



Instructor: Katie Morrissey

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00 – 5:00 pm and by appointment.

Course Description

Historical and contemporary, chick-lit and chick flicks, vampires and Prada... This class is about love, desire, happy endings and guilty pleasures. Over the course of the semester we will explore representations of relationships across popular culture: in literature, film, and television. If genre is a space where we work through (and rework) different cultural norms, what tensions do genres of romance reveal regarding gender, relationships, and sexuality? What social conflicts do these stories seek to mediate? How do they represent men and women, desire, and partnership? Finally, how are romance narratives constructed for different audiences across different media forms? This course will take up these questions by examining what romance looks like in print, in film, on the television screen and, most importantly, by taking "bad romances" very seriously.

There are no prerequisites for this course and you are therefore not expected to have any prior knowledge of media studies. You are, however, expected to treat the material as a legitimate object of study. We will begin with the premise that literature, film, television, and digital media stories about falling in love offer much more than "entertainment" and that, accordingly, studying these forms is a serious undertaking requiring rigor and diligence.

Course Readings

The majority of our readings will be uploaded to the D2L course site (<http://d2l.um.edu>). You are free to save the articles and read them offline, print your own hard copies, or read them online. Readings are typically posted *at minimum* a week in advance of class. If, for any reason, you ever need a reading in advance of that time and it isn't posted, please let me know.

In addition to these readings, you will need to purchase the following books:

- *The Flame and the Flower* by Kathleen Woodiwiss (1972, ISBN: 0380005255, \$7.99)
- *Hot Target* by Suzanne Brockmann (2004, ISBN: 0345456955, \$7.99)

These two books are available at the UWM Bookstore. They are also widely available used, online, in bookstores and in public libraries. You do not need to purchase the exact version listed above.

Course Expectations and Requirements

Final Grades for the course will be determined using the following scale:

Attendance & Participation	20%
Reading Responses	25%
Midterm	25%
Final	30%

Also: Extra Credit Opportunities Available

Attendance & Participation (20%)

Attending class regularly and participating in discussions are vital to your success in this class. It is important that you come prepared for class and ready to share your ideas and insights. If you are regularly unprepared for discussion and habitually miss assignments and screenings this will seriously impact your grade.

This class relies heavily on the active participation and presence of all students. **Missing more than six classes will result in an automatic failure in the class.** I do not differentiate between "excused" or "unexcused" absences, so class should not be skipped except for an emergency or illness. In addition, if you arrive more than ten minutes late or leave early without my permission, you will receive a full absence. If you have a health/life emergency, contact me as soon as you can about the situation and stay in communication with me as we work through the situation.

If you miss a class:

- You are still responsible for turning in your work on time. (If you cannot attend, assignments should be emailed to me.)
- You are responsible for speaking with your classmates to collect any documents, notes or news from that day. You are also expected to come prepared to the next class and to make up any missed screenings on your own time.

D2L Reading Responses (25%)

For each set of class readings you will be required to post a response on D2L. The prompts for these responses will be posted in the discussion forums on D2L. I will often build our discussion around your posts, so please come ready to talk about what you have posted online.

Response posts are generally expected to be *at minimum* a solid paragraph in length. You will often find yourself writing more than a paragraph. Strong responses will work with the words of the author directly (i.e. using quotes) and use specific examples from the stories we read/watch in class (i.e. pointing to specific scenes/moments as evidence).

On a practical level, the purpose of the weekly response is to demonstrate that you have completed the week's work and to help you prepare for class discussion. More importantly, the weekly response is designed to help you work through your own ideas, analysis, and questions regarding the week's materials, so that you can share them with the class.

Response posts are due on D2L by 9:00am Tuesdays/Thursdays (in the morning before class). You are able to miss a total of six responses without it impacting your grade. Be sure to keep an eye on your numbers and save these for times in the semester when you may need it.

Midterm and Final (50% Total)

The midterm will be a 3-4 page paper (20% of final grade). The final will be a slightly larger 5-7 page paper (30% of final grade). More extensive instructions will be given in class.

Extra Credit Opportunities (5-7 bonus points)

Several extra credit assignments will be offered in our class. Most of these will be assigned verbally during class. However, there is one long term extra credit assignment:

Screening Notes

Taking notes while screening films and watching television is an important habit to develop. It gives you a record of the things you noticed while watching, letting you see trends in your own thinking. It also gives you a useful archive to return to when writing your class papers and responses. To help you develop this practice I will provide a few quick items to look for each time we watch something in class. I will also often ask you about your notes as part of our class discussions.

Everyone takes notes in their own way and what you notice is up to you. However, I expect all students to make a good faith effort at taking notes each week. Generally, you are expected to have at least one full page of notes per film/tv show. Once you get in the habit of it, you may find that you're writing down more and more each time. That's great!

If you keep all your notes and turn them in at the end of the semester I will give you extra credit points for taking notes regularly.

Course Screenings

As this is a media studies course, most weeks you'll be viewing a film or television program to accompany the readings. Course screenings are held during class time and attendance is expected. If you miss a screening it is counted as an absence and you must make up the screening on your own time. You should be able to find all the films and television programs we screen in class in the UWM Media Library, at your local public library, or with your preferred movie rental source. If, for any reason, you cannot find the screening on your own, you are responsible for contacting me and so that I can help you make arrangements to screen it.

Content Warning

During this semester we will be discussing different subjects, watching films, and reading texts that may represent beliefs and life experiences that are different than your own. In particular, as a class investigating romance genres, we will regularly discuss representations of gender, relationships, sexuality, and desire. The readings and screenings for this course contain adult material, including nudity, violence, harsh language, drug use, sexual violence, and sexual content that ranges from suggestive to explicit.

Read the course calendar carefully and if you have any reservations, for whatever reason, about watching, reading, or discussing any of this content, please contact me during the first week of class.

P.S.

Remember that the schedule is subject to some change, as is this syllabus. Updates will be posted on D2L.

Course Schedule

(Updated 4/26/13)

Week One

Tuesday 1/22

Introduction to the Course

Thursday 1/24

Discussion: What is genre and how do we study it? What does it mean to study popular culture? What does it mean to study romance across media? What are some of the cultural issues/tensions that romantic stories help us explore?

Required Reading:

- Douglas Kellner, "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and Media Culture" (Gender, Race and Class in Media, 9-19)
- Pamela Regis, "Eight Essential Elements of Romance" (A Natural History of the Romance Novel, 27-39)
- Joan Hollows, "Reading Romance Fiction" (Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture, 68-87)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 1/24

Week Two

Tuesday 1/29

Required Reading: *The Flame and the Flower* (Chapters 1-4)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 1/29

Thursday 1/31

Required Reading: *The Flame and the Flower* (Chapters 5-7)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 1/31

Week Three

Tuesday 2/05

Required Reading: *The Flame and the Flower* (Chapters 8-10)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/05

Thursday 2/07

Required Reading: *Hot Target* (Chapters 1-9)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/07

Week Four

Tuesday 2/12

Required Reading: *Hot Target* (Chapters 10-19)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/12

Thursday 2/14

Required Reading: *Hot Target* (Chapters 20-29)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/14

Week Five

Tuesday 2/19

Screening: Frank Capra, *It Happened One Night* (1934, 1:45)

Required Reading:

- Richard Maltby, "It Happened One Night: The Recreation of the Patriarch" (*Frank Capra*, pg. 130-163)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/19

Thursday 2/21

Screening cont.: Frank Capra, *It Happened One Night* (1934, 1:45)

Required Reading:

- Reread Maltby pages 144-157.

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/21

Week Six

Tuesday 2/26

Screening: Douglas Sirk, *All that Heaven Allows* (1955, 1:29)

Required Reading:

- Robin Wood, "Ideology, Genre, Auteur" (Genre Reader III, 60-73)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/26

Thursday 2/28

Screening cont.: Douglas Sirk, *All that Heaven Allows* (1955, 1:29)

Optional Reading:

- Brandon French, "Oppression In Sheep's Clothing: All That Heaven Allows" (On the Verge of Revolt, 92-103)
This reading is optional. If you're struggling with the Wood article and/or the film, you may find this article helpful.

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 2/28

Week Seven

Tuesday 3/05

Screening: *Annie Hall* (1977, 1:33)

Required Reading:

- James MacDowell, "Happy Endings and True Love" Parts 1- 3
(Alternate Takes, Part 1: <http://www.alternatetakes.co.uk/?2005.9.24>,
Part 2: <http://www.alternatetakes.co.uk/?2005.9.28>,
Part 3: <http://www.alternatetakes.co.uk/?2005.10.32>)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 3/05

Thursday 3/07

Screening cont.: *Annie Hall* (1977, 1:33)

Required Reading: None

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 3/07

Week Eight

Tuesday 3/12

Screening: *Working Girl* (1988, 1:45)

Required Reading:

- J. Emmett Winn, "Moralizing Upward Mobility" (Southern Communication Journal, v66n1, 40-49)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 3/12

Thursday 3/14

Screening cont.: *Working Girl* (1988, 1:45)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 3/14

Week Nine

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS 3/19 + 3/21

Week Ten

Tuesday 3/26

Screening: *Mississippi Masala* (1992, 1:58)

Required Reading:

- Anjali Ram, "Immigrant Inscriptions: Redefining Race and Gender in Mississippi Masala" (Mediated Women, 355)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 3/26

Thursday 3/28**

Screening: *Mississippi Masala* (1992, 1:18)

Assignment Due: TBA

****Instead of meeting in face-to-face on 3/28, this class will be held as an online discussion. More detailed instructions will be given out in class.**

Week Eleven

Tuesday 4/02

Screening: *Basic Instinct* (1992, 2:03)

Required Reading:

- Reichet & Melcher, "Film Noir, Feminism, and the Femme Fatale: The Hyper-Sexed Reality of Basic Instinct" (Mediated Women, 287)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/02

Thursday 4/04

Screening: *Basic Instinct* (1992, 2:03)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/04

Midterm Due – Sunday 4/07, 11:59pm in D2L Dropbox

Week Twelve

Tuesday 4/09

Screening: *Sex and the City* (TV Episodes, Clips from film)

Required Reading:

- Deborah Phillips, "Shopping for Men: The Single Woman Narrative" (Women: A cultural review, vol. 11 no. 3, 238-251)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/09

Thursday 4/11

Screening: *Sex and the City* (TV Episodes, Clips from film)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/11

Week Thirteen

Tuesday 4/16

Screening: Daytime soap clips and selections from primetime TV series

(Tentatively: *Grey's Anatomy*, *General Hospital*, *Lost*)

Required Reading:

- Jason Mittell, "Television Genres: Soap Operas" (Television and American Culture, pg. 240 – 244)
- John Fiske, "Gendered Television: Femininity" (Gender, Race and Class in Media, pg. 469-475)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/16

Thursday 4/18

Screening: Daytime soap clips and selections from primetime TV series

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/18

Week Fourteen

~~Tuesday 4/23~~ **Thursday 4/25**

Screening: *Queer As Folk* and *The L Word*

Required Reading:

- Candace Moore, "Having it All Ways: The Tourist, the Traveler, and the Local in *The L Word*" (*Cinema Journal*, 46, Number 4, Summer 2007, pp. 3-22)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/25

~~Thursday 4/25~~ **Tuesday 4/30**

Screening: *Queer As Folk* and *The L Word*

Required Reading:

- Sean Smith "Fan Swapping: Gay. Straight. Up Late" (*Newsweek*, 6/23/2003, Vol. 141 Issue 25, p65)
- Norah Underwood, "Queer as Mainstream: Returning for season two, *Queer as Folk* has a strong heterosexual following" (*Maclean's* 1/21/2003, 42-44)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 4/30

Week Fifteen

~~Tuesday 4/30~~ **Thursday 5/02**

Screening: *True Blood* (and possibly some *Twilight*)

Required Reading:

- Ananya Mukherjea, "My Vampire Boyfriend: Postfeminism, "Perfect" Masculinity, and the Contemporary Appeal of Paranormal Romance" (*Studies in Popular Culture*, 33.2 Spring 2011, pg.1-20)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 5/2

~~Thursday 5/02~~ **Tuesday 5/07**

Screening: *True Blood* (and possibly some *Twilight*)

Assignment Due: D2L Post by 9am 5/02

Extra Credit Assignment Due: Screening notes collected in class or via email Tuesday, 5/07. (All paper copies will be returned to you on the last day of class.)

Week Sixteen

~~Tuesday 5/07~~ **Thursday 5/09**

Discussion: Reality Television Sampler & General Romance Discussion

Required Reading: NONE

Assignment Due: NONE

Final Paper due Saturday 5/18, 11:59pm in D2L Dropbox.

UWM Syllabus Addendum:
General Education Requirement

This course meets the criteria for General Education Requirement Humanities credit at UWM by addressing “questions, issues and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context; ... induc[ing] an organic study of letters and knowledge; [and providing] literary, aesthetic and intellectual experiences which enrich and enlighten human life,” as specified in UWM Faculty Document No. 1382. The course uses humanistic means of inquiry, including critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, judgment and expression of ideas, and organizing, analyzing and using creatively substantial bodies of knowledge drawn from both primary and secondary sources. In addition to addressing other GER Humanities criteria, the course introduces substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural and literary knowledge to illuminate human events in their complexities and varieties, and enhances appreciation of literary and other arts by thoughtful, systematic analyses of language and artifacts such as novels, stories and films.

UWM seeks Essential Learning Outcomes throughout the undergraduate curriculum in four key areas: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; Intellectual and Practical Skills; Personal and Social Responsibility; and Integrative Learning. GER courses in particular contribute to these learning outcomes. Student work in GER courses is assessed individually for course-specific outcomes and goals, and holistically as part of departmental self-assessment of learning outcomes throughout the major.

Grading and Assessment

In Film Studies 212, students will demonstrate learning outcomes in “Knowledge of Human Cultures” and in “Intellectual and Practical Skills”: by engagement with key questions in film and other cultural artifacts, and by producing written film analysis that reflects thoughtful, informed engagement with source material and standards of evidence and argumentation in humanistic disciplines. This outcome will be assessed through review of papers written in the course, a requirement of all English GER courses, via the rubric which appears on the following page.

GER Course Assessment

All GER courses in the Department require significant student writing, including papers of varying length. The Department samples GER courses in each semester, including primarily papers from Film Studies 212, evaluating them on a holistic scale, according to the following rubric:

1. Work does not meet disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of film or cultural artifacts. Work does not meet expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose. Work does not show student awareness of conventions for analysis and expression.
2. Work shows some awareness of conventions for analysis and expression but may contain distracting errors. Work meets some disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of film or cultural artifacts, but inconsistent in doing so. Work meets some expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose, but is inconsistent in doing so.
3. Work meets most or all expectations for analysis and interpretation, argues from evidence, and is written clearly and without significant mechanical errors, showing student awareness and achievement the learning outcomes for the course.

Numeric scores are used to generate snapshots of how well GER courses meet the department’s stated learning outcomes and what, if anything, needs to be altered when the course is next offered.

Grading Rubric for GER Classes

	Content	Organization	Mechanics & Editing	Other
A	Highly original. Clear thesis and argument. No factual or logical inaccuracies. Minimal summary; uses evidence, not opinion; represents secondary sources accurately.	Well-organized, even at paragraph level. Reader led through a logical sequence; paper stays on topic.	Accurate use of citation conventions. Virtually no mechanical or formatting errors.	Precise word choices; vivid, fresh language. Avoids wordiness. Informal language only when clearly appropriate. Establishes ethos strongly through knowledge of subject. Entertains, educates, and makes reader want to know more.
B	Less original; may have minor factual errors. May use secondary sources uncritically or with mild inaccuracy.	Well-organized, but structure sometimes disjointed. Goes off-topic on occasion.	Some awkwardly worded passages. Some errors, but not enough to distract the reader.	Language sometime too general or less precise than the A writing. Enough errors to suggest the paper needs more polish and thought.
C	Relies more on summary than original interpretation or argument. Restates common or familiar arguments or interpretations uncritically. Secondary sources do not clearly contribute to or support the argument, or may be presented inaccurately.	Basically well organized, though individual paragraphs may be disunified or misplaced. Logical and apparent plan overall.	More frequent awkwardness, with distracting errors, although meaning is clear. Citations improperly formatted or absent.	Language is competent but wordy, general, imprecise, or trite.
D	No original contribution; restatement or misstatement of the ideas of others. Doesn't interpret, but just repeats or reports.	Poor organization; reader has little sense of a plan even though a thesis or main point is recognizable.	Some sentences may be so confused that their meaning does not clearly emerge.	Words may be imprecise, incorrect, trite, or vague. In general, however, the paper is understandable.
F	Lacks clear thesis or point.	Language muddled and unclear in several spots.	Highly distracting mechanical errors.	Shows little care or attention to detail on the part of the author.

UWM Syllabus Addendum:
Important Policy Links¹

1. *Students with disabilities.* Notice to these students should appear prominently in the syllabus so that special accommodations are provided in a timely manner.
<http://www4.uwm.edu/sac/SACltr.pdf>
2. *Religious observances.* Accommodations for absences due to religious observance should be noted. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>
3. *Students called to active military duty.* Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty should be noted.
Students: http://www4.uwm.edu/current_students/military_call_up.cfm
Employees: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S40.htm>
(Editorially Revised, 3/25/09)
4. *Incompletes.* A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work.
<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf>
5. *Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment).* Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.
<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S47.pdf>
6. *Academic misconduct.* Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm
7. *Complaint procedures.* Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm>
8. *Grade appeal procedures.* A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm>
9. *Other* The final exam requirement, the final exam date requirement, etc.
<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm>

¹ Supplement to UWM FACULTY DOCUMENT NO. 1895, October 21, 1993; Revised March 16, 2006; Revised January 24, 2008; Editorially Revised, 8/26/11.

UWM Syllabus Addendum:
Credit Hours

The university has asked departments to break down for students how much time they will spend working on various aspects of their classes.

As the UW System assumes “that study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours” (UWS ACPS 4), a 3-credit course such as this one will require a minimum of 144 (3 x 48) hours of your time. You may find it necessary to spend additional time on a course; the numbers below only indicate that the course will not require any less of your time.

If this is a **traditional, or face-to-face** course, you will spend *a minimum* of

- 37.5 hours in the classroom
- 75 hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- 31.5 hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

If this is an **online** course, you will spend *a minimum* of

- 37.5 hours reviewing instructional materials prepared by your instructor and placed online
- 75 hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- 31.5 hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

If this is a **hybrid** course, you will spend *a minimum* of

- 18.75 hours in the classroom
- 18.75 hours reviewing instructional materials prepared by your instructor and placed online
- 75 hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- 31.5 hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

Notes

- The breakdown above is for a standard 15-week semester. In a 16-week semester, the numbers breakdown above changes as follows. Traditional: 40 hours in classroom, 80 for preparation, 24 for papers and exams; online: 40 hours of online instruction, 80 for preparation, 24 for papers and exams; hybrid: 20 hours in classroom, 20 for online instruction, 80 hours for preparation, 24 for papers and exams. Again, these are minimums.
- UWM Credit Hour Policy, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Faculty Document No. 2838, can be found at https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/2838_Credit_Hour_Policy.pdf.
- UWS ACPS 4, the University Of Wisconsin System Policy On Academic Year Definition And Assorted Derivatives, can be found at <http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acps/acps4.pdf>.