

# **“When Women Were Dragons”: A Study of Femininity and Change in a Post-Modern World**

ID2930 (#27071) – Honors (Un)common Reads  
Wednesday, 5:10-6:00 (Period 10) | Fall 2025 | Location: Little 117

## **Contact Information**

**Faculty Instructor:** Melina Jimenez, [mpjimenez@ufl.edu](mailto:mpjimenez@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** TBD

**Peer Instructor:** Adelyn Richgels, [richgelsa@ufl.edu](mailto:richgelsa@ufl.edu)

## **Course Overview**

Welcome in! We're Adelyn and Melina and absolutely thrilled to invite you to a wonderful world filled with magic and dragons. We're so excited to get started!

Throughout this course, we will be reading and discussing *When Women Were Dragons*, a magical realism story by award-winning author Kelly Barnhill. A lot of our discussions will center around the themes of *choice*, *power*, and *femininity*: admittedly, three really broad themes, but we'll use the chapters and additional readings to dive deeper into them and engage with the course content.

As we progress through the course, we'll have a mixture of hands-on and discussion-focused activities. We encourage you to truly put the time in to engage with the material, your classmates, and us, and to reflect upon the themes and readings each week. We want you to get the most out of this hour a week you spend with us, and that requires participation and effort. If you ever feel you are struggling and cannot put in the necessary time, don't be afraid to speak with us – we're here to support you however you need. You don't owe us any personal information about your mental or physical health, but informing us that you need support (whether from us or some external source) can help us support you in the best ways possible.

## **Course Goals**

Within this course, you will:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the content and thematical elements of the core novel and all supporting text and works through discussion and analysis;
- Connect the events and stories told within the novel to both historical and modern-day events and ways of life;
- And create visual projects and storytelling aids that showcase and highlight understanding of the themes and ideals present in the novel and supporting works.

## **Required Texts**

*When Women Were Dragons*, Kelly Barnhill

You can purchase the paperback at [the local bookstore The Lynx](#). Use coupon code UNCMN2025 to receive 15% off. It can also be purchased, rented, or borrowed as an audiobook, paperback, or hardback. We're good with whatever you choose, as long as you have some method of reading! Let us know if you need financial support or help in finding a copy.

Other materials will be provided on the course Canvas page.

## Materials and Supply Fees

None

## Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. We're happy to support you in this process – let us know if anything else comes up during the semester as well.

## Course Breakdown

Assignment Type	Weight
In-class participation	55%
Three pre-class discussion posts	10% each = 30%
Final Group Project	15%

## Reading, Attendance, and Class Expectations

Each week, you will read between about 30-40 pages of the book and additional readings. Refer to the guiding questions on a discussion page. Attendance and participation are required for class on Wednesdays, since this is a discussion-based class. A typical class consists of a small group discussion and participation will be evaluated based on how you interact and engage with your classmates and the course material. Some weeks will have a smaller in-class project/post, while others will be solely discussion based. Because of this, doing the reading each week is crucial to your participation in class. See the breakdown of the schedule later in this syllabus for further details.

There will be three longer pre-class discussion posts centered around longer discussions of the themes. As we get nearer to these dates, more detail will be provided.

Your final group project will be a creative assignment due near the end of the semester. You will submit a proposal two weeks in advance of the deadline, and we will approve your topic or work with you to refine it. More details will follow as we get nearer to the deadline!

## Make-up Policy

If you miss a class or an assignment, just let us know why – no specifics, we just want to check in! You will be able to submit your responses to the class discussion questions or your small project later – we prefer late participation rather than none! If you have any concerns or extenuating circumstances, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Grading Scale

<b>Percentage</b>	100-94	93-90	89-87	86-84	83-80	79-77	76-74	73-70	69-67	66-64	63-61	60-0
<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

## Honors Grading Requirement

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards your Honors Completion Requirements. Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Completion module to earn Honors Completion credit. If you have questions about this, please consult the Honors Program information under Campus Resources.

## University Student Honor Code

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors in this class.

## Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Students can complete evaluations in three ways: The email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

## Course Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. [Click here to read the In-Class Recording policy](#).

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## Course Schedule

Wk	Dates	Readings, in-class projects, and pre-class discussion posts
1	8/20/2025	<b>No class</b>
2	8/27/2025	<b>First day of class:</b> Syllabus & Getting to know you <b>Introduction post:</b> Due Sun Aug 31, Responses due Tues, Sept 2
3	9/3/2025	<b>Read Ch 1 – 3</b>
4	9/10/2025	<b>Read Ch 4 - 9</b> <b>Discussion Post 1 on world-building:</b> Due Tues, Sept 9
5	9/17/2025	<b>Read Ch 10 – 15</b> <b>Additional reading:</b> “Women Whose Lives are Food, Men Whose Lives are Money” by Joyce Carol Oates
6	9/24/2025	<b>Read Ch 16 – “The Pinsley Mill ...”</b> <b>Additional reading:</b> <a href="#">“Tithonus” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson</a> <b>Discussion Post 2 on analyzing poems:</b> Tues, Sept 23
7	10/1/2025	<b>Read ch 20 – “At this point...”</b>  <b>In class project:</b> comparisons of sisters and mother-daughter pairs
8	10/8/2025	<b>Read Ch 22 - 24</b> <b>Additional reading:</b> <a href="#">“The Summer Day” by Mary Oliver</a>
9	10/15/2025	<b>Read Ch 25 - Could they come back?</b> <b>Additional Reading:</b> <a href="#">“Viola in Midwinter” by Marie-Helene Bertino</a>
10	10/22/2025	<b>Read Ch 29 - 33</b> <b>Discussion Post 3 on depictions of dragons and themes:</b> Due Tues, Oct 21  <b>In class project:</b> draw a dragon from the book or one of someone in your life
11	10/29/2025	<b>Read Ch 34 – Gentlemen</b>  <b>In-class project:</b> Be prepared to defend arguments posed by characters
12	11/5/2025	<b>Read Ch 37 - 40</b> <b>Final Project Proposal with group partners:</b> Due Tues, Nov 5
13	11/12/2025	<b>Read Ch 41 - Finish book, including Acknowledgments</b> <b>Additional viewing:</b> <a href="#">Christine Blasey Ford Senate Hearing</a>  Update Final Project Proposal
14	11/19/2025	<b>Final project prep with group partners</b>
15	11/27/2025	<b>Thanksgiving Break! Enjoy 😊</b>
16	12/3/2025	Present 2-3 minute spoken elevator pitch for your project to convince your classmates to watch / read yours for their responses  <b>Last day of class! No final exams for this course.</b>

## Campus Resources

### Health and Wellness

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Located at *Reid Hall*, (352) 392-8565, Email: [DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu)

**U Matter, We Care**: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

**Counseling and Wellness Center**: The CWC provides short-term counseling, group, and couples' therapy as well as consultation, crisis services, outreach, referrals, self-care, and more. *Peabody Hall 4<sup>th</sup> floor or 3190 Radio Road*, 352-392-1575

**UF Student Health Care Center**: The SHCC provides a variety of health care services. Located at *2140 Stadium Rd*, (352) 392 - 1161

**UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center**: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at *1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608*

**GatorWell Health Promotion Services**: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

**University Police Department**: 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

### Campus Connections

**GatorConnect**: UF has over 900 student organizations that you can join

### Academic Resources

**UF Honors Program**: Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email [advisor@honors.ufl.edu](mailto:advisor@honors.ufl.edu); Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/ufhonorsadvising>; Located at *201 Walker Hall*, 352-392-1519

**UF Computing Help Desk**: The UF Computing Help Desk provides phone, email, and walk-in direct consulting including for E-learning (Canvas) technical support 352-392-4357 or e-mail to [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

**Career Connections Center**: The C3 team helps students gain career experience, write resumes, find clothing for interviews and more. *Reitz Union First floor*, 352- 392-1601

**Library Support**: The UF libraries provide various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. They love questions!

**Academic Resources**: The Teaching Center provides free tutoring services for courses within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. They also offer supplementary instruction and general study strategy workshops. *Online*, 352-392-2010 or 352-392-6420

**Writing Studio**: The Writing Studio provides free one-on-one consultations with specific papers or writing generally. *302 Tigert Hall*, 352- 846-1138

### Complaints

**Academic Complaints through the Office of the Ombuds**: The purpose of the Ombuds is to assist students within the university community in solving problems and conflicts. The Ombuds serves as an advocate for fairness for University of Florida students.

**Enrollment Management Complaints**: These are limited to Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions grievances.