**WR 150 KB**

**Writing Seminar: Women and Madness in Literature**

**Spring 2018**

**PSY-B55 TuTh 9:30AM-10:45AM**

Instructor: Kristin Lacey

Office: 236 Bay State Rd. Rm. 122

Contact: [klacey@bu.edu](mailto:klacey@bu.edu)

Email Policy: I welcome email correspondence, and appreciate your clear, formal, and grammatically correct messages. Please allow 48 hours for a response.

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00AM-12:30PM

**Course Description**

WR 100 and WR 150 make up a two-semester sequence of writing courses required of most Boston University undergraduates. They are designed to help all students acquire skills and habits of mind essential both to their academic success and to their future personal, professional, and civic lives. WR 100 and WR 150 are taught as small, topic-based seminars. The specific topic of this section of WR 150 is **Women and Madness in Literature.**

The idea of the "crazy woman" permeates television, movies, literature, and everyday life. In the past, doctors even attributed a number of "hysteria" symptoms (anxiety, insomnia, fainting, sexually "forward" behavior) explicitly to women's biology. In this course, we will look at literary texts that show how social and political forces have also shaped the composition of women's "madness." Some questions we will explore together include: Who benefits from portraying women as mad? To what extent is "madness" purely a result of the mind's function, and to what extent is it imposed by characters' environments? Do we see this phenomenon in fiction and nonfiction today? Key readings include The Awakening (Kate Chopin), "The Yellow Wallpaper" (Charlotte Perkins Gilman), and Wide Sargasso Sea (Jean Rhys).

**Course Goals**

Although they vary in topic, all sections of WR 100 and WR 150 have certain goals in common. In WR 100, you developed your abilities to:

* craft substantive, motivated, balanced academic arguments
* write clear, correct, coherent prose
* read with understanding and engagement
* plan, draft, and revise efficiently and effectively
* evaluate and improve your own reading and writing processes
* respond productively to the writing of others
* express yourself verbally and converse thoughtfully about complex ideas.

In WR 150, you will continue developing all of these abilities **while working intensively on prose style and learning to conduct college-level research**.

**Course Requirements**

As a writing seminar, WR 150 requires both a good deal of reading and writing and your active involvement in a variety of class activities. Specific course requirements are:

* self-assessment
* additional exercises as assigned
* three major papers
* final portfolio
* one conference with your instructor
* attendance and participation

**Course Materials**

**Feel free to purchase these texts online, searching by ISBN numbers as listed here. Older editions may be used, provided the ISBN numbers match.**

Chopin, Kate, and Nancy A. Walker. *The Awakening.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s,

2000.

**ISBN: 9780312195755**

Rhys, Jean, and Judith L. Raiskin. *Wide Sargasso Sea: Backgrounds, Criticism.* New

York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999.

**ISBN: 9780393960129**

Turabian, Kate L., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams*. Student's Guide to Writing College Papers*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010.

**ISBN: 9780226816333**

**A notebook dedicated to this course.**

All other materials will be handed out in class and/or posted on the Blackboard site. You

can log in to our Blackboard page at: https://learn.bu.edu

**Assignments**

You will be given a range of assignments in this course, including a self-assessment, various reading and writing exercises, three major papers, and a final portfolio. Much of this work will not be graded, but that does not mean it is unimportant. Students who prepare diligently for class, participate actively, and take the homework exercises and drafts seriously generally learn more and write better final papers than those who do not.

**Self-Assessment:** At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to submit a written self-assessment in which you take stock of your reading and writing abilities and establish some personal goals you wish to pursue over the course of the semester. For grading purposes, your self-assessment will be considered your first exercise. You will post this on Blackboard.

**Exercises:** We will use the term *exercises* to refer to various low-stakes assignments and activities that you will be asked to complete over the course of the semester. You will do some of these exercises in class; others will be given as homework.Your exercises will not receive explicit grades, although you will receive credit for completing them on time. **You must purchase a notebook to contain your in-class writing and you must bring this notebook with you to class each day.**

**Reading Responses:** You will complete five reading responses on Blackboard throughout the semester, as listed on the course schedule below. These should be thoughtful responses of 100-200 words to the complete reading for that Thursday. I encourage you to end them with a question that might spur our class discussion. These must be posted by 11:59 PM the Wednesday before class for full credit.

**Major Papers (drafts and final versions):** We will use the term *draft* to refer to unfinished or preliminary versions of your three major papers. You will be required to write at least one draft of Paper 1 and at least two drafts of Papers 2 and 3. I will provide feedback on each draft, either through conferences, written feedback, or Blackboard comments. You will also receive feedback from your peers in Peer Review Workshops. Drafts will not receive explicit grades, although you will receive credit for completing them on time. Remember that you are more likely to write a better final paper if you write a substantive draft. Your performance on your drafts may also affect your participation grade. Your course grade will be determined primarily by the quality of the final versions of your major papers. All drafts and final papers must be word-processed and be documented in MLA style unless otherwise specified. **Please include a *word count* (available as a function on most word processors) at the end of all drafts and final papers. Each version of each paper (*including drafts)* must be uploaded to Blackboard by the time class starts on the due date.** That way, you will have a copy of each draft for your portfolio even if you lose the hard copies.

**Portfolio:** At the end of the semester, you will be asked to submit a portfolio containing your self-assessment, major papers (drafts and final versions), other supporting artifacts, and an introductory essay. The portfolio provides you with an opportunity to document and reflect on your development as a reader and writer over the course of the semester. Your portfolio will contain work that has already been graded. This work will not be re-graded in the portfolio. Rather, your grade for the portfolio will be based on those things that make the portfolio itself a coherent work: the introduction, any additional framing (annotations, captions, etc.), the selection and arrangement of artifacts, and overall organization.

**Sharing of Student Writing:** Experienced writers routinely share their work with others, because they understand that the best way to improve a piece of writing is to test it out with actual readers. In this class, you will learn how to respond productively to the writing of others and how to use feedback from others to improve your own work. All students in the class will be required to share at least one draft of each paper. If you are concerned about sharing your writing, please talk with me about your concerns.

**Grading and Evaluation**

Grading Scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Percent |
| A  A-  B+  B  B-  C+  C  C-  D-F | 93-100  90-92  87-89  83-86  80-82  77-79  73-76  70-72  <70 |

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Exercises and Drafts (credit for submission): 5%

Participation: 5%

Reading Responses: 5%

Paper 1: 15%

Paper 2: 25%

Paper 3: 35%

Final Portfolio: 10%

**Late and Missed Assignments:** Unless you make other arrangements with me in advance, graded assignments will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade for each class day they are late. If you submit a homework exercise or draft late, I cannot promise to read it in time for my comments to be useful to you. If you do not turn in drafts, you are still responsible for turning in final versions of your papers when they are due. Please note too that we will regularly work with our exercises and drafts in class. If you are habitually late with your assignments, you will be unable to participate fully in the class.

**Participation and Attendance:** Since this course is a seminar, your regular attendance and participation are essential both to your own learning and to your classmates’ learning.

Under ordinary circumstances, missing more than one week of class (three or more classes) will lower your final grade. Missing more than two weeks of class may lead to a failing grade in the course. Note that these absences need not be consecutive. **Missed conference appointments will count as an absence. Three late arrivals to class will count as one absence.**

The second week of absence (3-4 classes missed) will lower the final course grade by a third of a letter for each class missed (e.g., B becomes B-🡪C+🡪C). Five or more absences (more than two weeks) will be grounds for an “F” in the course.

If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g., varsity athletics, religious observances), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. While my attendance policy is fairly rigid, **please do not hesitate to speak to me about circumstances that may be affecting your performance or attendance.** **Exceptions may be made in a small number of cases.**

**Technology Policy:** All phones and electronic devices must be put away and silenced before class begins. A first offense during the semester will merit an in-class calling-out, and the second will count as an absence for that class period. I take this policy seriously and expect that you will, too. Because of the discussion-based nature of this seminar, I do not allow laptops or tablets in the classroom. Instead, please bring your notebook and pen to each class. With that being said, I may include Laptop Days for working on drafts; if necessary, these Laptop Days will be announced in advance.

**Pronouns and Names:** If your name or pronouns do not match the university’s records, please let me know. If your pronouns or name change during the semester, I am happy to adjust my records.

**CAS Center for Writing**

At the CAS Center for Writing (100 Bay State Road, 3rd floor with a satellite location at Mugar Library) students enrolled in WR courses can receive one-on-one consultations about their writing with well-trained tutors familiar with WR assignments. When you visit the center, you should expect to be actively involved in your session. Tutors will work with you at any stage in your writing process, but they will not edit or correct your paper for you. Rather, they will work with you to help you do your own best work. The center is a resource for all WR students. Whether you consider yourself to be a strong writer or a weak one, you can benefit from consulting with a tutor.

The CAS Center for Writing is open Monday through Friday. Hours for the current semester are posted on the website below (common hours are between 9 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.). While the center accepts walk-in visits, you are strongly encouraged to make an appointment in advance. Because of the high demand for consultations, students are limited to one reservation per week. You may schedule a session online:

http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/the-writing-center/

You may also schedule a session in person at the CAS Center for Writing or by calling 617-358-1500. Cancellations must be made at least 9 hours in advance.

***WR***

The CAS Writing Program publishes an online journal of exemplary writing from WR courses. If you are interested in looking at samples of successful WR papers, or if you just want to read some good essays, I encourage you to visit the journal:

http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/journal/

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the passing off of another’s words or ideas as your own, and it is a serious academic offense. Cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures described in the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code. All WR students are subject to the CAS code, which can be read online:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>

Penalties for plagiarism can range from failing an assignment or course to suspension or expulsion from the university. In this class, we will discuss conventions for using and citing sources in academic papers. If you have any questions about plagiarism, I invite you to speak with me.

**Resources**

CAS Writing Program: Administers all WR courses and the CAS Center for Writing. You may contact the Writing Program if you have any concerns about your WR class.

100 Bay State Rd., 3rd Floor

617-358-1500

<writing@bu.edu>

Boston University Libraries: Offer a wealth of online and print resources. Research Librarians will introduce you to the many resources the library offers in any field of research. They can work with you to develop a research plan and organize your sources. The Research Center welcomes you for walk-in consultations on the first floor of Mugar Memorial Library or at any other library on campus.

Research appointments can be made at http://www.bu.edu/common/request-an-appointment/.

Mugar Memorial Library

771 Commonwealth Avenue

Phone: 617-353-2700

http://www.bu.edu/library

Educational Resource Center: Offers tutorial assistance to all undergraduate students in a range of subjects, including writing. You should use the Writing Program’s Center for Writing for your WR classes, but you may wish to visit the ERC for tutorial assistance in other subjects.

100 Bay State Rd, 5th floor

Phone: 617-353-7077

http://www.bu.edu/erc

CAS Academic Advising: A central resource for all questions concerning academic policy and practice in the College of Arts and Sciences. The office is headed by the Associate Dean for Student Academic Life and has a staff of fifteen faculty advisors and five academic counselors. All students can receive academic advice about and assistance through this office. Students who have not yet declared concentrations can receive pre-registration advising through this office.

100 Bay State Rd. 4th Floor

Email: casadv@bu.edu

Phone: 617-353-2400

<http://www.bu.edu/casadvising/>

Here are links to the advising offices of other BU colleges:

CFA: <http://www.bu.edu/cfa/resources/advising/>

CGS: <http://www.bu.edu/cgs/academics/advising/>

COM: <http://www.bu.edu/com/resources/current-students/undergraduate>

ENG: <http://www.bu.edu/eng/current-students/ugrad/advising/>

QST: <http://questromworld.bu.edu/udc/essentials/advising/>

SAR: <http://www.bu.edu/sargent/current-students/academic-services-center/>

SED: <http://www.bu.edu/sedadmitted>

SHA: <http://www.bu.edu/hospitality/academics/advising/>

Office of Disability Services: Responsible for assisting students with disabilities. If you have a disability, you are strongly encouraged to register with this office. You may be entitled to special accommodations in your courses, such as additional time on tests, staggered homework assignments, or note-taking assistance. This office will give you a letter outlining the accommodations to which you are entitled that you can share with your teachers. If you require accommodations, you must present me with an official letter from Disability Services. **Please also feel free to approach me via email, before or after class, and/or during office hours to talk about how I can best support you in light of any disabilities you may have.**

19 Deerfield Street, 2nd floor  
 Phone: 617-353-3658

http://www.bu.edu/disability

ACADEMIC CALENDAR for Boston University

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| --- | --- |
| Spring 2018\* | |
| January 18 | Classes Begin |
| January 24 | Last day to add a WR course |
| February 19 | Presidents’ Day Holiday, Classes Suspended |
| February 20 | Substitute Monday Schedule of Classes |
| February 22 | Last day to drop standard courses (without a “W” grade) |
| March 3 – 11 | Spring Recess, Classes Suspended |
| March 12 | Classes Resume |
| March 30 | Last day to drop standard courses (with a “W” grade) |
| April 11 | Last day to officially take a leave of absence or withdraw from the University. |
| April 16 | Patriots’ Day Holiday, Classes Suspended |
| April 18 | Substitute Monday Schedule of Classes |
| May 2 | Last Day of Classes |

**Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings**

***TA:*** *The Awakening* Bedford St. Martin’s Edition

***T:*** *Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers* (Turabian)

***WSS****: Wide Sargasso Sea* Norton Critical Edition

**BB:** Blackboard

The schedule below is subject to change at any time by the instructor. Short selections from Turabian may be added depending on the class’s needs.

**Unit 1: Short Fiction and Poetry**

Week 1

Thursday, Jan. 18

* Course Introduction and Syllabus Review
* Self-Assessment and Questionnaire Assigned

Week 2

Tuesday, Jan. 23

* Paper 1 Assigned
* Reading Due: Susan Glaspell, *Trifles* (BB)
* Writing Due: Self-Assessment (Upload to BB)

Questionnaire (Bring to class)

Write a one-paragraph summary of *Trifles* and bring a hard copy to class.

Wed. 1/24 [*Last day to add a WR class*]

Thursday, Jan. 25

* Reading Due: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wall-Paper” (BB)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “Why I Wrote ‘The Yellow Wall-Paper’” (BB)

*T* 13.1 “Draft Your Final Introduction” p. 119-126

* Writing Due: Reading Response #1 (Post on BB by 11:59 pm Wednesday)

Claim and introduction paragraph for Paper 1

Week 3

Tuesday, Jan. 30

* Peer Review Workshop
* Reading Due: Marge Piercy, “Barbie Doll” (BB)
* Writing Due: Paper 1 First Draft, hard copy and upload to BB
* Conference Meetings Begin

Thursday, Feb. 1

* Library Instruction Day: **MEET AT MUGAR LIBRARY ROOM 302**
* Conference Meetings End
* Reading Due: Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* p. 3-5, marked beginning and ending on BB

Week 4

Tuesday, Feb. 6

* Reading Due: Adrienne Rich, “Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law” (BB)

Sylvia Plath, “The Applicant”

Thursday, Feb. 8

* Reading Due: Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market”
* Writing Due: Paper 1 Final Draft

Reading Response #2

* Paper 2 Assigned

**Unit 2: *The Awakening***

Week 5

Tuesday, Feb. 13

* Reading Due: *TA* p. 22-62

Thursday, Feb. 15

* Reading Due: *TA* p. 62-105

*TA* Contextual Documents p. 157-160 “The Artist and Marriage”

* Writing Due: Reading Response #3

Week 6

Tuesday, Feb. 20 [*No class: Substitute Monday schedule*]

Thursday, Feb. 22

* Reading Due: Finish *TA* p. 105-139
* Writing Due: Paper 2 First Draft
* [*Last day to DROP classes (without a ‘W’ grade)*]
* Optional Conferences Begin

Week 7

Tuesday, Feb. 27

* Reading Due: Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *Madwoman in the Attic* (BB selections)

*WR Journal* essay (handed out in class on Thursday and on BB)

*T* Ch. 4 “Finding Useful Sources” p. 44-55

* Optional Conferences End

Thursday, March 1

* Writing Due: Paper 2 Second Draft
* Peer Review Workshop

Week 8

Tuesday, March 6 [*No class: Spring Recess*]

Thursday, March 8 [*No class: Spring Recess*]

Week 9

Tuesday, March 13

* Reading Due: *TA* Elizabeth LeBlanc, “The Metaphorical Lesbian: Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening”*

*T* Ch. 12 “Revising Your Draft” p. 115-118

* Writing Due: Write, in your own words, what LeBlanc’s claim is, and identify three pieces of evidence she uses to support her claim.

Thursday, March 15

* Writing Due: Paper 2 Final Draft
* Assign Paper 3

**Unit 3: *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Research Projects**

Week 10

Tuesday, March 20

* Reading Due: *WSS* p. 9-61

Thursday, March 22

* Reading Due: *WSS* p. 61-112
* Writing Due: Reading Response #4

Week 11

Tuesday, March 27

* Reading Due: *WSS* Mona Fayad, “Unquiet Ghosts”

*T* Ch. 2 “Finding a Research Question” p. 26-39

* Writing Due: Write down some research questions Fayad might have asked before writing this essay.

Thursday, March 29

* Writing Due: Paper 3 Research Question and Annotated Bibliography due (First Draft)

Friday, March 30 [*Last day to DROP classes (with a ‘W’ grade)*]

Week 12

Tuesday, April 3

* Reading Due: Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady* (BB selections)

Thursday, April 5

* Writing Due: Paper 3 Second Draft
* Presentations on Research Projects

Week 13

Tuesday, April 10

* Presentations on Research Projects

Wednesday, April 11 [*Last day to officially take a leave of absence or withdraw from the University*]

Thursday, April 12

* Reading Due: Gloria Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (BB)
* Writing Due: Reading Response #5

Week 14

Tuesday, April 17

* Reading Due: Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger”

Leslie Jamison, “I Used to Insist I Didn’t Get Angry. Not Anymore”

Kiki Petrosino, “At the Teahouse”

Thursday, April 19

* Reading Due: TBD

Week 15

Tuesday, April 24

* Writing Due: Paper 3 Final Draft

Thursday, April 26

* Writing Due: Portfolio Draft

Week 16

Tuesday, May 1

* Last Day of Class
* Course Evaluations
* **Final Portfolio Due**