



# PNI Practicum I: Smaller-scale PNI

## *Syllabus*

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## Part 1: Introduction, Fundamentals, Planning

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: I will go over the “PNI Practicum I Description” presentation (the one on the web site) and answer questions about the course. Each student will talk a little about the project they want to do. Then I’ll go over the “PNI Fundamentals” WWS-S chapter.
- b. Sandbox: I will gather some stories in individual interviews.

### Activities

- a. Answer some questions about your participants
- b. Tell project stories
- c. Answer the PNI Planning Questions
- d. Observe conversational story sharing

### Short readings

- WWS-S, Chapter 1 (“Introduction”)
- WWS-S, Chapter 2 (“Story Fundamentals”)
- WWS-S, Chapter 3 (“PNI Fundamentals”)
- WWS-S, Chapter 4 (“Project planning”)

## Part 2: Collection I

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will “pitch” their project to the group, as if they were seeking funding or approval for it.

- b. Sandbox: I will gather some stories in a group interview.

## Activities

- a. Choose and adapt a story form
- b. Build your privacy policy
- c. Gather stories in an individual interview
- d. Transcribe stories
- e. Improve your story form

## Short readings

- WWS-S, Chapter 5, up to “Facilitating Story-sharing Sessions”

## Part 3: Collection II

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: I will facilitate a group story-sharing exercise.

### Activities

- a. Gather stories in a group interview
- b. Transcribe stories
- c. Prepare at least one story card

### Short readings

There are no readings in Part 3. Use the time to collect stories, transcribe them, and prepare your story cards. You might also want to go back over some of the previous readings.

## Part 4: Collection III

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: I will facilitate a sensemaking contact exercise.

### Activities

- a. Facilitate a group story-sharing session
- b. Transcribe stories
- c. Finish preparing your story cards

## Short readings

- WWS-S, Chapter 5, starting at “Facilitating Story-sharing Sessions”

# ONE WEEK BREAK

## Part 5: Sensemaking I

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: I will facilitate a narrative sensemaking exercise.

### Activities

- a. Facilitate a contact-only sensemaking session

## Short readings

- WWS-S, Chapter 7 (“Narrative Sensemaking”)

## Part 6: Sensemaking II

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: I will facilitate a complete (though shortened) sensemaking workshop, with a contact task, a story exercise, and a wrap-up.

### Activities

- a. Facilitate a sensemaking session with a contact task and an exercise

## Short readings

There are no readings in Part 6. As you think about what happened in your first sensemaking session and plan your second, you might want to go back and look over previous readings.

## Part 7: Sensemaking III

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### Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: I will facilitate a session in which we build a narrative simulation.

## Activities

- a. Facilitate a full sensemaking workshop

## Readings

There are no readings in Part 7. As you think about what happened in your first and second sensemaking sessions and plan your third, you might want to go back and look over previous readings.

# Part 8: Intervention and Return

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## Meetings

- a. Project progress: Each student will talk about what has been going on in their project.
- b. Sandbox: In our last sandbox session, each student will make a presentation to the class about their project: what they wanted to do, what they did, what happened, and what they learned.

## Activities

- a. Plan and carry out a narrative intervention
- b. Return stories to the community
- c. Create a project report
- d. Reflect on the project

## Short readings

- WWS-S, Chapter 8 (“Intervention and Return”)

# Wrap-up meeting

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Our last meeting will be a discussion and Q&A session on the PNI Practicum and on PNI in general.

## Notes

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### On the readings

- **Please try to at least skim the short readings before our Zoom meetings.**
- Parts 3, 6, and 7 have no readings. I did this for two reasons.
  - Some activities take longer than others. Taking a break from absorbing new information in those parts gives you more time to focus on the activities.
  - Some parts of the course start new project phases (like Collection and Sensemaking). For those parts, I want you to have all the information you need for the whole phase. You can go back and review those readings again later.
- All of the medium and long readings are optional. Dip into whatever seems useful to you, during or after the course. Consider the readings a menu rather than a checklist.

- On references:
  - *WWS* means *Working with Stories*, which you can find at <https://workingwithstories.org>.
  - *WWS-S* means *Working with Stories Simplified*, which you can find at <https://workingwithstories.org/morewws.html>.
  - *MWWS* means *More Work with Stories*, my (unfinished) second PNI book, which you can find at <https://workingwithstories.org/morewws.html>
  - For the long readings, when I do not specify a book chapter, it means I think the whole book is worth reading. (It's usually a short book.)

## On the sandbox meetings

- In our sandbox sessions, I will facilitate an activity that you will facilitate in the *next* part of the course. Because of this, you will often participate in activities you have not yet read about. If you would rather read about each activity first, you can read (or skim) ahead to the next part's readings before the sandbox session.
- At the end of each sandbox session, if there is time, we will talk about the activity and how you can use it in your own projects.

# Medium-length and long readings

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## Part 1

### Medium-length readings

- Introduction to PNI, planning projects
  - *WWS*, Chapter Six ("Introducing Participatory Narrative Inquiry"), pp. 85-92.
  - *WWS*, Chapter Seven ("Project Planning"), pp. 93-107.
- Fundamentals
  - *WWS*, "What is a Story," pp 15-22.
  - *WWS*, "The best stories for story work," pp 22-23.
  - *WWS*, "Stories in conversation," pp 35-45.
  - *WWS*, "Functions of story sharing in communities and organizations," pp 63-72.

### Long readings

- On the foundations of PNI
  - *MWWS*, "PNI Justified," pp 8-24.
- On the nuances of PNI
  - *MWWS*, "PNI Opportunities and Dangers," pp 39-66.
  - *MWWS*, "Planning projects with stories in personalities," pp 100-104.
  - *MWWS*, "Ethics in PNI work," pp 104-124.
- On what it's like to do PNI projects
  - *MWWS*, "PNI Stories," pp. 224-284.
- On story form, function, and phenomenon
  - Story form
    - *Story* by Robert McKee, especially Chapter 7 ("The Substance of Story") and Chapter 13 ("Crisis, Climax, Resolution").
  - Story function

- *Tell Me a Story: Narrative and Intelligence* by Roger C. Schank, especially Chapter 1 (“Knowledge is Stories”) and Chapter 2 (“Where Stories Come From and Why We Tell Them”).
    - *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions* by Gary Klein, especially Chapter 5 (“The Power of Mental Simulation”) and Chapter 11 (“The Power of Stories”).
  - Story phenomenon
    - *Story, Performance, and Event* by Richard Bauman, especially Chapter 2 (“A contextual study of expressive lying”) and Chapter 3 (“The management of point of view in personal experience narratives”).
    - *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, edited by Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman, Chapter 2 (“The Narrative Quality of Experience”), Chapter 4 (“Storytelling in Criminal Trials: A Model of Social Judgment”), Chapter 8 (“Narratives of the Self”), and Chapter 11 (“The Virtues, The Unity of a Human Life, and the Concept of a Tradition”).
    - *On the Origin of Stories* by Brian Boyd, especially Chapter 11 (“Narrative: Representing Events”) and Chapter 12 (“Fiction: Inventing Events”).
- On how stories flow in conversations
  - *Conversational Narrative: Storytelling in Everyday Talk* by Neal R. Norrick, especially Chapter 3 (“Formulaicity and Repetition in Storytelling”).
- On how stories flow in communities and organizations
  - *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, and Fantasies* by Yiannis Gabriel, especially Chapter 1 (“Same Old Story or Changing Stories?”) and Chapter 2 (“Storytelling and Sensemaking”).
  - *Narrating the Organization: Dramas of Institutional Identity* by Barbara Czarniawska, especially Chapter 2 (“On Dramas and Autobiographies in the Organizational Context”).
- On narrative inquiry
  - *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*, edited by D. Jean Clandinin, especially Chapter 6 (“Talking to Learn: The Critical Role of Conversation in Narrative Inquiry”) and Chapter 21 (“The Ethical Attitude in Narrative Research: Principles and Practicalities”).
- On action research
  - *Do It Yourself Social Research* by Yoland Wadsworth
  - *Participatory Action Research* by Alice McIntyre
- On oral history
  - *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson

## Part 2

### Medium-length readings

- WWS, Asking People to Tell Stories, Asking Questions About Stories, pp 122-157.
- WWS, Stories and Personalities, pp 45-50.
- WWS, On Transcribing Storytelling, page 183.

### Long readings

- On interviewing
  - *The Oral History Reader*, Chapter 10 (“Ways of Listening”), pp 114-121.
  - *The Oral History Reader*, Chapter 14 (“Learning to Listen”), pp 157-171.
  - *MWWS*, “Habits of story collection,” pp 135-138.

- *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative* by Elliot G. Mishler, Chapter 4 (“Language, Meaning, and Narrative Analysis”), pp 66-116.
- On facilitating story sharing
  - *Reflections on Therapeutic Storymaking* by Alita Gersie, Chapter 5 (“The Intricacy of Listening and Responding to Stories”), pp. 113-153.
- On asking questions about stories
  - *MWWS*, “The story fundamentals questions explained,” pp 140-162.
  - Essay, “The Story-Sharing Journey (or, Stories and Nonviolent Communication)” (PDF file).
  - Essay, “Stories, narratives, and hasty generalizations” (PDF file).
- On transcribing stories
  - *The Oral History Reader*, Chapter 32 (“Perils of the Transcript”), pp 389-392.

## Part 3

There are no readings in part 3.

## Part 4

### Medium-length readings

- *WWS*, Facilitating Group Story Sessions, pp 166-183.
- Readings for particular exercises
  - Twice-told stories - *WWS*, pp 187-190.
  - Narratopia - [narratopia.com](http://narratopia.com)
  - Timeline - *WWS*, pp 190-199.
  - Landscape - *WWS*, pp 199-211.
  - Ground truthing - <https://workingwithstories.org/GroundTruthingWithStories.pdf>
  - Local folk tales - <https://workingwithstories.org/LocalFolkTales.pdf>

### Long readings

- On group story sharing
  - *Storycatcher* by Christina Baldwin
  - *A Safe Place for Dangerous Truths* by Annette Simmons
  - *MWWS*, PNI skills, pp 76-92.
  - *MWWS*, What to expect when expecting stories, pp 173-198.

## Part 5

### Medium-length readings

- *WWS*, Chapter 11 (“Narrative Sensemaking”)
- *WWS*, Chapter 12 (“Group Exercises for Narrative Sensemaking”)

### Long readings

- On sensemaking
  - *Sensemaking in Organizations* by Karl E. Weick, especially Chapter 2 (“Seven Properties of Sensemaking”)

- *Sense-Making Methodology Reader: Selected Writings of Brenda Dervin* by Brenda Dervin and Lois Foreman-Wernet, especially Chapter 8 (“Sense-Making’s Journey from Metatheory to Methodology to Method”)
- “The cost structure of sense making” by Daniel M. Russell et al, *ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (1993), accessible at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235961374\\_The\\_cost\\_structure\\_of\\_sense\\_making](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235961374_The_cost_structure_of_sense_making)
- On narrative sensemaking
  - *Three Native American Learning Stories: Who Speaks for Wolf, Winter White and Summer Gold, Many Circles* by Paula Underwood
  - *Narrative Life: Democratic Curriculum and Indigenous Learning* by Neil Hooley, especially Chapter 11 (“Participatory Narrative Inquiry”)
  - *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Augusto Boal
- On facilitation
  - *Participatory Workshops: A Sourcebook of 21 Ideas & Activities* by Robert Chambers
  - *Small Groups as Complex Systems* by Holly Arrow, Joseph E. McGrath, and Jennifer L. Berdahl, especially Chapter 3 (“Groups as Complex Systems: Overview of the Theory”)
  - *Using Conflict in Organizations*, edited by Carsten De Dreu and Evert Van De Vliert, especially Chapter 4 (“Mitigating Groupthink by Stimulating Constructive Conflict”) and Chapter 10 (“Productive Conflict: Negotiation as Implicit Coordination”)

## Part 6

There are no readings in part 6.

## Part 7

There are no readings in part 7.

## Part 8

### Medium-length readings

- WWS, Chapter 13 (“Narrative Intervention”)
- WWS, Chapter 14 (“Narrative Return”)

### Long readings

- On narrative therapy
  - *Narrative Therapy in Practice: The Archaeology of Hope* by Gerald Monk et al., especially Chapter 1 (“How Narrative Therapy Works”)
  - *Maps of Narrative Practice* by Michael White, especially Chapter 2 (“Re-Authoring Conversations”)
- On participatory theatre
  - *The Applied Theatre Reader*, edited by Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston, especially Chapter 6 (“Provoking Intervention”), Chapter 18 (“Introduction to Participation”), and Chapter 24 (“The Complexity and Challenge of Participation”)
  - *Telling Stories to Change the World*, edited by Rickie Solinger et al. (read the chapter titles of this book and find an example that connects to what you want to do)



