

AML2410: Issues in American Literature & Culture

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Good Girls Gone Bad: Unruly Girls and Women in American Literature and Culture

Girls and women who transgress cultural notions of acceptable behavior—who behave badly— attract both contempt and concern at higher rates than their male counterparts. These “bad” girls and women challenge boundaries of appropriate femininity, and as a result people often perceive them as threats to social order. Of course, notions of “good” and “bad” behavior reflect norms in particular historical and social contexts. Actions once considered subversive may now be commonplace—in part because girls and women continued to misbehave. This course will examine representations of “bad” girls and women in American literature and culture to consider how they reflected, and perhaps changed, shifting notions of ‘appropriate’ womanhood.

Throughout this course, we will read, interpret, and discuss a wide variety of cultural materials from the eighteenth century through the twenty-first, with a particular focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—periods of dramatic change for women and girls’ legal and social standing in the United States. We will examine such figures as the “ruined” woman, the tomboy, the femme fatale, and the mean girl, among others, through fictional representations as well as archived materials, like newspapers, magazines, and diaries. We will consider such questions as: How do these representations serve to both demarcate and transgress social expectations? How are notions of “bad” and “good” women impacted by race, class, sexuality, and age? Why are some behaviors, like tomboyism, acceptable in girls and yet perceived as dangerous in adult women? What does it mean to embrace “bad” behavior as a subversive act?

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- AML2410 confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H). It also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student **must** receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of AML2410, students are expected to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Novels:

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899): ISBN 0393960579

Nella Larsen, *Passing* (1929): ISBN 0813511690

Vera Caspary, *Bedelia* (1945): ISBN 1558615075

Toni Morrison, *Sula* (1973): ISBN 1400033438

Kelly Sue DeConnick, *Bitch Planet: Vol. 1* (2014): ISBN 1632153661

Film:

Mark Waters dir., *Mean Girls* (2004)

These are the ISBNs for preferred editions, but you can purchase other versions. We will also read various short stories, essays, and excerpts, which will be accessible via Canvas.

Electronic copies on permitted electronic devices (see classroom policies) are allowed, but hard copies are preferred. **Failure to have the required reading, as well as notes and/or discussion questions, will count as an absence.**

ASSIGNMENTS (Total Points Possible: 1000)

Discussion Prompts (25 points total)

Over the course of the semester, students will submit discussion prompts for a minimum of *five* classes. Prompts should respond to or ask about the reading to be discussed in class that day. The prompt must include an insight (2-3 sentences) about the text and a discussion question. The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate dynamic reading experiences, critical thinking, and an interactive discourse community. Discussion prompts must be submitted to the Canvas discussion board by noon on the day we will discuss it in class.

In-Class Presentation (5 minutes, 500 words; 50 points)

Throughout the semester, each student will present on an “unruly” woman or girl relevant to the course’s themes. To prepare, students will select and research a historical figure related to their assigned week’s theme and/or historical moment. Students will write a short paper (500 words) establishing their definition of “unruly” and articulating how their selected figure connects to class discussions. This paper should offer a brief biographical sketch of the historical figure and incorporate outside research. Students will then present their historical figure to the class on their assigned presentation day. Through this assignment, students will have the opportunity to

develop research skills and practice speaking in front of an audience. Papers, visual aids and properly formatted Works Cited must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the assigned presentation day.

Presentations will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester. Please note barring extraordinary circumstances, presentations will not be rescheduled. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor before their scheduled presentations.

Outlines (3 outlines, 300 words each; 75 points total)

For the three main papers, students must turn in outlines detailing their argument prior to each paper's due date (see reading schedule for due dates). It should be a formal full-sentence outline, with a developed thesis statement and textual evidence. The purpose of these outlines is to plan thorough, well-developed arguments and anticipate any potential obstacles that might arise when writing your papers. Outlines must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due dates.

Paper 1: Close Reading Argument (900 words; 100 points)

Students will choose one assigned reading and conduct a persuasive close-reading of part of that work. In this assignment, students will analyze the selection (a passage from a novel or short story or a poem) and use the text to develop an argument about women's roles and/or treatment within that historical moment. This assignment is designed to assess analytical and critical thinking skills. Paper 1 must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due date.

Paper 2: Critical Analysis Argument (1200 words; 150 points)

Students will perform a critical analysis of one of the texts already studied in class. In this assignment, students will develop a thematic reading and then use that theme to analyze the text. The goal of this assignment is to develop a student's ability to formulate a specific, substantial critical argument that addresses a significant aspect of a text and justifies its claims through a systematic critique of two or three detailed textual examples. Historical secondary research *may* be incorporated, but is not required. Topics must be discussed with the instructor before you begin writing. Paper 2 must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due date.

Annotated Bibliography (900 words; 100 points)

In preparation for the final paper (paper 3), students will research and write an annotated bibliography with 3-5 sources related to their proposed project. The assignment will open with a paragraph explaining the project, proposing an argument, and putting the sources in context with one another, followed by the annotations. This opening paragraph will stand in for the final paper's outline, but students are still welcome to submit a formal outline for review.

Each bibliographic entry should include a brief summary of the material, an assessment of the source, and an indication of its usefulness for your project. Not all annotations will be the same length, but should be approximately 150-200 words. At least two entries should be for peer-reviewed academic sources. Annotations must be in MLA format. This assignment is designed to assist students' in their research for the final paper as well as practice proper MLA citation style. Annotated bibliographies must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due date.

Paper 3: Researched Analysis (1500 words; 200 points)

In this assignment, students will use the skills developed throughout the course and in previous papers. This assignment is a sustained, formally researched analysis in which you will make an original argument about one or more literary texts through a particular theoretical, historical, or critical lens. Students will develop a topic of their own choosing, subject to instructor's approval. This assignment is an opportunity to develop unique, interesting arguments. The paper should incorporate both primary and secondary texts and offer evidence of the student's critical thinking and interpretive abilities. Paper 3 must be submitted to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due date.

Paper Revisions + Memos (2 memos, 300 words each; 200 points total)

Revising your work allows you to strengthen your arguments, catch errors, and make your papers more persuasive while improving your writing skills. After the first two papers, students will revise their papers based on instructor comments, in-class writing workshops, and their own reflection of their work. As we will discuss in class, the revised drafts should *not* merely correct typos or grammatical errors. The revisions should improve significantly the original essay and reflect the students' efforts to further develop their writing skills.

Each revision must include a 300-word memo that responds to the instructor's comments on the original draft and outlines the efforts made to strengthen the paper. Each memo and revised paper must be submitted as a *single document* to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due date.

Participation (100 points)

In order to develop an open, engaging community of critical thinkers, we must all actively participate in the learning process. Completing course assignments and attending class fulfills part of your commitment to the class. Students must also participate in class discussions and activities (including peer reviews, group work, and quizzes), as well as complete any out-of-class activities or homework assigned. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to in-class activities and discussion will lower your participation grade.

Peer Review

On the days marked for peer review, you must bring a **completed hard-copy draft** of the upcoming paper to class, and be prepared to critique that of your peers. Absences on peer review days will affect your participation grade (*-5 points per missed peer review*). You must submit your peer-reviewed hard copy draft on the day the final draft is due. Neglecting to submit a full draft will lower the final grade on the paper by *10 points/one letter grade*, at the instructor's discretion.

Please note: I am always available to discuss your assignments with you during the writing process, if you contact me in a timely manner. When you have any questions or concerns about your work, please feel free to e-mail, visit during office hours, or schedule an appointment with me. You can also visit the Writing Studio in Tigert 302 for concerns regarding grammar, punctuation, or style: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/>

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Assignments

The writing assignments for this course are designed to meet the requirements of the University Writing Requirement credit. To satisfy this requirement, **every** assignment's word count must be fulfilled. **Assignments that do not meet the minimum word count will receive zero credit.** Students must complete all assignments.

Attendance

Each student is allowed **three** absences. Each absence beyond the first three absences will lower your overall grade by 20 points (per absence). **If you miss six or more periods, you will fail the course automatically.**

If you enter class after the official start of the period, you are late—which disrupts the entire class. **Three instances of tardiness count as one absence.** Entering the classroom more than 15 minutes after the class begins counts as an absence.

The University exempts from this policy **only** those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Inform me as early as possible in advance if you will miss class due to a university-approved reason (i.e. varsity athletics, etc.). Similarly, please inform me in advance if you will miss class to observe a religious holiday. If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other special dispensation approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please meet with me to discuss your requirements as early as possible. I will consider documented extenuating circumstances, such as major illnesses, on a case-by-case basis.

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

Formatting and Submission

All written assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman and double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides. Format, citations, and documentation must follow MLA style. All assignments are due at the beginning of class or online at the assigned deadline. Late assignments **will not be accepted** unless you have made specific arrangements with the instructor prior to the submission of the late work.

Outlines, papers, annotated bibliographies, and revisions must be submitted as MS Word (.doc or .docx) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to Canvas by 3:00pm on the due dates. Discussion prompts must be submitted to Canvas by noon on the day we will discuss that text in class. Paper copies of rough drafts must be brought to class for peer review. Peer-edited rough drafts must be turned in the day the final draft is due.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission or a review of graded papers, it is your responsibility to make available this material.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it 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 including but not limited to those found on the internet, 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, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, ask for help!

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

Grading

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grade Issues: University policy prohibits discussions of grades via email. If you have a question about a grade, you may schedule an appointment to meet with me to discuss it.

Grade Appeals: In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the English Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

More information about grading can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Course Evaluations

Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Counseling and Wellness Center

Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>

Classroom Behavior

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

Electronic Devices

No disruptions from cell phones will be tolerated. The instructor reserves the right to require those who break this rule to leave the classroom, which will count as an absence. In the event of a situation that requires your cell phone to be on, please notify the instructor before class.

You can use laptop computers and other electronic devices in class for the purposes of taking notes during discussion, referencing electronic texts, or for in-class presentations. Web browsing, emailing, chatting, etc. unrelated to class are, however, inappropriate. In the event of a violation of this policy, the instructor reserves the right to prohibit **all** electronic devices in class.

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

Each student is expected to participate in a responsible and mature manner that enhances education. Any conduct that disrupts the learning process may lead to disciplinary action. Because this course requires much contact, collaboration, and dialogue among students, it is essential that each student work to create an environment of respect and tolerance.

Environmental Sustainability

Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing used copies of print texts or electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is subject to change. The online syllabus supersedes the paper copy. Unless otherwise indicated, assignments and readings are due the day they are listed on the syllabus.

* indicates that the text(s) will be available online or through Canvas

	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Week 1	M 1/8	Course introduction and syllabus	

	W 1/10	Helen Anne Petersen, Introduction from <i>Too Fat, Too Slutty, Too Loud: The Rise and Reign of the Unruly Women</i> (2017)* Lindy West, “Brave Enough to Be Angry” (2017)* Workshop: Building arguments	
	F 1/12	<i>Introduce class discussion prompts, in-class presentations, and Outlines/Paper 1</i>	
Week 2	M 1/15	NO CLASS	
	W 1/17	<u>Women on Trial</u> Excerpt of <i>The Journal of John Winthrop</i> and “The Trial of Anne Hutchinson” (1637)* Workshop: How to close read	
	F 1/19	Selections of transcripts from the Salem Witch Trials (1692)* http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/home.html	
Week 3	M 1/22	<u>Women as Warnings</u> <i>Amelia; or the Faithless Briton</i> (1789)*	
	W 1/24	Hermann Mann, <i>The Female Review</i> (1797)*	OUTLINE 1
	F 1/26	Hermann Mann, <i>The Female Review</i> (1797)*	
Week 4	M 1/29	Excerpt of Hannah Webster Foster, <i>The Coquette</i> (1797)*	
	W 1/31	Excerpt of Hannah Webster Foster, <i>The Coquette</i> (1797)*	
	F 2/2	<i>In-class peer review</i> Workshop: Editing for peer review	ROUGH DRAFT 1
Week 5	M 2/5	<u>Women Speaking Out</u> Margaret Fuller, “The Great Lawsuit” (1843)* Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman” (1851)*	FINAL DRAFT 1
	W 2/7	Sarah Willis Parton, “A Chapter on Literary Women” (1853)*	

		Selections from <i>The Lily</i> (1849-1853)*	
	F 2/9	Workshop: Revising and reverse outlining <i>Introduce Paper 2 and Revision Assignments</i>	<i>*Bring in a copy of Paper 1</i>
Week 6	M 2/12	<u>Claiming Space and Selfhood</u> Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> (1899)	
	W 2/14	Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> (1899)	
	F 2/16	Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> (1899)	REVISION 1
Week 7	M 2/19	Excerpt from Winnifred Eaton, <i>Me: A Book of Remembrance</i> (1915)* Workshop: Incorporating quotes and in-text citations	
	W 2/21	<u>Performing Race and Gender “Right”</u> Silas X. Floyd, “The Loud Girl,” “Directions for Little Ladies,” and “The Don’t-Care Girl” in <i>Floyd’s Flowers: or, Duty and Beauty for Colored Children</i> (1922)*	
	F 2/23	Nella Larsen, <i>Passing</i> (1929)	
Week 8	M 2/26	Nella Larsen, <i>Passing</i> (1929)	OUTLINE 2
	W 2/28	Nella Larsen, <i>Passing</i> (1929)	
	F 3/2	Workshop: Considering Counterarguments	
Week 9	3/3-3/11	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK	
Week 10	M 3/12	<i>In-class peer review</i> Workshop: Structure and organization	ROUGH DRAFT 2
	W 3/14	<u>Women and Crime</u> Newspaper articles about Bonnie Parker and Stephanie St. Clair and Evelyn Frechette, “Crime Does Not Pay” (1936)*	
	F 3/16	Workshop: Library resources and research techniques	FINAL DRAFT 2

		<i>Introduce Paper 3 and Annotated Bibliography Assignments</i>	
Week 11	M 3/19	Vera Caspary, <i>Bedelia</i> (1945)	
	W 3/21	Vera Caspary, <i>Bedelia</i> (1945)	
	F 3/23	<i>Girls' Town</i> (1959)* Workshop: Organizing your research	
Week 12	M 3/26	<u>Double Jeopardy: Race and Gender</u> Toni Morrison, <i>Sula</i> (1973)	REVISION 2
	W 3/28	Toni Morrison, <i>Sula</i> (1973)	
	F 3/30	Toni Morrison, <i>Sula</i> (1973)	
Week 13	M 4/2	Excerpt of <i>This Bridge Called My Back</i> (1981)*	
	W 4/4	Excerpt of Assata Shakur, <i>Assata: An Autobiography</i> (1987)*	
	F 4/6	Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek" (1991)* Workshop: Persuasive techniques and considering audience	
Week 14	M 4/9	<u>Worrying About Girls</u> Excerpt of Mary Pipher, <i>Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls</i> (1994)* Margaret Talbot, "Girls Just Want to Be Mean" (2002)*	ANNOTATED BIB
	W 4/11	<i>Mean Girls</i> (2004)	
	F 4/13	<u>21st Century Unruly Women</u> Kelly Sue DeConnick, <i>Bitch Planet: Vol. 1</i> (2014)	
Week 15	M 4/16	Kelly Sue DeConnick, <i>Bitch Planet: Vol. 1</i> (2014)	OUTLINE 3
	W 4/18	Elizabeth LaPensée, <i>Deer Woman: A Vignette</i> (2017)*	

	F 4/20	Selections of Roxane Gay, <i>Difficult Women</i> (2017)* Workshop: Coherence and concision	
Week 16	M 4/23	Selections of Roxane Gay, <i>Difficult Women</i> (2017)*	
	W 4/25	<i>In-class peer review</i> In-class screening: Tracee Ellis Ross at Glamour's Women of the Year Summit (2017)*	ROUGH DRAFT 3

RESEARCH PAPER DUE MONDAY 4/30

GRADING

Grading for this course will be rigorous. If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will be failed. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts.

As the instructor, it is my duty to evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

Grade Scale:

A	93-100%	930-1000 points
A-	90-92%	900-929
B+	87-89%	870-899
B	83-86%	830-869
B-	80-82%	800-829
C+	77-79%	770-799
C	73-76%	730-769
C-	70-72%	700-729
D+	67-69%	670-699
D	63-66%	630-669
D-	60-62%	600-629
E	0-59%	0-599

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
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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.