

English/Social Justice 5215 WA: Fan and Media Studies

Course Location: RB 3023

Class Times: Monday 2:30-5:30

To our Student: Should you require information or documents from our office in another format, please let us know. We are happy to help you. Contact your instructor or our Department of English Administrative Assistant.

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Instructor Information

- Instructor: Dr. Monica Flegel
- Office: RB 3042
- Telephone: 343-8285
- Email: mflegel@lakeheadu.ca
- Office Hours: TBA

Course Description/Overview

This course will focus on fan texts and fan cultures. We will discuss the following topics: aca-fandom and ethical research on fans and fan texts; producer/consumer relations in the new digital landscape; the politics of fandom; and the mainstreaming of fandom and its consequences.

Course Objectives and/or Learner Outcomes

Outline the specific topics and information covered by the courses and/or what knowledge and skills students will have acquired by the time they have completed the course. Adapt the departmental learner outcomes (listed below) as appropriate:

- read texts of all kinds critically, and assess their rhetorical, ideological and aesthetic strategies
- analyze online communities and participatory culture from an informed, ethical perspective
- write well (grammatically correct, clear, effective prose) and communicate ideas effectively in a variety of forms (essay, podcast, video, blog, etc.)
- use library and appropriate online resources to research a topic and use what they discover to illuminate a text/online subculture
- think independently and critically about the issues raised throughout the course
- analyse texts and communities from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
- research a topic and present findings to a class of advanced English students
- lead class discussion effectively

Course Resources

Required Course Text

- Binder with readings available in Grad Lounge RB 3032 & BB 0029D

Course Website(s)

- [Desire2Learn \(or myCourseLink\)](https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home)¹

¹ <https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home>

Course Schedule

January: Media Fandom and Fan Theory

- 6 **Lecture:** Mass culture, sub-culture, and participatory culture
- 13 **Fan Studies Beginnings:** Jenson, Joli, “Fandom as Pathology”; Jenkins, Henry, “Textual Poachers”
- 20 **Toxic Fandom:** Wilson, Katie, “Red Pillers, Sad Puppies, and Gamergaters”; Whiteman, Natasha, “What if they’re Bastards?”
- 27 **Aca-fandom and Ethics:** Christofari & Guitton, “Aca-fans and fan communities: An operative framework”; Ruth Deller – “Ethics in Fan Studies Research”

February : Fandom and Politics

- 3 **Hierarchies:** Fiske, John, “The Cultural Economy of Fandom”; Hess, Amanda; “How Fan Culture is Swallowing Democracy” (D2L)
- 10 **Identity:** Mel Standfill, “The Unbearable Whiteness of Fandom”; Wanzo, Rebecca, “African American Acafandom and Other Strangers”: **Community Analysis**
- 17 **Reading Week**
- 24 **Gender and Sexuality:** Kustritz, Ann, “Slashing the Romance Narrative”; Ng, Eve, “Between Text, Paratext, and Context: Queerbaiting and the Contemporary Media Landscape” (D2L)

March: Fan Texts and Practices

- 2** **Authorship:** Derek Johnson – “Participation is Magic: Collaboration, Authorial Legitimacy and the Audience Function”; Tushnet, Rebecca. “Copyright Law, Fan Practices, and the Rights of the Author”: **Project Proposal / Annotated Bibliography**
- 9** **Archiving:** Geraghty, Lincoln, “It’s Not All About the Music” (D2L); Lothian, Alexis, “An Archive of One’s Own” (D2L)
- 16** **Fanvids:** Middleton, Kim, “Remix Video and the Crisis of the Humanities” (D2L); Freund, Katharina, “‘Becoming a part of the storytelling’: Fan Vidding Practices and Histories”
- 23** **Fan criticism:** Hills, Matt. “Media Academics *as* Media Audiences”; Lindsay Ellis, “*The Hobbit*” (3 parts) (D2L)

30 Conference!

Assignments and Evaluation

Table of Assignments

Assignment	Due date	Value	Length
Seminar / Lead the class	Throughout term	25%	Approx. 1 hour
Community Analysis	February 10 th	15%	500-650 words
Essay Proposal / Annotated Bibliography	March 2 nd	15%	500-650 words
Participation	Throughout term	20%	N/A
Major Project	April 3 rd	25%	2000-4500 words

Assignment Policies

- All assignments are individual assignments and cannot be completed collaboratively, unless cleared first with the professor.
- Assignments are due before class on the dates indicated. Please submit to the appropriate D2L folder, in doc.x format.
- If you require an extension, you must ask for one **BEFORE** the due date.
- Unless you ask for (and receive) an extension, late essays will be penalized by 2% per day (to a maximum of 20%)
- All assignments must be in MLA format, double spaced, with 1" margins, and in 12-point font.
- No work will be accepted after April 2nd, 2020.
- Exceptions to these policies are allowed only with a doctor's note or other appropriate documentation.

Descriptions of Assignments

1. Community analysis (15%): Each student will choose an online community relevant to the topic s/he has chosen for their final project. You will provide a short report on this community, summarizing, insofar as it is possible, the demographics of the community, the culture of the community, and/or its internal rules and structures. Remember: you must not refer to or cite any information that is friendslocked or otherwise restricted. Instead, use this information to provide an informed discussion of what ethical research of this community might look like.

2. Project Proposal (15%): This assignment comprises two connected assignments:

- a 2-3 page outline that presents a topic and research question, a working thesis, and a working outline of the project you plan to write for your final assignment, making sure to situate your project within an existing creative/critical framework.
- An annotated bibliography, composed of your primary and secondary sources, in MLA 8th edition style. Three of your secondary source entries must be followed by a paragraph summary of the source.

3. Seminar presentation (30%): 1 hour

In a concise, organized, carefully-constructed presentation, you will lead the class in a discussion of your chosen topic. Note: be careful when incorporating media, as this will cut into your time. You will be responsible for choosing the fan text or fan community to apply that day's theory/ theme (e.g. "toxic fandom"), so you will need to circulate any texts you want the class to review a week prior to your presentation. You must hand in whatever script/questions you use for your presentation to aid in its evaluation.

4. Final Project (25%):

You have a choice of either a) a presentation (approx. 2000-2500 words / 15-20 minutes in length) or b) a longer 4500-word submission. These can be either scholarly, creative, or a mix of both. Conference presentations will be evaluated based on content, presentation, and answering questions. Whichever form you choose, the same principles of good writing will apply: focus, coherence, flow, clear expression, and relevance to the course material.

5. Class participation (20%):

Because this is a seminar, students are expected to engage in class material. This includes reviewing all the texts prior to class, participating in class discussion, and asking / answering questions during seminar presentations. A student will have 2% deducted from her/his final grade for each missed class. Exceptions will be made only in the case of illness backed up with a medical note, and in such circumstances additional work may be required to make up for the missed class participation.

Marking Standards

All assignments will be marked in accordance with the English Department Marking Standards².

If any of your assignments have different marking standards, they should also be indicated here.

Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules

Include the section on plagiarism and academic misconduct from the English Department Marking Guidelines. You should also be clear on any specific course rules or policies regarding collaboration on graded academic exercises.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties. See the [Code of Student Behaviour](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-conduct/academic-integrity/node/51239)³.

² <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english/marking-standards>

³ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-conduct/academic-integrity/node/51239>

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour - Academic Integrity⁴.
- **Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code⁵. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS)⁶ and register as early as possible.

This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage⁷ and/or the Desire2Learn or My CourseLink¹ site for the course.

⁴ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures>

⁵ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>

⁶ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>

⁷ <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english>