

ENC 1145 Writing About Fraud

Anastasia Kozak
 Spring 2015, Section 7401
 Class periods: MWF 6 (12:50 - 1:40 pm)
 Location: MAT 0105

Office hours: MW 5 (11:45 am -12:35 pm) in TUR 4412
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 Instructor's home page: <http://plaza.ufl.edu/kozak/>
 Canvas site for ENC 1145: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

Course Overview

Confidence tricks, counterfeiting, Ponzi schemes, identity theft – we are both fascinated and threatened by fraud and its manifestations. Print culture, in particular, reflects our obsession with sensationalist cases of fraudulence across several genres: fiction, non-fiction, and journalism. In this course, students will read works of fiction *about* fraud as well as learn about real-life cases of literary fraud in which popular works of non-fiction were subsequently exposed as fictitious. These texts might include Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories, Clifford Irving's *The Autobiography of Howard Hughes*, and Benjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments*. In addition to analyzing and writing critically about the literature of fraud, students will get a chance to practice in several literary strategies that embrace fraud in creative and productive ways. Ultimately, we will attempt to answer the questions of how fraudulence shapes our worldviews; what is the difference between real-life and fictional fraud; and how our fascination with fraud is connected to the insecurities about our own authenticity and origins.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of the course is to help students acquire a diverse portfolio of critical and practical skills. By the end of the course, students will have:

- Improved their understanding of reading and writing in a variety of genres (fiction, non-fiction, journalism)
- Conducted research utilizing a wide range of on-campus and digital resources and cite their sources in correct MLA format
- Employed critical vocabulary in oral and written critique of each other's work
- Provided engaging and convincing rationales that addressing specific choices they've made in research and writing process
- Explored a variety of meaning-making activities that include work with images, remix, and sound
- Acquired writing and commenting proficiency in a highly participatory wiki environment

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see <http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/gen-ed-courses-1.aspx>.

Wiki Learning Environment

A portion of your coursework will be completed and assessed in the course wiki. You will be able to share and revise your work in response to your classmates' and instructor's comments. Practical training on how to work in wiki environment will take place during the first week of class.

Required Readings

The following texts are available at the UF bookstore and online vendors. If you choose to buy your texts online, I recommend sources such as Abebooks.com and Alibris.com that serve independent booksellers. You may use either print or electronic versions for this course.

- Highsmith, Patricia. *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. New York: Norton, 2008. ISBN: 9780393332148
- Irving, Clifford. *The Hoax*. New York: Open Road Media, 2014. ISBN: 9781497644755
- Proust, Marcel. *The Lemoine Affair*. Tr. Charlotte Mandell. Melville House, 2008. ISBN: 9781933633411 (electronic version of this text is available at <http://www.mhpbooks.com/books/the-lemoine-affair/>)
- Wilkomirski, Benjamin. *Fragments*. New York: Schocken, 1996. ISBN: 9780805210897 (this text is out of print but there are plenty of inexpensive version available from online booksellers)

Additional course readings and podcasts will be available electronically via course website or through George A. Smathers Libraries Course Reserves (ARES).

Course Policies/Requirements

Attendance

You are allowed three (3) absences in the course (no explanation required). Do not miss a day on which you're due to present or to respond to another student's presentation; it may be very difficult to reschedule your presentation or response. Additional unexcused absences, unless taken for university-related events or religious holidays, will incur a half-letter grade penalty. If you reach six (6) unexcused absences, you will fail the course. Absences due to major illnesses will only be excused if you submit appropriate medical documentation. Please be courteous to others by arriving to class on time. If you're more than 10 minutes late, your attendance will not be recorded. Three (3) tardies constitute one full absence.

Participation

This class requires a timely submission of all assignments and ongoing participation (in class and via wiki). Unless you submit a brief written explanation of why you had to miss a deadline, late work will not count towards your grade. Please note that because of our full class calendar and your classmates' commitments in other courses, presentation (and response) dates cannot be rescheduled once assigned.

Homework and class preparation

Always come to class prepared by doing all the reading. Be prepared for a moderate reading load this semester (anywhere between 100-130 pages per week). I recommend that you read a little each day and make the reading process as active as you can by incorporating highlighting, marginalia, and note-taking. Additionally, you are expected to review and invited to comment on the projects and notes submitted to the wiki by your classmates before the day on which these will be discussed in class. The more you review each other's work, the more you will learn about the process of writing and improve your grade.

Laptop and tablet policy

You are allowed to use your own laptop or tablet in class; however, activities not related to course research or in-class writing will not be tolerated. Cell phones must be set to silent during class.

Communication with instructor

Your instructor is available by e-mail and during office hours. Please note that e-mail will not be checked after 5 p.m., on weekends, or holidays. Your communications with the instructor should be considered professional and the style and content should reflect that. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. Contact the instructor about an appointment if you are not available during the scheduled office hours.

Student feedback

Students 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 students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Academic honesty

The University community's policies and methods regarding academic honesty are clearly spelled out in the UF Student Honor Code. Visit <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code> for more information.

Accommodations

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Visit <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/> for more information.

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 information about UF policies regarding harassment, visit http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/.

Assignments and Grading

All assignments must be completed in order to receive the writing credit for the course. Detailed submission instructions will be offered in class. Please note that listed word counts **do not** include bibliographic references. Unless otherwise stated, all major assignments are due on **Fridays at 7 pm**.

- Definition assignment: 10%
- Case study presentation: 10%
- Critical response (to another student's presentation): 5%
- "Wanted" image project: 15%
- "Pseudotranslation" project: 15%
- Final paper (including paper proposal): 30%
- Reading quizzes (best 10 out of 12): 5%
- Professionalism, homework, and collaboration: 10%

Definition assignment: 10% (1,000 words)

You first major task in the course is to write a critical definition of the term "fraud." Using the definition offered by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a starting point, you are asked to expand on the existing definitions by incorporating outside scholarly sources and drawing on several expansion strategies discussed in class. Apart from the *OED*, you must consult and correctly cite at least three (3) other authoritative sources. Wikipedia is not an "authoritative source" in this context.

Case study presentation: 10% (min. 500 words, 10 min)

Research and present a particular case study where fraudulent behavior plays an important role. Examples may be chosen from a variety of disciplines (literature, business, arts, medicine, psychology, academia, etc.). You are required to succinctly introduce the details of your case, key players, and the aftereffects of the case in social or cultural life. Additionally, be prepared to provide a well-defined criteria for the definition of fraud as it pertains to your particular case study. Your presentation notes must be posted on the wiki **one (1) week** before your actual presentation date in order to give your responder (see below) enough time to comment on your arguments. Following your presentation, you will have **one (1) week** to make edits and changes to your work. This way, you will be able to fully benefit from your responder's, other classmates', and instructor notes.

Critical response presentation: 5% (min. 250 words, 5 min)

In this assignment, you will be responding to another student immediately following his or her class presentation. In order to prepare for this assignment, you will review the student's presentations notes (posted one week in advance) and write you your own notes in the wiki. The idea is to focus on a specific aspect of your classmate's argument that seems problematic, inconsistent, or weak and suggest ways in which the argument can be strengthened or improved. You are welcome to consult outside sources or work with the sources cited by your classmate. Your response notes are due in the wiki **24 hours** before class. Following your critical presentation, you will have **three (3) days** to make edits and changes to your work.

"Wanted" image project: 15% (min. 500 words)

In this project, you will be creating a visual collage based on the character of Tom Ripley in Patricia Highsmith's novel. Collect **10-12 images** (print clippings, online images, or, even better, the images you've take yourself) that remind you of the moods, tones, scenes, sounds, and smells present in the novel. When choosing your images, you are asked to sample **at least two (2)** of the following selection strategies: *ekphrasis* (images representative of specific scenes from the novel), *atmosphere* (images that pinpoint a specific atmosphere or mood), and *senses* (synesthetic images that represent the senses of touch, feel, smell and taste).

If you're working with online images, make sure you're working with images that are free to use, modify, and share. In order to assemble your collage, you can choose one of the following options:

- upload the images directly onto your wiki page
- use an image manipulation program of your choice (Paint, CorelDraw, GIMP, etc.) to create a digital collage and upload it as a single file to wiki
- incorporate your images into a Prezi (if you choose this option, you'll have to create your own template from scratch in order to have maximum flexibility with arranging and animating images).

Additionally, write a **250-word introduction** to your project, explaining your image selection criteria and search methodology, as well as include a brief (about 3 sentences) caption **for each** of your 10-12 images explaining why you chose these particular images to "translate" Ripley into image, and what influenced the arrangement of images in relationship to each other. Make sure to include image provenances in your works cited. Since you will be uploading and perhaps remixing found pictures from the internet, you must have permission to use and/or manipulate these pictures.

"Pseudotranslation" project: 15% (1,000 words)

In this project, you will get an opportunity to engage in a very old and common literary practice of pseudotranslation. Write a critical translator's preface to a fictional work (poetry, fiction, memoir, or historical document) that you supposedly found and translated. In order to provide a convincing backstory of how this work came into your hands and why this is an important text to translate, you are

required to locate at least five (5) outside sources that give context to the historic time and place in which your “discovered” poet wrote and incorporate these sources into your preface.

Final paper proposal (250 words)

Before starting your final paper, you are required to submit a detailed paper abstract that outlines your main topic. Particular emphasis should be placed on your working research questions, your thesis, and the significance of your query. Students are encouraged to discuss their potential projects with the instructor by March 15.

Final paper: 30% (2,500 words)

You may choose to write this paper on any novel or combination of novels on the syllabus for this class. This paper should present your own in-depth interpretation of a particular thematic or technical aspect of the work(s) you choose. You may focus on one particular feature of one work or you may present your own in-depth study of a theme or technique as it is used in two or more of the works we've read. For example, you might analyze the role a particular image or symbol plays in the work(s) you've picked or you might analyze the function of one or more secondary characters.

Whatever you decide to do, remember that this essay is **argumentative** and **interpretive** (i.e., *not* a review or summary of criticism on a work). That is to say, you'll need to convince the reader that the topic you're presenting is significant and that it works the way you say it does. How convincing you are depends on how well you use the material at your disposal. That material should be drawn primarily from the work you've chosen, but you should also consult a small number of secondary research sources. You must be careful, however, to use your research to support your own point; avoid simply reporting what other researchers have said.

Reading Quizzes: 5% (best 10 out of 12)

Quizzes will usually take place at the beginning of class on Monday and will be based on the reading for that week. If you show up late to class you will receive a grade of zero for the quiz and will be marked absent. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

Professionalism and collaboration: 10%

This grade includes your punctuality, attendance, class preparation, etiquette (in class and on wiki), and collaboration. We will not have the time to discuss everyone's work in detail during class time; therefore, treat your classmates as you're a valuable support and editorial network. You will also be working in groups on several in-class exercises.

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

Grade point equivalencies

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. Visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> for more information.

Grade appeals

Complaints about individual assignments should be addressed to the instructor. Complaints about final grades should be discussed with the instructor in at least one conference soon after the next term begins. If the conference on the final grade does not resolve the problem in a valid, college-level manner, the complaint can be expressed on a form in the English office, 4008 Turlington, which is

available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. The form must be accompanied with copies of every assignment and the instructor's directions.

Assessment Rubric

****Please note that this is the general rubric that applies to all student work. Individual assignments may have additional requirements, which will be thoroughly explained in class.****

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Assignments 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.	Assignments either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Lack of 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.
REVISION	Work exhibits evidence of continuous, substantial, and critical revision of all your work based on peer and instructor feedback.	Absence of revision or insufficient revision in student's work. Disregard of peer and instructor feedback.
STYLE & FORMAT	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Documents are presented according to the specific formatting guidelines (including appropriate usage of hyperlinks and citations).	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Incorrect formatting of documents.
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.

"A" work is strong in all of the above five (5) areas.

"B" work warrants improvement in at least one (1) of the above areas.

"C" work needs considerable improvement in, but shows potential for, at least two (2) of the above areas.

"D" work requires significant revision in order to be improved upon in at least two (2) of the above areas.

Course Schedule

The following schedule is tentative and subject to change. Always consult Canvas course wiki for the most up-to-date deadlines and requirements. You are also expected to check your university email daily for course announcements. Readings and writing exercises are due on the day that they are listed in the calendar.

UNIT ONE – FRAUD IN LITERATURE

Week 1 (January 7-9) – INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

- course orientation
- setting the course expectations
- working in wiki environment

Week 2 (January 12-15) – FRAUD IN SHORT FICTION (I)

Reading:

- Helen Norris “The Pearl-Sitter”
- Arthur Conan Doyle “The Adventure of the Red-Headed League”

In class:

- fraudulent agents and decoys (discussion)
- library research workshop
- introduction to MLA

Week 3 (January 19-23) – FRAUD IN SHORT FICTION (II)

(M) January 19 – NO CLASS

Reading:

- Nikolai Gogol “The Nose”
- start reading *The Talented Mr. Ripley*

In class:

- surrealist fiction and unreliable narrators (discussion)
- impostors and doubles
- **Definition Assignment DUE**

Week 4 (January 26-30) – FRAUD IN A NOVEL (I)

Reading:

- Patricia Highsmith *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (chapters 1-15)
- *This American Life* podcast, Episode 506: Secret Identities <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/506/secret-identity>

In class:

- introduction to Bubbl.us mapping

Week 5 (February 2-6) – FRAUD IN A NOVEL (II)

Reading:

- Patricia Highsmith *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (chapters 16-30)

In class:

- case study presentations #1 and #2
- Prezi workshop and working with images

Week 6 (February 9-13) – DIAMOND FRAUD (I)Reading:

- Marcel Proust *The Lemonier Affair*

In class:

- pastiche vs plagiarism
- case study presentations #3 and #4
- **“WANTED” image project DUE**

Week 7 (February 16-20) – DIAMOND FRAUD (II)Reading:

- selections from Frances Mossiker’s *The Queen’s Necklace* (full text available through Smathers Library courtesy of Hathi Trust Digital Library)
- background material on “The Diamond Necklace Affair”

In class:

- Case study presentations #5 and #6
- Fraudulent networks and confidence tricks (discussion)

UNIT TWO – LITERARY FRAUDWeek 8 (February 23-27) – FRAUD IN JOURNALISM (I)Reading:

- Clifford Irving *The Hoax* (Part One and Part Two, pp. 1-148)

In class:

- case study presentations #7, #8, and #9
- background of the Howard Hughes affair
- view excerpts from Orson Welles’s film *F for Fake*

SPRING BREAK (February 28 – March 8) - NO CLASSESWeek 9 (March 9-13) – FRAUD IN JOURNALISM (II)Reading:

- Clifford Irving *The Hoax* (Part Three and Part Four, pp. 149-249)

In class:

- case study presentations #10, #11, and #12

Week 10 (March 16-20) – PSEUDOTRANSLATION (I)**(F) March 20 – NO CLASS**Reading:

- Lawrence Venuti “Authorship” from *Scandals of Translation*

- Madeleine Shwartz “Romain Gary: a short biography”
<http://www.theharvardadvocate.com/content/romain-gary-short-biography>
- Paolo Rambelli “Pseudotranslations, Authorship and Novelists in Eighteenth-Century Italy”

In class:

- case study presentations #13, #14, and #15
- Introduction to the “Pseudotranslation” assignment

Week 11 (March 23-27) – FRAUD IN MEMOIR (I)Reading:

- Binjamin Wilkomirski *Fragments*

In class:

- introduction to survival memoir genre
- case study presentations #16, #17, #18, #19
- **Paper Proposal DUE**

Week 12 (March 30-April 3) – FRAUD IN MEMOIR (II)**(W) April 1 and (F) April 3 – NO CLASS**Reading:

- selections from other survivor memoirs (TBD)

In class:

- ethical considerations in fiction vs. non-fiction (discussion)

I will be travelling this week to present a paper at 2015 Popular Culture Association (PCACA) conference and will arrange a substitute instructor for at least a part of this week. You are expected to continue working on your projects independently and write a short review about the reading for this week.

Week 13 (April 6-10) – PIOUS FRAUD (I)Reading:

- Selections from *Narrative of James Williams*. New York: American Anti-Slavery Society (available online from <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/williams/menu.html>)
- Lara Langer Cohen “Introduction” from *The Fabrication of American Literature* (pp. 1-22)

In class:

- **“Pseudotranslation” project DUE**

Week 14 (April 13-17) – PIOUS FRAUD (II)Reading:

- watch several online videos featuring stage magicians for class discussion on Monday

In class:

- individual conference meetings to discuss the progress on final papers

Week 15 (April 20-22) – COURSE WRAP-UP

Reading:

- read Snopes article about Bristol Zoo <http://www.snopes.com/crime/clever/carpark.asp>

In class:

- course evaluation, fraud about fraud, course wrap-up

Final projects DUE on April 24 @ 11:55 pm