Course Description:

This course will explore the diverse forms of Indonesian folklore, including but not limited to *dongengan* (fairy tales), *nyanyian* (songs), *wayang* (theater), and *tarian* (dance). Students will be asked to critically engage with the history of Indonesia in relation to the cultural significance and relevance of the folklore (on the basis of Richard Dawkins’s concept of the “meme”). For their final project, each student will conduct research on an Indonesian folklore topic of their choosing, for which they will write a short research paper and creatively recreate.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

Through readings, participation during in-class discussions, completion of written reflections and other homework assignments, and engagement in tactile learning opportunities (e.g. students will create and perform short *wayang kulit*, or shadow puppet plays, as an in-class activity), students will examine the roles of the history and culture of Indonesia in the shaping of its folklore. In addition, by completing the midterm and final projects, students will reflect upon the future of Indonesian folklore dissemination.

This course attempts to promote its students’ sense of citizenship within our globalized world by introducing students to the diversity of Indonesian folklore. Indonesia being the fourth most populous country in the world, it is perplexing how little scholarship has been published on the subject of its folklore!
Pedagogical Philosophy:

The Chiron Studies program allows students to collaboratively learn about new and unique subjects in a formal classroom environment. Through this course, I wish to share my passion and interest in the folklore of Indonesia with my peers in order to spread awareness of the importance of learning about Indonesia through appreciation of its folklore. During the course, I will encourage students to engage in a dialogue with their classmates on the course materials because I believe that static readings and lectures do not allow students to effectively explore and push the boundaries of their ideas and consider new perspectives, an integral aspect of the learning process. I want to support my students in the ways they require of me to ensure their success in this course.

Please do not hesitate to approach me with any questions, comments, or concerns you have regarding the course. Please contact Professor Amanda Smith Byron (whose contact information can also be found on the first page of this syllabus) with any questions, comments, or concerns you feel you cannot discuss with me.

Community Connection:

Students will engage in experiential learning by listening to Indonesians and Indonesian-Americans telling folktales and participating in tactile learning opportunities as they play songs on gamelan instruments, perform original shadow puppet plays, batik-style dye textiles, etc.

Assignments:

Students are expected to complete weekly written reflections and other homework assignments, and the midterm and final projects, in order to receive a satisfactory grade in this course.

Please see “Grading and Evaluation Methods” for more information on reflection paper guidelines and my policies on late work and absences.

Midterm and final project instructions are located at the back of this syllabus.

Required and Supplemental Texts and Resources:

Required text:
The Bunanta text will be available on reserve for 2-hour check out at Millar Library, although students are strongly recommended to obtain their own copies of the text because it will be referenced in class.

All other readings assigned for this course will be provided by the instructor via E-Reserves, and are cited within the course calendar.

**Grading and Evaluation Methods:**

This course is only offered under the P/NP grading system.

**Class Participation:** 30%
Students are required to participate during class meeting times, which can include asking questions about the material, engaging with classmates during in-class discussions, and/or participating in individual and group in-class activities. Regular attendance to class does not count towards your participation grade.

**Homework:** 20%
Students are required to write weekly reflection papers (or complete alternative assignments) based on each week’s topic, as outlined in the calendar at the end of this syllabus. Each homework assignment is worth up to 2% of the student’s final grade. Papers must be at least two pages in length and adhere to the below guidelines.*

Homework is graded on a +, ✔, and – system, corresponding to 2 points, 1 point, and 0 points, respectfully.

**Midterm Project:** 20%
See rubric attached behind this syllabus.

**Final Project:** 30%
See rubric attached behind this syllabus.

*All written work must be typed in double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, with 1-inch page margins. In addition, papers must contain appropriate headers (including the student’s first and last name, instructor’s name, course number and title, and the due date), be titled, and include citations that conform to either MLA or APA style standards (including in-text citations and a works cited/bibliography or references page).

Late work is accepted up to one class period from its due date, and will be docked 1 point of its original grade (e.g. a student who turns in a reflection paper which would have received a + instead receives a grade of ✔ on that assignment). Please see me
ahead of time if extenuating circumstances will prevent you from meeting any
assignment deadlines. Students may be granted deadline extensions for assignments
on a case-by-case basis.

Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences throughout the term. Students may be
excused from class by providing written documentation for the absence to the instructor,
such as a doctor’s note. For each additional unexcused absence, students are docked
2% from their final grade.

This balanced grading system will ensure that students have plenty of opportunities to
earn a satisfactory final grade. In addition, the instructor may, at their discretion, offer
extra credit opportunities to the entire class in order to help students compensate for
late assignments and additional unexcused absences.

**Student Conduct:**

Academic honesty is integral to the learning process and university system. Please refer
to the university’s policy regarding academic dishonesty here:

http://www.pdx.edu/dos/codeofconduct - AcademicDishonesty

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Plagiarizing, or misrepresenting, the work of others as
your own may result in failure of that assignment.

**Disability Access Information:**

Please inform your instructor if you require accommodations to participate in this course
(e.g. special seating, interpreter, note-taker, etc.). Students with disabilities should
register with the PSU Disability Resource Center (503-725-4150, TTY or Relay 503-
725-4178, SMSU 116, http://www.drc.pdx.edu) to document their needs for
accommodation and obtain support services. I will work with you to arrange the
supports you need in this class.
Course Calendar

***All homework assignments are due the following class period, unless otherwise noted in this calendar.

Week 1: Folktale as “Historia”

March 30: Introduction; guest speakers narrate Indonesian folktale

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Write a reflection paper on your experience listening to the storytellers. Some potential discussion points include: What did you notice about the storytellers’ gestures and movements? What did you notice about the storytellers’ enunciation and emphasis of different parts of the tales? Which tale was your favorite and why? How do you think oral and written traditions differ in their audiences’ reception of tales? Do you have any questions for the storytellers? What factors involving the performance of the tales influenced your perception of the tales?

April 1: Discussion on reflection papers; lecture and discussion on performance theory and what makes an oral storytelling performance “effective”

Reading for next class:

Week 2: Folktale as “Meme”

April 6: Oral transmission exercise; discussion – brainstorm a list of factors influencing the oral transmission of a folktale
Reading for next class:

AND

Select one of the following articles/book chapters to read –

[ ] Homework: Write a reflection paper on the three factors you believe most influence the shaping of an orally transmitted folktale. Explain why you believe these factors impart the most change on the performance of the tale.

April 8: Watch film adaptation of folktale “Bawang Merah, Bawang Putih” (with subtitles); discussion on the film in context of the readings and oral transmission exercise (e.g. How was your experience watching this film different than listening to orally narrated tales?)

Reading for next class:
Week 3: Ventriloquist Folklore and Wayang (Theater)

April 13: Discussion on readings; in groups of 3-4, students write short wayang kulit (shadow puppet plays) and perform them in class

No assigned reading.

April 15: Discussion on the process of wayang kulit performance; work on midterm projects for the remainder of class

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Instead of a reflection paper, write up a project proposal for your midterm. Select the folktale you wish to reformulate and describe how you will logistically recreate that folktale to appeal to a modern audience. Explain your choices. Length: 2 pages.

Week 4: Batik as Folk Art

April 20: MIDTERM PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE; lecture on batik (with photographic and textile examples); begin batik art project

Reading for next class:
April 22: Finish batik art project; show-and-tell discussion of students’ artistic choices and symbology of designs; discussion on the social and economic significance of batik in context of the readings

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Write a reflection paper describing your batik design choices and the symbolism behind your original design. Reference the readings in your paper to show you understand the material.

**Week 5: Food Lore**

April 27: Lecture on food; discussion on how food preparation may be considered a form of folk ritual; work on midterm projects for the remainder of class

No assigned reading; work on your midterm project.

April 29: **MIDTERMS DUE**; feast and present projects

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Write a reflection paper on your learning experience completing your midterm project. Address the questions: How did your plan unfold? What were some of your successes? What were some of your challenges? What would you have done differently in executing your midterm project that you can apply to your final project?
Week 6: Dance as Folk Art, Ritual

May 4: Watch videos of Balinese dances; discussion on dances in context of performance theory and what struck the students about the dances (e.g. How are they different from western dance styles? How were they similar to western dance styles? How did the music interplay with the dancers’ movements?); discussion on the potential implications of the commoditization of dance for “cultural tourism”

***Please let me know if you are physically unable to participate during the dance workshop (in which case your homework assignment would be to reflect upon your first impressions of Balinese dance based on the videos you watched during today's class). You will still be required to attend class, however.

Reading for next class:

May 6: Balinese dance workshop

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Reflect upon the dance workshop experience. Some questions you could address include: Were you comfortable? Uncomfortable? Why? What apprehensions did you have regarding this activity? Did you experience any pleasant or unpleasant surprises during the workshop, and how did you react to these surprises? Did you enjoy the experience? Why or why not?

Week 7: Children’s Folklore in Story, Song

May 11: Discussion on tales in Bunanta text; creative writing exercise – students write their own tales, employing common motifs/plots/etc. of Indonesian folktales, to create their own emerging/transforming stories (based on the Storytelling Project Model)
Reading for next class:
[ ] Situngkir, Hokky. “Conjectures to the Memes of Indonesian Songs.”

May 13: Listen to songs in class; discussion on why these songs might appeal to children; creative writing activity – students brainstorm a list of major social/economical/environmental/etc. concerns for the people of Indonesia (informed by current events), and write children’s songs to address those concerns

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Write a reflection paper analyzing a tale from the Bunanta text through the lens of the Storytelling Project Model.

**Week 8: Music and Community**

May 18: Watch gamelan videos; lecture and discussion on gamelan

Reading for next class:

[ ] Homework: Email me with topic suggestions/readings for next week’s course. I’ll take a poll on these topics next class.

May 20: Gamelan workshop; poll on next week’s topic suggestions; students sign up for order of presentations.

No assigned readings; work on your final project.
Week 9: Topic TBD (student choice)

May 25: Memorial Day (no class today)

May 27: **FINAL PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER DUE**; in-class written reflection; TBD

[ ] In-class reflection (counts towards homework grade): Write a reflection paper detailing your progress on the final project/presentation. Be honest. I’m here to help you succeed.

No assigned readings; work on your final project.

Week 10: **FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**

June 1: Final Project Presentations, Part 1

June 3: Final Project Presentations, Part 2; in-class written reflection

[ ] In-class written reflection (counts towards homework grade): What were you expecting to gain from this course? What did you actually gain? What was your favorite in-class activity, and why? What reading interested you the most, and why? Were there any aspects of the course that disappointed you, and how so? What could the instructor do to improve the course?

No class during finals week.
Midterm Project Instructions

As modes of folktale dissemination are evolving and transforming based on technological advances that make traditional oral storytelling “obsolete,” for this project you will consider how traditional folktales are also evolving in form to remain relevant and accessible to younger generations.

For your midterm, you will be reconstructing a folktale to make it appealing for a modern audience. Select a tale from the Bunanta text (if you have another folktale you wish to use for the purpose of this project, please run it by me ahead of time), and repackage it as a(n): short film, comic book, videogame, pop-up book, board game, “app,” coloring book ... the options are limitless! Use your skills and talents!

Your projects will be evaluated and graded based on the creativity and clean execution of the project. However, projects need not be time-consuming and technically complex, unless you wish to execute such a project.

Proposal due date: April 20

Project due date: April 29

Weight: 20%
Final Project Instructions

As you will learn throughout the term, folklore can reflect prejudiced, classist, ageist, misogynistic, homophobic, racist, and other marginalizing ideas. However, folklore – like language – also transforms with time.

For your final project, select a topic from the below list (or come up with one of your own!) and write up a 3-4 page research paper on that topic.

Topic ideas include: the Indonesian version of the Mahabharata, the Kantjil (mouse-deer) folktales, Borobudur temple, West Javanese batik design, the Wewe Gombel (ghost figure) mythic legend, the children’s song “Pok Ami-Ami” (“Clap [your] hands”) … your options are only limited by your ability to use Google, and your willingness to ask me (or your librarians) questions about potential topics to explore!

Please speak to me if you are unsure if your chosen topic and project idea would be appropriate or feasible for this project.

For your research paper, you must incorporate at least five outside sources (two of these may be readings assigned for the course) in your discussion of your topic. Structure your paper to address the following questions:

1) What is your topic?

2) How is this folklore significant within the history of Indonesia?

3) How is this folklore significant today in Indonesia?

4) Who participates in the creation of this folklore? Describe its creation process.

5) Include any additional, surprising, and interesting information you found that you wish to share.

For your presentation, you will recreate your chosen topic for your classmates. This may include bringing in a product you made (e.g. batik-style dyed scarf), performing the folklore for the class (e.g. narrating your feminist version of a folktale which you found originally misogynistic), etc. Again, the possibilities here are limitless!

Your presentations will be evaluated and graded based on the creativity of your recreation and preparedness to present. Your papers will be evaluated and graded
based on your adherence to the requirements of the paper as listed in this handout, conformance to the basic standards of English language grammar and syntax, level of engagement with the course material and secondary sources, and expression of unique and relevant insights to the theme of the project.

Research paper due date: May 27

Presentations: Week 10 (June 1-3)

Weight: 30% (20% for the paper, 10% for the presentation)