

Learning Outcomes

ENL 372 - Writing about Popular Culture fulfills the University Studies 4B Requirement. The goals of *Cluster 4: The Social World: Humanity and Society* of University Studies include the following:

- I. To introduce students to questions about human knowledge and the human condition, as well as the relationship of the individual to the broader world.
- II. To foster an understanding of the diversity within US society.
- III. To encourage a deeper understanding of one's place and role in US society.
- IV. To engage students in critical thinking about humanity and society.
- V. To foster awareness of global cultural perspectives.

After taking this course you will be able to:

- Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives; b) US social and cultural domains in relationship to other regions of the world; or c) the different facets of citizenship in the United States.
- Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
- Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society.
- Explain the development of popular culture and its varied sub-cultures in the US.
- Explain the social and cultural context and implications of popular cultural artifacts and practices.
- Recognize ethical issues in popular culture and evaluate the positions taken on these issues by various individuals and communities.
- Draw on the academic study of popular culture in order to evaluate perspectives on popular culture's role in our society.

Books/Readings

- Grazian, Walter. *Mix It Up: Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2nd Ed. 2017.
- All other readings will be available online in .pdf format

Assignments Overview

Assignment Expectations

This course covers a lot of material in a short amount of time. *It is important to note that in this class we will be covering the same amount of material as in a regular 14-week semester.* Because of the compressed time frame, you absolutely cannot afford to fall behind. If you miss even one day's worth of work, you will have difficulty catching up.

There will be a series of short-answer responses in which you will post your thoughts on the readings based on question prompts for each content area. There will also be participation requirements in which you post comments on other students' work. Assignments will be due roughly every few days.

Each written response will be evaluated on its overall quality based on how well you do the following:

- Consider the complexities and implications of the issue
- Organize, develop, and express your ideas about the issue
- Support your ideas with relevant citations, reasons, and examples
- Control the elements of standard written English
- Fulfill completely the directions as listed in the assignment and discussed in the course

Reading Expectations

You are expected to keep up with the assigned reading and to be prepared to discuss these readings with each other. This is not a course in which I dictate your learning. Your grade will directly reflect your efforts in engaging the course material and your fellow students. I have high expectations of your dedication, understanding, and ability to discuss material.

Writing Expectations

Written work is expected to be turned in on time, written with care and attention to detail, and written to the standards of written college-level English.

In other words, please do not dash off your assignments in the last possible minute. Do not post them in without spell checking or proofreading. If I cannot understand your writing, I cannot grade your work.

Participation Requirements

Discussion Boards

This class depends a great deal upon the discussion board conversations (threads). You are each required to post at least four times per content area (and occasionally more) to the discussion board about the readings, topics, films, other student's posts, and so forth. Your participation in this area is graded. I will be evaluating the substance and quality of your postings with each discussion activity you complete.

Ideas for Substantive Participation Include:

- Share an experience that is related to the discussion. Comment on other participants' experiences that are related to the course.
- Ask others questions about their ideas and experiences that are related to the course.
- Challenge a point that another participant made in a respectful manner. Offer a different perspective on an idea that is being discussed.
- Give insights gained from readings that were assigned for the week. If you need more information, ask the participants a question about the week's reading.
- Discuss a work issue that is related to the course or discussion and ask for feedback.
- Relate how you have applied what you have read, learned or discussed regarding the course to your personal and professional life.
- Share another resource such as Web links, books, etc. that you have used to answer other participants' questions or as you explore the topics of the course, (as it is a violation of copyright law to copy the actual page).

How to get to the Discussion Board?

1. In the left hand tool list, click on "Discussion Board" under Student Tools. You will end up at a page that shows you all the discussion boards. Often, I will embed a discussion board right in a lesson, so you will see it right where you are doing your work on a particular book.
2. Click on the discussion activity message you want to respond to. You will end up at an explanation of the current assignment/activity that is taking place.
3. When you are ready to post a response, click on the "Reply" button in my message. Doing this creates your message. Make sure you fill in a subject for your posting so we can distinguish between all the postings easily.
4. Once you have written your message, click on post. Make sure you said what you wanted to say before doing this—there's no turning back after you hit "post"!

Above all, remember that RESPECT is the key principle of any of our communication methods. There is no place in this classroom for flaming, trolls, disrespect, profanity, harassment, or intolerance of any kind. Violation of this principle will result in dismissal from the class.

Specific Assignments

Film responses:

- You will write a few short responses to films that will be available on the MyCourses site. Question prompts will be provided and your response will be assessed on how well you articulate a response to one of the prompts.

Reading responses:

- You will write a series of short responses to the readings from the book *Mix it Up*, as well as to various articles that will be posted to MyCourses. Question prompts will be provided, and these responses will aid you in your exams. More specifics about the readings responses will be included in the learning modules.

Points for each entry of the blog entry, film response, and reading response are awarded according to how well the contribution provides accurate and unique insights to the topic, and helps us to understand the overall content and depth of the topic:

5 = excellent, 4 = very good, 3 = good, 2 = satisfactory, 1 = not satisfactory,
0 = did not post

Responses to Classmates

- You will respond two times per learning module to your classmates' pop culture blog and/or film responses. Each response will be worth 2 points, for a total of four points per section.
- Responses to your classmates will be rated according to how well you do the following:
 - Adds value to the discussion and avoids simply repeating, agreeing with, or answering yes or no to peer's comments
 - Challenges comments or ideas in the class either from the readings, students, or the facilitator
 - Asks insightful questions
 - Exemplifies a point with real-life events, when possible
 - Makes comments that are relevant to the course content and furthering its objectives

Exams:

- In this online class, the only way that I can assess whether you've completed and comprehend the readings is through an exam. The exam will include material we've covered in the course including readings and films. Exams will be open book/readings/notebook. You should take notes as you are reading using the question prompts. The exams will be made up almost entirely from these question prompts. If you take notes as you read/watch, it will make the exams much, much easier!

Points Breakdown

Your final grade will be determined by your accumulation of points in the following areas:

Film responses	5 points each
Reading responses	5 points each
Response to classmates	2 points each (x2 per section)
Final Exam	40 points

Grading Scale

Grade	Percent
A	94%+
A-	90-93%
B+	88-89%
B	83-87%
B-	80-82%
C+	78-79%
C	73-77%
C-	70-72%
D+	68-69%
D	63-67%
D-	60-62%
F	<60%

Course Schedule

The course schedule can be accessed under the Course Information section on the MyCourses page.

Communication Policies

Email: The most important thing to keep in mind is that email in the course site is for personal and private issues only. For example, let's say you have to miss an assignment deadline because you had a family emergency. That information should be communicated to me via email, and we'll work out the next step. All other comments and ideas should be directed to the discussion board for the benefit of the entire class. For example, let's say you cannot find the .pdf readings for a content area. That question should be sent to the Q&A discussion board because other people might be having trouble as well. Either a fellow student can respond with a solution, or I can send one posting back addressing the issue. Make sense?

I check my course the course site and email throughout the day. My policy is that I will respond to email within 24 hours during the week. On the weekends, I'll respond within 48 hours. One warning: I tend not to check the course site late at night. So, if you email after about 5:00 p.m. you likely will not hear from me until the morning.

How often should students check into the course?

Because this is an online course, you should check into the course site every day, including weekends.

Late Assignment Policies

Assignments that are turned in later than 24 hours beyond the deadline are not accepted. Any late assignments will receive a deduction for lateness up to 50% of the value of the grade. Of course, if there is a documented medical or family emergency, you should contact me immediately to discuss the situation.

Plagiarism

In any situation, plagiarism is a serious offense and may result in a failing grade in this course up to expulsion from the university. Since work in this class requires the use of outside sources, and extensive use of the Internet, citation of those sources is mandatory. Every student in this class should understand the necessity of citing your sources in all academic work in order to avoid plagiarism. For a thorough explanation of plagiarism, see [Purdue University's online writing lab](#).

Students should be aware that suspect assignments (e.g., those without works cited pages, or with noticeable departures in style) will be submitted to [SafeAssign](#) by the instructor for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Dartmouth dedicated databases of assignments. These databases of assignments will be used solely for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism during the grading process during this term and in the future. Students must provide an electronic copy of their assignment to the instructor for submission to the service when plagiarism is suspected, in order to receive a grade on the assignment and to avoid possible sanctions.

For more information about plagiarism and cheating, or if you are at all unsure about the policies of this university, please see the [UMass, Dartmouth Student Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Academic Integrity

All UMass Dartmouth students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand required academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty.

A student found responsible of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the University. The procedure for responding to incidents of academic dishonesty may be found in Section III of this document. You may also refer to the Student Handbook for information about the judicial process.

A high standard of academic integrity promotes the pursuit of truth and learning and respect for the intellectual accomplishments of others. These are values that are fundamental to the mission of this University, values that are undermined by dishonesty.

Policies for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability, you may request accommodations to obtain equal access and to promote your learning in this class. Please contact the Office of Disabled Student Services to acquire the name of the campus representative to whom documentation should be submitted. After your eligibility for accommodations is determined, you will be given a letter which, when presented to instructors, will help me know best how to assist you. See the UMass Dartmouth [Center for Access and Success](#) page for more information.

Policies Regarding Incompletes

According to the university catalogue, an incomplete may be given only in **exceptional circumstances and at the instructor's discretion**. No incompletes will be give for any reason other than extreme medical emergencies or similar situations.

Technical Help

If you are in need of technical assistance the IT Service Desk is available to students.

Claire T. Carney Library, lower level 508.999.8884 (x8884)

or Email itstudentcenter@umassd.edu

- Sunday: 12:00pm-2am
- Monday thru Thursday: 7:30am-2am Friday: 7:30am-11pm
- Saturday: 9:30am-1pm

Students living in the Residence Halls may also contact the Residential Technology (ResTech) Support Center:

- Visit ResTech in Elmwood Hall, lower level
- Call the ResTech Help Line at 508.999.8040 (x8040)

Email ResTech help: ResTech@umassd.edu

ENL 372: Writing About Popular Culture Online
Course Schedule

Topic	Readings & Film	Assignments Due by Midnight
Introduction		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review syllabus 2. Review course schedule 3. Complete "Introduction" learning module 4. Self introduction 5. Choose pop culture blog topic
What is Popular Culture?	From .pdf folder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storey – Popular Culture From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 “The Straight Story” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "What is Popular Culture" learning module 2. Post "What is Popular Culture?" readings response 3. Post an introduction to your Blog
Politics	From .pdf folder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franklin, “Film, Media, and American Tales” From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 – “Friday Night Lights” • Chapter 3 – “Monsters Inc.” Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The US vs. John Lennon</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Politics" learning module 2. Post "Politics" readings response 3. Post “The US vs. John Lennon” film response 4. Blog Post #1
Censorship	From .pdf folder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ciple, “The Ratings System Built To Last” • Croteau & Hoynes, “Political Influence on Media” (p. 98-116 only) • Franklin, “Movies, Censorship & the Law” Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This Film is Not Yet Rated</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Censorship" learning module 2. Post "Censorship" readings response 3. Post “This Film is Not Yet Rated” film response 4. Comment on at least two other student’s “US vs. John Lennon” film responses
Disney	From .pdf folder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avila – “Pop Culture in the Age of White Flight” • Watts – “Walt Disney: Art and Politics in the American Century” From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 – “Risky Business” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Disney" learning module 2. Post "Disney" readings response 3. Comment on at least two students’ "This Film is Not Yet Rated" film responses 4. Blog Post #2

Race I	<p>From .pdf folder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chan – “The Construction of Black Male Identity in Black Action Films of the Nineties” • Gates Jr – “Blood Brothers” • Kitwana – “Young dont give a fuck and black” • Nadell – “Boyz n the hood a colonial analysis” <p>Film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Boyz N The Hood</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Race I" learning module 2. Post "Race I" readings response 3. Post “Boyz N The Hood” film response 4. Comment on at least two students’ "Disney" reading responses
Race II	<p>From .pdf folder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the Right Thing reviews • Rose – “Fear of a Black Planet” • Hess – “Dynamite Hack Covers NWA” <p>From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 – “Bright Lights Big City” • Chapter 7 – “Rules of the Game” <p>Film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do the Right Thing</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Race II" learning module 2. Post "Race II" readings response 3. Post “Do the Right Thing” film response 4. Comments on at least two students’ “Boyz N The Hood” film responses 5. Blog Post #3
Media	<p>From .pdf folder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herman and Chomsky, “Manufacturing Consent” <p>From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 – “The Searchers” • Chapter 10 – “Strange Days” <p>Film</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Control Room</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Media" learning module 2. Post "Media" readings response 3. Post “Control Room” film response 4. Comment on at least two students' "Do the Right Thing" film responses
Gender	<p>From .pdf folder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sellnow - Feminist Perspective • Erinrich & Hess, “Beatlemania” • Berlatsky, “Miley Cyrus Racist Twerking” • Berlatsky, “Miley Cyrus Racist Twerking II” • Freeman, “Miley Cyrus twerking was cultural appropriation at its worst” • Penny - The Miley Cyrus Complex - An Ontology of Slut-Shaming” <p>From Grazian, <i>Mix It Up</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 – “Scenes From a Mall” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete "Gender" learning module 2. Post "Gender” readings response 3. Comment on at least two students' "Control Room” film responses 4. Blog post #4
Final Exam		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete exam by midnight 2. Comment on at least two students’ “Gender” reading responses