Fall break
Week 9		
Nov 16	Narrative (in practice)	Josselson, Hermeneutics of faith.
Nov 19	Narrative (in practice)	Schiff, Chapter 6-7.
Week 10		
Nov 23	Narrative (in practice)	Lieblich, Looking at change.
Nov 26	Narrative (in practice)	Bamberg, Form and functions of 'slut bashing'
Week 11		
Nov 30	Narrative (in practice)	Schiff, Chapter 8
Dec 3	Narrative (in practice)	Schiff, Chapter 9.

Week 12		
Dec 7	Narrative (in practice)	Smith, Changing bodies.
Dec 10		
Finals		
Week	Online presentations	

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
A New Narrative for Psychology	Schiff	OXFORD	9780199332182	Yes
Interviewing for qualitative inquiry	Josselson	ROUTLEDGE	9781462510009	Yes

Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation

I expect students to attend every class. We will meet for a limited number of sessions and class time is my opportunity to help you think about the subject matter. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are experiencing a medical emergency or if there is a family crisis. Students who miss several classes will receive a lowered final grade. It is expected that students will come on time to every class. If a student is habitually late to class, I will count late arrivals as absences. All readings are required. Assignments must be completed by the date indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of class. Students are expected to make relevant and thoughtful contributions to class discussion and activities. In determining your final grade, I will take into account your attendance, classroom conduct and your comprehension of the assigned readings as demonstrated in class discussion and activities. If students are not reading assignments, I reserve the option to give surprise quizzes and count quiz grades as a portion of exam grades.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled

classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Covid-19 temporary amendments: Students studying at The American University of Paris are **STILL EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL** scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the

option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory. In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student. Whether an absence is excused or not is **ALWAYS** up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

GRADING

Course requirements will contribute the following portions to your grade:

Attendance and participation:	20%
Reflections:	20%
Transcripts/Preliminary Anal.:	10% (Each)
Final paper	40%

Research project

Over the course of the semester, students will design an interview based research project. Students are required to hand in a project proposal, design an interview guide, informed consent, conduct at least two interviews, transcribe the interviews, analyze each interview, and write a final paper on what they have learned from their research. During finals week, students will present their projects to the class. This is a complex task that will require effort through the whole semester. Students are not permitted to begin their research until their proposals and interview materials have been approved.

Reflections

Every Thursday, students will hand in a one-page reflection that critically engages one of the week's readings. What insights did you learn? How does the reading help you to better understand narrative, persons, psychology, the social world? A final grade will be based upon student's engagement with the content of the readings, understanding of the material, insightfulness, and punctuality in handing in assignments. The average of nine reflections will be counted toward your final grade. You may hand in up to ten reflections and the lowest grade will be dropped.

classroom POLICIES

Professional behavior

Students are expected to maintain professional behavior in class. Students will be respectful of their fellow students and the instructor. Please come to class on time. If you are unavoidably

late, please enter quietly and take the closest open seat to the door. Please do not use foul language in the classroom. During class, do not have private conversations, pass notes, text message, do your homework, or read. All electronic devices (such as computers, cell phones, blackberries, pagers, etc.) must be stored off your desk and respectfully turned off. Please take the time to go to the bathroom before class. If you have a medical problem, please let me know. If your attention needs to be elsewhere, then you shouldn't be in class.

Make up policy

I reserve the right to give NO CREDIT for late material. In order to make certain that you will receive credit for an assignment, you must contact me before the assignment is due. Please do not leave a message on my machine one minute before the final and expect to receive credit. In case of emergency, please contact me at the first moment possible to make certain that you receive credit for an assignment. If you have questions or problems with an assignment please come talk to me about it.

Academic dishonesty

Please take the time to learn about academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism includes handing in work that is not your own and cutting and pasting passages (from the internet, journals, books, etc.) without citing the original source. These are very serious academic offenses and could lead to an "F" in the course, suspension, or expulsion from the university. If I detect plagiarism, the least serious consequence is failing the course. Please keep in mind that I read for plagiarism and use technology that detects plagiarism. It is always better to hand in a poor paper than to plagiarize. I take these issues very seriously and will follow through with consequences for students who misrepresent the work of others as their own intellectual product. If you have a question about academic integrity, please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss your question. Keep up with assignments and let me know if you need extra help. Don't get desperate—ask for help as early as you can!

Office hours

You are encouraged to visit me during the semester. My office hours should be used to ask questions, to deal with problems understanding the material and to discuss assignments. If you have a problem with an assignment or need extra help, I ask you to please speak with me as early as possible. I am very open to speaking with you and helping you progress in your work. If my posted office hours do not work, please e-mail me to make other arrangements.

Other
