Multifaith Leadership in the 21st Century: How to Change the World through Public Narrative

Fall 2021 -- 4 Credits
UPADM-GP 254
Mondays 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM
60 5th Ave, Rm 125

Instructor Information
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  - Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description
In the context of an increasingly polarized American society, this course seeks to train students to mobilize diverse faith communities together for the greater good. Unleashing the power of storytelling, students will articulate their values and explore the ways it can be shared. The course will draw on case studies from historical and contemporary leaders who have achieved success in creating sustainable change, as well as interrogating relevant current affairs as they arise and viewing storytelling through a global lens. Students will develop skills to understand the power of stories more profoundly, how to use them in their own lives and within the frameworks of institutions and organizations. They will be able to identify better social change strategies and the importance of storytelling to enhance effectiveness and emotional connection.

Learning Outcomes
Through this course, students will learn to:
1. Analyze how stories are used to motivate action, identify key components of effective storytelling, critique stories as told in various media and in person, and generate their own authentic story.
2. Craft authentic stories for social change and plan an action by connecting their own story to the values of a broader community and to a specific course of action.
3. Assess the roles that race, power and privilege play in elevating and downplaying stories and understand how muting the stories of others can contribute to stereotyping, tokenizing, and othering
4. Discern the values which motivate action and articulate their own values which can serve as a common bond for action
5. Build deeper bonds with the Other through sharing stories with vulnerability and listening with openness.
Teaching & Learning Methodologies

Four learning methodologies will be involved in this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>The lectures will provide relevant historical knowledge, highlight the intellectual contexts of the required readings, spell out key concepts and outline analytical implications.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation and discussion</td>
<td>Much of the work of the class involves introspection, reflection, and sharing of ideas and experiences. Readings will provide theoretical frameworks and case studies, which will be deliberated in class. We will often break into small groups to allow for a more focused and participatory learning experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written assignments - Response Papers</td>
<td>You will be expected to write three response papers on required readings in the course of the JTerm. The papers build on each other, incrementally bringing you to the final project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral presentation - Storytelling</td>
<td>Students will be challenged to craft, tweak and tell stories orally during class. This exercise requires preparation, following the theoretical frameworks which will be introduced during the first class.</td>
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Assignments and Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #1</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>1, 5</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
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Course Overview
This course is rooted in the framework developed by community organizer Marshall Ganz:

“Leadership, especially leadership on behalf of social change, often requires telling a new public story, or adapting an old one: a story of self, a story of us, and a story of now. ... 
1. A story of self communicates the values that move us to lead. 
2. A story of us communicates values shared by those whom you hope to motivate to join us. 
3. A story of now communicates the urgent challenge to those values that demands action now.”

Unit I: The Story of Self

9/13: Introduction: What makes stories work? 
Watch: Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability
Read: Marshall Ganz, Public Narrative, Collective Action, and Power
Lecture: The VITALS system

9/20: Storytelling
Students share “stories of self”

9/27: Storytelling
Students share “stories of self”

10/04: Story of Self Workshop
In small groups, students follow Marshall Ganz worksheet, incorporate Feedback

First Assignment: 5 pages, typed and double-spaced, 12pt font, and 1-inch margins

The purpose of this assignment is to build a personal narrative on the foundation of raw vulnerability. Vulnerability is the starting point of human connection. And yet, the stories can be shaped to further accentuate human connection, draw the audience in to the choice point, and enable listeners to experience the outcome. The story rooted in vulnerability is the raw material; Ganz’s framework provides a container or mold.

● Read and review Marshall Ganz’s piece on public narrative.
● Read the "Participant Guide”. Consider your story using the frameworks of challenge, choice, and outcome (p. 8). Review the section on "action motivators" (p. 5-6) and think about the emotions you want your story to evoke.
● With these frameworks in mind, please tell your story, being sure to illustrate a challenge, choice, and outcome. Explain what you hope a reader might feel or how your reader might be motivated to act after reading your story.

Unit II: The Story of Us

10/12 (Tuesday): How Negative Narratives are Constructed and Spread
First Response Paper Due
In this module, we focused on the "Story of Us," learning about different social theories that create feelings of inclusion, exclusion, tokenization, and allyship. We discussed which values our "stories of self" would invoke which could be shared by these audiences.

Now it's time to identify your Us, your audience, and what your shared values are. It can be particularly powerful to address audiences who are not used to being addressed, individuals who are usually subsumed under a "single story" or tokenized as part of a narrative that centers on other people.

- Read through Ganz's worksheet, with particular attention to the "story of us" and choosing your audience.
- Imagine, identify and describe your optimal "us" in three concentric circles:
  - Easily reachable -- several hundred people, most of whom you would have the ability to reach through your existing platforms
  - Reachable with help -- several thousand people, most of whom who you do not know or do not know well but at least really know people like them
  - Reachable if picked up by a media outlet -- hundreds of thousands of people, most of whom you do not really know at all, but with the presumption that there are shared values
- Name:
  - What is the shared value that you want to invoke?
  - How can your story be adjusted in order to heighten or focus that value?
  - What elements of your story would you tell differently?
**Unit III: Story of Now**

**11/22: Finding Your Problem**
Defining “Urgency”
Small Group Work
Second half: Telling your Story of Self/Us/Now on one foot- students practice in pairs, and then instructors model assignment.

**11/29: Storytelling Workshop**
In small groups, workshop stories to effectively link the story of self, story, of us, and story of now

**12/6: Linking the Story of Self, the Story of Us, and the Story of Now**
Each student has 5-7 minutes to retell stories

**12/13: Linking the Story of Self, the Story of Us, and the Story of Now**
Each student has 5-7 minutes to retell stories

#### Third Assignment Due

Third Assignment: 5 page reflection paper answering the two questions below AND the final version of your story which integrates the stories of self, us and now.

1. People respond to deadlines. You have a powerful story. Looking back at your story of self and your “us”, what change would you want to be implemented? What is the threat or opportunity that you are responding to which makes your change time-sensitive?
2. What part of this course moved you the most? What do you feel you are taking with you from the course (skills, knowledge, etc.)? What would you have liked to take but aren’t?
3. Final version of your story of self, us, and and now.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by Wagner’s Academic Code. All Wagner students have already read and signed the Wagner Academic Oath. Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

**Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU**
Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescssd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

**NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays**
NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.