

PTPC 75970
Reading Lives: Story, (Auto)biography, and Identity
(3 semester hours)

Instructor: David Cho

Instructor Email: e.cho@tcu.edu

Term: Spring 2022

Time: Wednesdays 1:00-3:30 PM

Prerequisites: None

Format: In Person

Description of Content:

“We tell stories, build from fragments of our lives maps to guide us to each other.”
– Pat Schneider

“We are the stories we tell.” – Dan P. McAdams

This course is designed to: (1) Introduce students to a range of narrative theories including psychology, philosophy, theology, literary studies, and psychotherapy to understand narrative identity formation; (2) Teach basic skills of close reading of one’s own and other’s life stories through reading and analyzing memoir; (3) Help students identify the impact of narrative environments and meta/master narratives (e.g. gender, racial, sexual, religious, cultural) on one’s narrative identity development; (4) Provide a basic understanding of the role of stories in faith communities; (5) Explore how stories can be used creatively and constructively in practices of pastoral ministry.

Class Procedures:

A seminar-style course largely driven by student-led discussion, occasional lectures by the instructor, in-class writing exercises, weekly discussion posts, and student presentation.

Requirements:

1. Attendance and Informed Participation
2. In-Class Writing Exercise
3. Reading Response and Discussion Leadership
4. Living Autobiographically Paper (5-8 pages)
5. Narrative Environment Analysis Paper (8-10 pages)
6. Final Paper: Narrative Analysis of a Spiritual Memoir (10-12 pages)

Required Texts:

Randall, William and Elizabeth McKim. *Reading Our Lives: The Poetics of Growing Old*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Scheib, Karen. *Pastoral Care: Telling the Stories of Our Lives*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016.

Ward, Jesmyn. *Men We Reaped*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Various journal articles and book chapters made available online.

Spiritual Memoir (Students will choose one from the list):

- *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor
- *The Pastor: A Memoir* by Eugene H. Peterson
- *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
- *Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint* by Nadia Bolz-Weber
- *Said I Wasn't Gonna Tell Nobody* by James H. Cone
- *At Home in Exile: Finding Jesus among My Ancestors and Refugee Neighbors* by Russell Jeung

Grading Procedures:

1. Attendance and Informed Participation (10%)
2. In-Class Writing Exercise (10%)
3. Reading Response and Discussion Leadership (15%)
4. Living Autobiographically Paper (15%)
5. Narrative Environment Analysis Paper (20%)
6. Final Paper: Narrative Analysis of a Spiritual Memoir (30%)