

ENC 3930: Introduction to Fandom Studies
CRN: 12718
TR 140-255
Instructor: Linda Howell
Office Hours: TR 10-12, 3-5, and by appt.
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Course Description: This course will study the Sheldon Coopers of the world, the fanboys and fangirls who make up the online communities dedicated to films, tv shows, books, and video games. This course asks students to consider the future of producing texts in a digital age. To that end, students will read seminal works by writers in fan culture, such as *Textual Poachers* by Henry Jenkins and various works by Nancy Baym, as well as others including articles from *Transformative Works and Cultures*, to name a few.

Students will, as their major projects, immerse themselves in fandoms like *Doctor Who*, *Supernatural*, *Stargate*, and other active online fandoms. Students will produce both fan art work and scholarly explorations of fandom. Students will be expected to learn basic webwriting techniques, maintain a tumblr, twitter, and livejournal accounts to produce new media texts. Traditional written essays will be few and far between.

The main project of the class will be for students to immerse themselves in a fandom, produce fanart, and interact with other fans to produce a comprehensive ethnography of the community.

Course Outcomes:

When students complete this course successfully, they will be able to:

- Define selected terms of importance in fandom studies
- Compose a print media as well as visual media works
- Document sources accurately using MLA documentation style
- Distinguish between popular and scholarly source materials
- Summarize, with concise and plain prose, several sources
- Synthesize and integrate multiple sources into a single research project
- Produce and present multimedia project to peers
- Use rubrics and/or other self-directed assessment protocols for independent revision
- Present materials to an audience of peers, both individually and collaboratively
- Produce PUBLIC writings posted to tumblr, livejournal, and twitter

Texts (must use editions in bookstore):

Jenkins, Henry. *Textual Poachers*.

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*

Various online materials on BB



Assignments (You must complete ALL assignments to receive a passing grade in the course):

1. *Diagnostic Exam on terms (0 points)*
2. *Final exam on terms, texts, and summary (50 points)*
3. *2 Summaries (100 points)*
4. *Choice of Approaches: Fan-Critic-Producer or Critic-Scholar-Producer (ALL MUST BE PUBLISHED ONLINE and linked on Twitter)*
You choose the approach you would like to take by January 17. You must commit to the three works at that time.

*Option 1: Produce series of fanworks (based in your chosen fandom), including a critical analysis of 1-2 pages per project (300 points) *One of these works must be a mashup**

- a. Fanfiction – posted to LiveJournal, min. word count: 3000 (100 points)
- b. Fanvideo – posted to YouTube (100 points)
- c. Fanart – posted to Tumblr (100 points)

Option 2: Produce series of critical works (based in your chosen fandom), including a self analysis of 1-2 pages per project

- a. Series of 5 critical blog entries – posted to LiveJournal, min. word count: 3000 (100 points)
 - b. Critical Vodcast – posted to YouTube (100 points)
 - c. Published Fandom Bibliography w/ Annotations, 10 entries minimum – posted on Tumblr (100 points)
5. Weekly Reflection Blog – posted to LJ, Tumblr (100 points)
 6. Ethnography (100 points) – posted to LJ
 7. Collaborative White Paper Contribution (100 points) – posted to BB
 8. Creative work with accompanying marketing strategy (200 points) – posted to LJ, Tumblr, and Twitter
 - a. Option 1: Create a meme (see Ryan Gosling, Sad Keanu, others for examples)
 - b. Option 2: Get a hashtag trending on twitter
 - c. Option 3: Make a viral video
 9. *Final reflection memo to instructor: 50 points*

**** I reserve the right to QUIZ you on any text, at anytime. Failure of a quiz will deduct 10 points from your overall grade. Passing the quiz **will not** add points to your grade.*

Writing Evaluation Policies and Procedures:

1. Each writing exercise will be evaluated and assessed using the *UNF Writes Self-Talk Rubrics*. I will give you scores for each rubric and a grade for each assignment. I will review the rubrics in class, but it is YOUR responsibility to review the rubrics before handing in the assignments. If you would like more feedback, above and beyond the rubric scores and grade, you will be responsible for making an appointment to see me to discuss your assignment.
 - a. Rules for appointments:
 - i. **I will not make** appointments to discuss grades prior to 24 hours after you have received your evaluated assignment. After 24 hours have elapsed, you are welcome to contact me for an appointment. I will not answer an email sent before such time.
 - ii. When you arrive for your conference, bring in a printed copy of the assignment details, a printed copy of your assignment, a printed copy of the assignment rubrics, and finally, specific questions about your assignment and the rubric scores. I will not negotiate your grade with you. I will only review grades when



you have made a convincing argument that the grade you received does not align to the assessment and evaluation standards.

- b. Grading scale: My philosophy about grading corresponds to a workplace metaphor. You receive a “C” for doing what you are asked to do, just as more than likely you get to keep your job if you are competent. You do not get raises and promotions for being competent. In my class, you receive As and Bs for going above and beyond what the course *requires* you to do.

To that end, while your grade will be informed by the rubric scores you receive, it will also be based on the following criteria:

- i. An “A” paper/assignment has likely received 4s on a majority of rubrics, with no 2s, 1s, or 0s on any rubric. An “A” also demonstrates, in a measurable way, a sophisticated understanding of the assignment beyond mere competence. For example, an “A” would demonstrate (with tone, structure, and/or diction) an understanding about the complex rhetorical situation at play with such immediate and public communication.
- ii. A “B” paper/assignment has likely received 3s and 4s on a majority of rubrics, with no 2s, 1s, or 0s on any rubric. A “B” also demonstrates, in a measurable way, an advanced understanding of the assignment beyond mere competence. For example, a “B” would not simply answer the assignment instructions but would demonstrate that the student is beginning to understand what the ramifications may be for the assignment, rather than simple communication of facts/figures/ideas.
- iii. A “C” paper/assignment has likely received 2s and 3s on a majority of rubrics, with no 1s or 0s on any rubric. A “C” assignment competently and completely answers the instructions provided but does not demonstrate anything besides a minimal understanding of the ramifications or significance of the assignment’s rhetorical situation.
- iv. A “D” paper/assignment addresses completely, or in large part, the assignment instructions. A “D” has likely received 2s and 1s on the rubrics. **A 1 on any two rubrics will automatically result in a D.**
- v. A “F” paper/assignment has not addressed the assignment instructions in some major way. It is incomplete or it has not followed formatting, content, and/or other minimum requirements as stated in the assignment instructions. A “F” may also result from a 1 on more than two rubrics or a 0 on any rubric.

Course Policies: For Department of English Common Course Policies, please see the file titled “Common Course Policies” in the BB Course Information tab.

- a. Email policy: I receive many emails and I will answer yours as soon as I can, but do not expect a response before 24-48 hours have passed, excluding weekends. I will not answer student inquiries between 5pm Friday and 9am Monday.
- b. Actively participate in the writing workshops. This means coming to class with your texts, completing your assignments, and interacting with your classmates, including sharing your written work and working collaboratively with them on assigned projects.
- c. Word process all course work and save all your work to CD or a portable drive besides the hard drive of your computer.
- d. Print out any articles assigned and bring them to class when due.



- e. **Absence Policy:** You are allowed 2 absences during the course of this course. We will have days where you will be given in class time to complete your research. Your third absence will result in a letter grade deduction; your fourth absence will result in a two letter grade deduction; your fifth absence will result in a three letter grade deduction. If you miss 20% or more of your class time, per the Department of English course policies, you will automatically fail the course. If you are in danger of failing due to absence, I recommend that you withdraw from the course. I will not assign incompletes, so if you have a medical or personal situation that causes you to miss more than 6 classes then you should drop the class.
- f. **Plagiarism:** You will submit each writing assignment to Blackboard, which will use *SafeAssign* to check for plagiarism. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail the assignment and I reserve the right to fail you for the entire course. The Department of English requires that I alert the department chair to all instances of plagiarism. If the plagiarism is found to be egregious enough, you may receive an unforgivable “F” for ENC 3930, which means you cannot take it again to eliminate the F. The “F” will remain on your record forever.

Plagiarism is defined in your UNF Student Handbook. You are responsible for reading the definition, but plagiarism can include the following circumstances:

- i. Copying language and/or ideas from other sources without properly citing the source.
 - ii. Working with another student on a paper, outside of an assignment that requires collaboration, and turning in the same or similar assignments.
 - iii. Buying a paper and submitting it as your own.
 - iv. Multiple submissions of the same assignment, i.e., submitting the same paper from a one course to another, different course.
- g. **Classroom Behavior:** I warn you ahead of time that you may encounter conversations that you feel uncomfortable with or offended by. I only ask for civil discourse in my courses. I do not require agreement, nor do I expect capitulation. You are as entitled to your opinion as your classmates are to theirs. I do require, however, evidence and support for observations and/or arguments. My version of the education process, and yes I note that this is my version, involves setting aside opinion in favor of evidenced and reflected reasoning. Opinions often are emotionally driven, whereas discourse should be logically and ethically driven. If you feel that you do not want to encounter such conversations, I encourage you to drop the course. I will not have a conversation six weeks into the term about how you may feel or think about a conversation that you find offensive, nor will I have this discussion with your parents.
 - h. **Texting/Cell Phone:** Please put your phone on silent or vibrate during class. If you need to take a call, please walk out of the classroom. I do not allow texting in my class. If I catch you texting, I will count it as an absence. I will not stop you, nor will I tell you. I will just count you as gone from my class that period.
 - i. I will return evaluated work to you no later than 2 weeks from the turn in date. All grades are subject to my interpretation of the rubrics, but also to the quality of work that goes beyond the rubrics. I will meet with you before you hand in an assignment and at your request, I will comment on the first paragraph to page of the work, no more.

FERPA Policies: Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/policy.html>) guarantees a student and his/her parents a host of rights and privileges. The important policies for this classroom are as follows:

1. **I cannot, nor will I, discuss your grades with you via email. Email is a public document and cannot ensure privacy to the sender.**
2. **I cannot, nor will I, discuss your grades and/or progress with your parents or any third party unless and until you have signed a waiver of your FERPA rights with One Stop. I will require proof that the waiver has been signed before I discuss anything with your parents.**



3. **If you fail the course and are on financial aid, I am required by law to report the record of your attendance to the financial aid department.**

Note: Participation is not a weighed part of the assignment grades, but I reserve the right to increase or decrease your grade based on attendance, classroom discussion, classroom behavior, lateness, in-class assignments, and any other judgment that is informed by my authority and expertise.

Schedule of Classes (Tentative and Subject to Change)

Full Schedule Posted on Blackboard Course Site

Thursday January 5	Introduction, Syllabus, Fandom Discussion and Critical Discussion
Tuesday January 10	Diagnostic Test on Terms Read Lee's article on BB – Fandom and Fanfiction Choose fandom to study/participate
Thursday January 12	Read Chapters 1-2, Jenkins Read Introduction and Chapter 1, Barthes
Tuesday January 17	Bring in Summary of Simone Murray's article on BB – Utility of Fandom
Thursday January 19	Class Discussion – Fans, Property, SOPA Read SOPA article on BB
Tuesday January 24	First Fanwork/Critical Work due online The Public Sphere and the Affect Effect
Thursday January 26	The Politics of Tweeting, Tumbling, and Journaling
Tuesday January 31	In class work in computer lab
Thursday February 2	Fandom updates from class

Major Assignment Deadlines:

Sign up for Twitter, Tumblr, and LiveJournal with "avatar" name and forward to me by January 12. For the class, we will be using twitter with a hashtag of #ENC3930. I will give you my twitter, tumblr, and livejournal name on 1/12 as well.

Weekly Reflection Blog	Each Friday by Midnight
Diagnostic Summary #1	January 10 January 17
Approach Choice #1	February 9
Approach Choice #2	February 23
Approach Choice #3	March 8
Ethnography	April 10
Collaborate White Paper Contribution	March 29



Creative Work

Choice

Creative Posting

Marketing Analysis

March 1

March 22

April 17

Final Exam

April 24 (1-2:50)

Final Reflection

April 24