Analytical Writing and Thinking

*Bad Moms: Writing about Mothers*

#### ENC2305-13D3

#### MWF Period 8, CBD 0212

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**Course Description**

Analytical Writing and Thinking is designed to advance your critical thinking and writing skills beyond first-year composition. To achieve those goals, you will learn advanced analytical techniques and communication strategies that professors in all disciplines expect you to know.

The texts and assignments in the course will expose you to challenging ideas. The subject matter of the course will be developed in accordance with the instructors’ own studies, with wide-ranging themes in areas such as Literature, Political Science, Anthropology, or Biology. By examining humanistic or scientific theories or principles, you will learn how to read deeply and think critically. As such, you will be introduced to seminal ideas in specific disciplines and will be asked to engage in debates important to our time and our culture.

In this course, you will hone your reasoning skills through engagement with a specific topic and sharpen your writing skills through multiple drafts of papers with substantial feedback from your peers and your instructor. The culmination of the course will be a portfolio that demonstrates your growth as a thinker and as a writer.

**Goals**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to...

* Analyze specific influential research, theories, or philosophies
* Recognize writing as an open process that permits writers to use reinvention and rethinking to revise their work
* Understand the collaborative nature of writing processes by critiquing your own and others' work
* Demonstrate critical thinking skills
* Incorporate the ideas of published scholars in your own work
* Produce a scholarly writing style, including clear, coherent, efficient, and well-organized prose as well as logical argumentation

**Course Theme**

To ground your investigations for the semester, the course will focus on a particular formative theme. The theme of this section is “Bad Moms.”

This course asks students to unpack the cultural assumptions inherent in our conceptualization of motherhood. Ultimately, students are encouraged to think critically about the familiar figure of the mother and join existing conversations within the fields of cultural studies, maternal theory, and feminism.

How do we define the terms “mother” and “motherhood”? How have those definitions changed overtime? What external influences shape how we define these terms? Why are we so quick to dismiss women as “bad moms”? Is there a place in our cultural imagination for a celebrated non-traditional mother? We will work to answer these questions and others throughout the semester by exploring motherhood in a variety of contexts. We will analyze: current conversations about issues like smother mothers and working mothers; popular depictions of mothers like those in *Tallulah, Gilmore Girls*,and *Nurse Jackie*; and maternal theories by Adrienne Rich, Nancy Chodorow, and more.

**Required Texts**

* [S] Williams, Joseph. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. 5th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2015. Print.
* [OL] Other required readings available either freely online.
* [N] Access to a Netflix account is recommended.

**Assignments**

More detailed descriptions of all assignments can be found on Canvas. The table below is designed to give you a concise overview.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Points** | **Words** |  |
| **100** | **750** | **Critical Definition of Motherhood**  This assignment asks for your initial reflection on the course topic. You will answer the following questions: What is your experience with the term “motherhood”? Where do you encounter it? What does it mean to you? How might your definition differ from that of others?  (Self Revision—25, Final—75) |
| **125** | **1000** | **Critical Analysis of a Popular Article**  In this assignment, you will analyze a credible popular article that relates to the course topic. You will identify the argument, explicit or implicit, that the author of the text makes and critique that argument. You will also evaluate the rhetorical strategies the author uses to advance her or his argument or perspective.  (Participation in Peer Review—25, Final—100) |
| **225** | **2500** | **Application of Theory to a Primary Text**  You will employ the skills of critical definition and analysis to discuss how a particular concept or theory applies to a current cultural, political, or legal phenomena or text. You will work closely with me to develop your topic over the course of the semester.  (Participation in Peer Review—25, Final—200) |
| **100** | **750** | **Course Reflection**  How has your writing and research changed? Revisit your first definition essay. How has your understanding of the term “motherhood” shifted over the course of the semester? Why? |
| **250** | **1000** | **Tumblr Project**  This project will show your engagement with the theories and topics of the course with non-class materials. Over the first half of the semester, you will post three times to the class Tumblr. I will provide a variety of prompts and each post must respond to a different one. By midterms, you will chose one post to expand on for your final project. The semester will end with a presentation and a personal reflection on the process.  (3 Posts at 25 points each—75, Proposal—25, Final Project—75, Presentation—50, Reflection—25) |
| **100** |  | **In-Class Activities**  1. Individual Presentation: Each student will be responsible for leading discussion about one of our course readings. On your assigned day, you will come prepared with a brief summary of the reading and some discussion questions. You should be able to facilitate the conversation for 10-15 minutes, and then I will take over. (25 points)  2. Group Presentation: Students will work in groups in order to introduce their peers to critical theories about motherhood. Groups will present their assigned theory to the class. Presentations must include a summary, key terms, important quotations, a contemporary example, and discussion questions. Presentations should last about 25 minutes. (50 points)  3. There will be 5 style workshops during the semester. A graded activity (5 points) will accompany each one. (25 points) |
| **100** |  | **Participation**  Participation includes completing assigned readings, conferences, homework, in-class writing activities, presentations, and discussions. I expect you to come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussions and other in-class activities. This means having completed any reading or homework assigned for that day. You will lose points for unpreparedness. |
| **1000** | **6000** | **TOTAL** |

*If something prevents you from actively participating in class, please schedule a conference with me early in the semester to make other arrangements.*

Grading for this course will be rigorous. Successful assignments will illustrate a careful regard for spelling, grammar, and citation guidelines. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts.

The writing assignments for this course are designed to meet the minimum requirements of the University Writing Requirement credit. To satisfy this requirement, every assignment’s word count must be fulfilled. Submitted assignments short of the minimum word count will receive zero credit.

**General Education Writing Assessment Rubric**

I will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SATISFACTORY (Y) | UNSATISFACTORY (N) |
| CONTENT | Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources. | Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources. |
| ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE | Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences. | Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader. |
| ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT | Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments. | Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis. |
| STYLE | Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure. | Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly. |
| MECHANICS | Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper’s argument or points. | Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader’s understanding or severely undermine the writer’s credibility. |

**Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | 4.0 | 93-100 | 930-1000 |  | C | 2.0 | 73-76 | 730-769 |
| A- | 3.67 | 90-92 | 900-929 |  | C- | 1.67 | 70-72 | 700-729 |
| B+ | 3.33 | 87-89 | 870-899 |  | D+ | 1.33 | 67-69 | 670-699 |
| B | 3.0 | 83-86 | 830-869 |  | D | 1.0 | 63-66 | 630-669 |
| B- | 2.67 | 80-82 | 800-829 |  | D- | 0.67 | 60-62 | 600-629 |
| C+ | 2.33 | 77-79 | 770-799 |  | E | 0.00 | 0-59 | 0-599 |

**Course Credit Policies**

You must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of “C-” will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

**Course Policies**

*Attendance*

Attendance is required. **The policy of the University Writing Program is that if a student misses more than SIX periods during a semester, he or she will fail the entire course**. The UWP exempts from this policy only those absences deemed excused according to UF policy, including university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, illness, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed.

Please Note: If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, your are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Tardiness: If you enter class after roll has been called, you are late, which disrupts the entire class. **Two instances of tardiness count as one absence**.

*Academic Honesty*Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

1. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php).

All the work submitted on Canvas will be passed through Turnitin.com, a website that compares your paper to other papers on the Internet, any published work, and the Internet itself. If you plagiarize, you will be caught, which could result in an automatic E for the assignment, the course, or a disciplinary measure from the university, depending upon the gravity and frequency of the matter.

*Phones, Computers, etc.*

Out of courtesy for your fellow classmates, and myself, it is expected that you silence your cell phone/other gadgets off before class. If you are using a laptop in class, it should only be used for taking notes.

*Classroom Civility*

Please keep in mind that you and your classmates come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

*In-Class Work*

Participation is a crucial part of success in this class. You will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, peer reviews, and other in-class activities. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. You must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. Writing workshops require that you provide constructive feedback about your peers’ writing. In general, you are expected to contribute constructively to each class session.

*Progress Conferences*

I encourage students to see me during my office hours, especially when they have questions about an assignment, need help with a particular writing problem, want extra feedback on a draft, or have questions about my comments on their work.

*Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*

You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is your responsibility to have and to make available this material.

*Mode of Submission*All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc or .docx) documents to Canvas **by 2:30PM**. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. File names will be the student’s last name\_assignment name (like: Smith\_Critical Definition.docx).

All papers must follow MLA format. They should be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered. Your last name should precede the page number (like: Smith 1).  Your name, my name, the course number, and the date should appear in the upper left-hand corner of the document. Every paper should have a title centered at the top of the document, but after your name, etc. All of this information, like the body of your paper, will be double spaced with no additional extra spaces.

**Papers are due at 2:30PM.** **Late papers will not be accepted.** Failure of technology is not an excuse.

*Students with Disabilities*

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should you need any accommodation, contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide you with documentation that you will then present to me when requesting accommodation.

***Harassment*  
UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:** <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

*Instructor Evaluations*

You are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but you will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

*Reading is due the day it appears on the calendar.*

*\*\*This calendar* ***only*** *contains reading assignments and major deadlines. Additional assignments will be added on an ongoing basis.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Monday | Wednesday | Friday |
| **Unit One: Defining the Bad Mother** | | | |
| Week One (8/22) | Syllabus and Course Overview | Introductions | ***Style Workshop: Thesis Statements with Tension and Topic Sentences***  Read: *Style* Lesson 7 [S] |
| Week Two (8/29) | Read: *AT* “Developing Your Thinking” | **Critical Definition Draft Due**  ***Style Workshop: Revision***  Read: *Shitty First Drafts* [OL-files] | **Critical Definition Due** |
| Week Three (9/5) | **Labor Day-No Class** | Read: Ideal Mothers content [OL-page] | **1st Tumblr Post Due** |
| **Unit Two: Unraveling the Bad Mother** | | | |
| Week Four (9/12) | Read: Smother Mothers and Tiger Mothers content [OL-page] | Read: Violent Mothers content [OL-page] | **No Class** |
| Week Five (9/19) | Read: Mothers with Other Priorities content [OL-page] | ***Style Workshop: Ethics and Quote Integration***  Read: *Style* Lesson 11 | **Critical Analysis Draft Due**  **2nd Tumblr Post Due** |
| Week Six (9/26) | **Peer Review Conferences** | **Peer Review Conferences** | **Critical Analysis Due** |
| Week Seven (10/3) | Read: Non-Mothers content [OL-page] | Read: Rich [OL] | **3rd Tumblr Post Due** |
| **Unit Three: The Bad Mother in Popular Culture** | | | |
| Week Eight (10/10) | **Group Theory Presentations** | **Group Theory Presentations** | **Homecoming-No Class** |
| Week Nine (10/17) | Read: article OL | Read: article OL | Tumblr Project Proposal Due |
| Week Ten (10/24) | *Bates Motel* discussion | *Bates Motel* discussion | *Bates Motel* discussion |
| Week Eleven (10/31) | Application of Theory Topics Due | ***Style Workshop: Cohesion and Coherence***  Read: *Style* Lesson 4 | Read: article OL |
| Week Twelve (11/7) | Read: article OL | ***Style Workshop: Concision and Emphasis***  Read: *Style* Lessons 8 & 5 | **Veteran’s Day-No Class Application of Theory Draft Due** |
| Week Thirteen (11/14) | **Peer Review Conferences** | **Peer Review Conferences** | **Application of Theory Due** |
| Week Fourteen (11/21) | Tumblr Project Conferences | **Thanksgiving-No Class** | **Thanksgiving-No Class** |
| Week Fifteen (11/28) | **Tumblr Project Presentations** | **Tumblr Project Presentations** | **Tumblr Project Presentations** |
| Week Sixteen (12/5) | **Tumblr Project Reflection Due** | **Course Reflection Due** | **Reading Day-No Class** |