Stanford



Jonah Willihnganz

The Stanford Storytelling Project Manager, Writing and Rhetoric Operations

Bio

BIO

Jonah Willihnganz is the Director of the Stanford Storytelling Project, an arts program that explores how story craft and practices can be used to create personal and social change and is the co-founder of the LifeWorks Program for Integrative Learning in the School of Medicine, which teaches students how to build natural capacities through practices from the arts, humanities, psychology, and wisdom traditions. He also co-leads the Dalai Lama Fellowship program at Stanford.

His research focuses on how narrative practices can help deepen capacities such as presence, courage, and empathy, and he has published fiction, essays, and articles on literature and pedagogy. He teaches courses in creative writing, American literature, media studies, and critical theory, and created the first college courses on storytelling in audio media. A long-time contemplative and student of Aikido, he incorporates their practices of into many of his courses, and he helps faculty integrate both narrative and contemplative practices into their courses.

He received a bachelor's degree from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, an MFA in creative writing from Hollins University, and a PhD in English from Brown. He belongs to the communities of the San Francisco Zen Center and Palo Alto Friends (Quakers), is a slow but avid swimmer, and is learning to fly fish.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

- PhD, Brown University , English (2003)
- MA, Brown University , English (1999)
- MFA, Hollins University , Creative Writing (1991)
- BSFS, Georgetown University , School of Foreign Service (1989)

LINKS

- Stanford Storytelling Project: storytelling.stanford.edu
- LifeWorks Program for Integrative Learning: https://vaden.stanford.edu/stanford-living-education/lifeworks

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Counterstory in Literature and Education: CSRE 141E, EDUC 141, EDUC 341 (Aut)

- Oral Documentary Workshop: ORALCOMM 126 (Aut)
- Storytelling as Medicine: ORALCOMM 170 (Win)

2025-26

- Designing for Care: Building a Story Pharmacy: ORALCOMM 190 (Aut)
- Holistic College Student Development: Theory and Practices: EDUC 182, EDUC 382 (Aut)
- Love: Art, Science, and Practice: ORALCOMM 172 (Spr)
- Oral Documentary Workshop: ORALCOMM 126 (Aut)

2024-25

- Holistic College Student Development: Theory and Practices: EDUC 182, EDUC 382, LIFE 182 (Aut)
- Love: Art, Science, and Practice: LIFE 176 (Win)
- Oral Documentary Workshop: ORALCOMM 126 (Aut)

2023-24

- Fight the Future: Speculative Fiction and Social Justice: ENGLISH 9SF (Win)
- Holistic College Student Development: Theory and Practices: EDUC 182, EDUC 382, LIFE 182 (Aut)
- Love: Art, Science, and Practice: LIFE 176 (Spr)
- Meeting the Moment: Inner Resources for Hard Times: LIFE 105, WELLNESS 105 (Spr)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Climbing into Bell's Well: Teaching CRT and Counterstory as Self-Inquiry** *COLLEGE ENGLISH*
  Antonio, A., Willihnganz, J.
  2024; 87 (1): 47-65
- **The Voice of America in Richard Wright’s Lawd Today!** *Broadcasting Modernism*
  Willihnganz, J.
  University of Florida.2009; 1st: 124-141

PRESENTATIONS

- Telling Stories, Stanford TEDx - Stanford Community (5/17/2015)