Course Title: **Hardwired for Stories Out Loud? Why Stories Matter.**  
Course Number: xxx                Semester: Fall 2015                2 units

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Course schedule: DAY, TIME.   (DATE, 2015 – DATE, 2015)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines and deconstructs verbal storytelling as a discipline in its own right. It is an exploration of speaking and storytelling as a fundamental building block of human evolution and innovation. We will look at the learnings from ancient times through modern scientific research—looking at theories attempting to explain what happens physiologically and psychologically when we are moved by a spoken narrative. This is a contextual approach that will focus on both the theory and the application in the marketplace of developing and delivering narrative as it relates to presenting oneself, a product or a service.

As such, we seek to understand what drives current trends toward narrative education and storytelling as a competitive advantage in learning, communicating, persuading and influencing.

Students will contribute to designing a collaborative verbal communication template for the class and for the Final Project: they will write a three page paper and apply the design to themselves or their projects, products, ventures and/or service concepts.

COURSE LEARNING TOOLS
Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, each student should be able to:
Develop and design a verbal storytelling template.
Understand why stories told out loud are important, drilling down on the distinction elicited by listening to stories as opposed to other forms of content.
Understand the latest scientific research that seeks to explain the underpinnings of successful communications.
Understand and deconstruct the various narrative frameworks.
Build an effective story and deliver it well, about themselves, a project, a mission, a product or a goal.
Understand the critical importance of storytelling in creating opportunities across academic disciplines, leadership skills, and creating a product or business or service.

Approach: This interactive course will combine lecture, case studies, discussions, group activities, guest speakers (TBA) and student presentations to provide a rich experience for all participants. Beyond assigned readings, students will be required to participate, complete assignments and share studies/ articles/ books/ visual content other material related to the course topics; as well as right a short final paper and make a final presentation applying the design they helped build.

Methods for Assessing Learning Outcomes:
A key component of the course will be students' contributions to discussions of the assigned reading of books, articles, visual content and case studies during and in between sessions. Homework and project assignments will enable students to apply the learnings in any capacity they chose. The final project will enable students to design the content, the props (text, visual, video or other content) and the strategy to deliver their verbal story for a fictitious or current project, product or mission they are currently working on.

Prerequisites: N/A

COURSE POLICIES
Missed assignments will lower the student’s grade based on the percentage of the grade allocable to it. Late assignments are permitted only with advance notice to, and permission from, the instructor.

Incompletes: IP or F may be granted by the professor under extraordinary extenuating circumstances. A student seeking an incomplete grade must make a request to the faculty prior to the end of the semester, and must complete at least 50% of the course.

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and be respectful to all viewpoints.

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism involves borrowing or using information from other sources without proper and full credit. Students are expected to demonstrate how what they have learned incorporates an understanding of the research and expertise of scholars and other appropriate experts; and thus recognizing others’ published work or teachings – whether that of authors, lecturers, or one’s peers – is a required practice in all academic projects.” The full policy is located at: http://www.scps.nyu.edu/about-scps/policies-and-procedures/ It will be strictly enforced.

No work for this course may be all or part of assignments prepared for or used in previous or current courses. No potential or actual economic benefit, including discussion of internship or employment opportunities, may be gained through work completed for this course during the course.

Disability Access Statement:

If you are a student with a disability who is requesting accommodations, please contact New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu. You must be registered with the Moses Center to receive accommodations. Additional information can be found at www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Evaluation Methods: Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the impact of verbal storytelling, including the physiological and psychological underpinnings; the power in the marketplace; the trend of narrative storytelling in education and communications; and apply that learning to developing their verbal storytelling framework.
Description of How Grades are Determined:
In-class discussion and ongoing participation in all class platforms digital and in the class. 30%
Homework assignments 30%
Final Project and Presentation 40%

Students must attend all class meetings. If a student anticipates missing class, the student is expected to inform the instructor in advance. More than two absences will negatively affect the grade (for example, a B will be lowered to B-).

Recommended Equipment:
If at all possible, it will be of great use to have a laptop computer or other device to access the internet for a variety of exercises and experiments the class will undertake.

COURSE OUTLINE

PRE-COURSE READING:
Excerpt. “Ethos, Pathos, Logos.” Aristotle
Current brief articles on Speaking, Storytelling and The Science.
Videos tbd

WEEK 1
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
Course Overview: Speaking. Storytelling. The Science. Effective verbal storytelling, a discipline in its own right in the evolution and innovation of humanity. Before we could write, people spoke to advance communities and commerce. It is a vital tool in persuading and influencing, why do they work? We will look at the growing body of science, while nascent, that is adding physiological granularity as to why they work and why they are seminal in moving your target audience. We will examine applications across disciplines in the marketplace.
Video introduction: A variety of speaking skills across market disciplines: pitching, marketing, advertising and communications.
Group Exercise: What’s a story?
The Sticky Human Stuff Platform: 1. Weekly, each week students will add one example of stories that have have been or are meaningful to their work: a compilation of assignments, articles, video or audio, data visualizations links or replications that they will began to unravel specific properties that create impact. 2. Explain Class project to design template. 3. Final Project: to apply that template.

HOMEWORK The Science
Readings: (short readings)
WEEK 2
Discussion: THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON STORIES: Growing technological advances make it possible for scientists to see our brains reacting to a story, we will take a look at what they are finding. This will include discussion about how the brain reacts to visual or audio stories; review the factors that govern what information is selected for long-term storage and look at why stories better embody those factors than other methods of communication.

HOMEWORK: The Story
READINGS:
Assigned short videos tbd: commercials, pitch clips

ASSIGNMENT: Second installment in Sticky Human Stuff platform.

WEEK 3
Discussion The Story: Verbal storytelling, the importance and the various guises from frameworks to application. Class will begin designing a framework integrating science learnings, story structure, delivery methods and strategies of successful storytellers across disciplines from their own experience as well as material presented.

HOMEWORK Storytelling in Action
READINGS:
Excerpt. Ad Age.
Video Montage of examples.

ASSIGNMENT: Sticky Human Stuff Platform. Instructor will provide a dozen storytelling frameworks for students to experiment in weekly addition, choose one to apply.

WEEK 4
Discussion and group exercise designing the template Storytelling in Action: Let’s take a look current trends of narrative as critical to being a CEO, a medical student, marketer, entrepreneur and the list goes on. This is an investigation of the factors and and structures that drive emotional comprehension and impact. A once over through the maze of marketing, advertising, movies, sales and other business uses of great storytelling out loud.
Guest TBD

HOMEWORK The Myth of the Charismatic Speaker (storyteller)
READINGS:
Video examples

ASSIGNMENT: Class breaking down into smaller groups, to meet and finalize assigned component of design of template: story building blocks, specify applications of science learnings, public speaking mechanics and strategies. Weekly addition to Sticky Human Stuff platform.

WEEK 5
Discussion The Myth of the Charismatic Speaker Students will identify what kind of speaker they are and what kind of listener. We will finalize class template to apply learnings, structure they will use for final project.

HOMEWORK
READINGS:
ASSIGNMENT: Final Project and Paper

WEEK 6
Guest TBA

ASSIGNMENT: Final Project and Paper

WEEK 7
FINAL PROJECT AND PRESENTATION
Present Application of Class Design
Wrap Up Class