

**Life Stories Reflection**  
**E450 Capstone Seminar in English**  
**Spring 2015**

“I am referring to the freedom that comes not only from owning your memory and your life story but also from knowing that you make creative choices in how you look at your life.”  
(From Mary Catherine Bateson, “Composing a Life Story,” *Willing to Learn: Passages of Personal Discovery*, Hanover, NH: Steerforth Press, 2004)

**First draft due: Feb. 18, 2015**

**Final reflection due: Mar. 11, 2015**

Create two one-page narratives that represent different versions of/perspectives on your life story (or, if you’d prefer, of an experience or series of experiences—like your undergraduate experience or the “story” of how you became an English major).

Next, re-read your stories and write a 2-3 page reflection that addresses one or more of the questions below. Feel free to use quotes from the Bateson article that illustrate your points or that you found especially thought-provoking. Conclude the reflection by telling us which version of your story you expect your ePortfolio to focus on. How will you build the portfolio so that its elements (text documents, section introductions, photos, introductions to examples of your work, and any other media you incorporate), viewed together, convey and demonstrate that story to your audience?

Reflection questions (don’t try to answer all of these!):

What are the major similarities and differences between your two story lines? In what ways do they represent alternative ways of looking at the same events/experiences? For example, is one the story you tell yourself and is the other the story you tell others? Does one have more continuity or one more “zigzags” than the other? Why?

Which story do you prefer? Why?

Was it difficult for you to compose one or both stories? Why do you think that was the case?

Have other people’s stories (like your parents’ stories) influenced yours? In what ways?

Did you compose your preferred story prospectively or retrospectively (i.e., are you looking forward or backward at your story)?

What insights did you gain from composing and re-reading your two stories?