Introduction:

Militant demonstrators, industrial saboteurs, terrorists, pamphleteers, gender activists, controversial artists, and revolutionaries all constitute politically and culturally subversive identities that have existed throughout history. The course will explore the content and form of subversive politics. We will focus on a variety of political and social movements, including protest groups, culture and subcultures, “terrorist” organizations, and political parties. The class will study sources from history, film, sociology, and music to develop a deep understanding of what subversion has meant in the 20th and 21st centuries. In particular, we will question whether subversion is exclusively a negative expression of political, cultural, and social oppression and alienation, or whether it offers constructive forms of critique and resistance.

UWS Goals:

The University Writing Seminar introduces you to the power of writing as a means of communication and as a process of thinking and understanding. You will formulate meaningful arguments, support them with observations and evidence, and convey them clearly and persuasively. You will gain the tools to be a successful and confident writer in any discipline and become an active participant in critical conversations across the University and beyond. Most importantly, these skills will prepare you to engage as an informed citizen in a global society.

Learning how to write is the most important aspect of this course, but I also hope to equip you with a valuable lens through which to interrogate culture, society, and history for your future academic endeavors.

UWS Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- Understand writing as a recursive process of thinking and communication
- Articulate elements of effective writing and integrate them into their own work
- Participate in critical conversations by responding to openings, problems or contradictions in existing scholarship
- Assess their own and others’ writing with respect to audience and purpose
• Generate original questions and pursue independent research
• Identify and evaluate sources and use them responsibly

**MOST COURSE TEXTS WILL BE PDFs ON LATTE, BUT YOU SHOULD ALSO PICK UP:**

Valerie Solanas, *S.C.U.M. Manifesto* (any edition—there is one in the bookstore, but you can also find an electronic copy)

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*, translated by Richard Pevear (*THIS EDITION IS IMPORTANT*)

**Course Requirements**

**Essay 1:** The close reading essay. In this assignment you will formulate an argument based on the documentary film *If a Tree Falls*.

**Essay 2:** The lens essay. For this essay, you will analyze *American Hardcore* through the lens of a theoretical essay by Theodore Adorno or Antonio Gramsci and make a claim about how definitions of culture and subversion in the essays help you understand *American Hardcore*.

**Essay 3:** The researched argument. For this assignment you will choose a subversive movement case study and make an argument about the form and effects of the movement.

**Portfolio:** At the end of the semester you will assemble all of your work (including pre-draft assignments, rough drafts, final drafts, and peer review sheets) in an electronic folder and email it to me, together with a letter describing how your understanding of yourself as a writer has changed over the course of the semester. **This means that you need to save electronically all your writing from the semester.**

**Drafting:**

Four steps lead up to the final draft of each essay:

• **Pre-draft assignments.** Each essay will be preceded by two or three pre-draft assignments—short pieces of writing designed to help you develop ideas. These assignments will receive either a check or a note telling you to redo the work and will count as part of your overall grade. You can re-submit any work until the end of the unit.

• **First drafts.** You are required to turn in a first draft of each paper. These drafts are important opportunities for you to receive feedback from me and your classmates in peer review. I do not expect these drafts to be polished, but I do expect them to be complete—otherwise we cannot give you useful advice.

• **Peer Review.** After the first draft of each paper is due you will form a group with two of your classmates and read each other’s drafts. In class you will give your partners feedback. I will collect your peer review letters and they will count as part of your grade. These activities increase your sense of audience awareness and give you an opportunity to reflect on the concepts we have discussed in class.
• **Conferences.** Each student will have three twenty-minute conferences with me over the course of the semester, one to discuss each first draft. Attendance is required; missing a conference is the equivalent of missing a class. Sign-up sheets will be distributed in class.

**Class participation:** Your consistent participation in class sessions constitutes a significant portion of your grade and is the most critical component of a successful course. Class participation includes:

• Your prompt, prepared, alert, consistent attendance
• The completion of reading assignments by the dates listed in the syllabus
• Your thoughtful contributions to class discussions

**Writing Center:** The University Writing Center, located on Goldfarb 232 on the Goldfarb mezzanine of the library, provides free one-on-one help with your essays. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this service. Writing Center tutors are well trained and will work with you in 45 minute sessions that you can schedule online: (http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/writing/writingcenter/index.html). **Students who take advantage of this service will receive a form during their tutorial that will entitle them to a 24-hour extension on either the draft or revision of their essay.**

Essays will be due electronically by 11:55 PM on the following day. Only one extension is allowed per essay.

**Grades**

Close reading essay: 20%
Lens essay: 25%
Researched argument: 35%
Class participation (includes research presentations): 10%
Portfolio (includes Latte posts, pre-drafts, and peer reviews): 10%

**Formatting**

Please submit all essays to latte in Word (no pdfs!) and to your peers in a google doc. Essays must use 1-inch margins and 12-point Times New Roman font. Do not enlarge your punctuation—I can tell. Essays must have a title and be double-spaced. Pre-drafts that are submitted in hard copy must be typed and stapled. For every written piece of work please have your name, date, course name and my name in the upper left hand corner.

**Late Work, Extensions and Minimum Page Requirements**

I am usually willing to offer extensions, given legitimate reasons. **If you are afraid your work will not be completed in time, please contact me more than 24 hours before the due date and arrange for an extension.** Otherwise, late work, including first submissions, will lead to a reduction of third of a grade per day (B+ → B → B- and so on) on the final paper. If a paper is due electronically at 11:55 PM and you submit it at 11:56 PM, it is late. In addition, final papers that do not meet minimum page requirements will receive a third of a grade reduction for each page that the paper falls short.
Attendance
Attending class is essential for you to get the most from this course; in-class discussions are critical for your learning. Therefore, please do not miss class unless you have an emergency. If you miss more than three classes, each additional absence will result in the lowering of your final grade for the course by 1/3 of a grade. Please contact me in the event of an emergency that prevents you from attending class. **Seven or more absences will result in a failing grade.**

Laptops
To prevent distractions, laptops are not allowed in this class unless you require special accommodations.

Academic Honesty
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually in section 5 of the *Rights and Responsibilities* handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards. Potential sanctions include failure on the essay, failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask.

Accommodations
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in class, please see me right away.

Email Etiquette
When you write to me or another professor or professional, please include a greeting (“Dear Professor Rourke”), full sentences, proper punctuation, and your name at the bottom of the email. **Always** include a brief note with an attachment. This is really good practice for when you enter the world beyond college.

*Four-Credit Course*

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

*Unit 1: Read Between the Lines*

**Week 1**

*Before Class: Read Dostoyevsky, Notes from Underground Pt. 1*
Wed. Aug 28  In-Class: Introductions, Syllabus.
Homework: Dostoyevsky, Notes From Underground Pt. 2
Question: Is the Underground Man a subversive character? What is the nature of his subversion? In what way is he or is he not subversive?

Wed. Sep 4  
In-Class: Close reading Dostoyevsky, making an argument.
Homework: Closely watch the film If a Tree Falls
Write: What is the underground man’s sickness? Do you empathize with him, or pity him? Do you see any parallels between the underground man and Daniel McGowan? Posts are due on Latte 11:55 PM on Tuesday, September 3. This is not a graded assignment, but will count towards participation.

Week 2

Mon. Sep 9  
In-Class: Make your argument: writing a thesis statement
Come prepared to class with an idea of what you want to write about relating to the film. Read the Close Reading prompt and make sure that your thesis answers the question. You are meant to say something about the film, NOT Dostoyevsky.
Homework: Skim through the ELF FAQ on Latte.

Wed. Sep 11  
In Class: close read of a passages from the FAQ or part of If a Tree Falls “Motivating Moves,” (Harvey) (H), motive exercise
Homework: “You Don’t Need a Weatherman to know Which Way the Wind Blows.” Write a thesis statement and motive and post them on Latte.

Week 3

Mon. Sep 16  
In-Class: Using the Weatherman to create some structure, thesis peer review, grading rubric.
Homework: Create an outline for your Close Reading paper. Due on latte by 11:55 PM.

Wed. Sep 18  
In-Class: Outlines, Titles, passive voice, peer review
Homework: Write your first draft essay and cover letter. Submit it on Friday by 11:55 PM to a google doc.

Fri. Sep 20  
Draft of Essay #1 due with cover letter on latte by 11:55 PM to me and to your peers in a MS Word Doc.
You will be assigned a peer reviewer. Read their paper, provide feedback, particularly their thesis, motive, and the general flow of the paper.
These peer-review documents will be due Sunday by 11:55 PM via email. CC me on the email to confirm.
SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET WITH ME AT OFFICE HOURS ON MONDAY

Mon. Sep 23  In-Class: Peer review update, Introductions, What is a Lens?
Homework: Stokely Carmichael, “Speech at University of California, Berkeley”

***CONFERENCES ON MONDAY (9/23) AND WEDNESDAY (9/25)***

Unit 2: Frameworks for Understanding: The Lens Essay

Week 4

Wed. Sep 25  In-Class: Carmichael, Audience, Conclusions, Lens Assignment Sequence
Homework: Watch American Hardcore

Tues. Oct 1  Revision of Essay #1 with cover letter due to me by EMAIL by 11:55 PM

Thur. Oct 3
In-Class: Adorno, Horkheimer, Gramsci
Homework: Read Adorno and Horkheimer “The Culture Industry” and Gramsci passage from The Prison Notebooks.
Write: pre-draft 2.1 reverse outlines (bring a hard copy to class)

Week 5

Mon. Oct 7  In-Class: Is American Hardcore a subversive movement? Using Adorno and Gramsci to answer.
Write: Pre-draft 2.2 mini-lens analysis (bring a hard copy to class)
Homework: Read the S.C.U.M Manifestro by Valerie Solanas

Tues. Oct 15  (BRANDEIS MONDAY: MONDAY SCHEDULE)
In-Class: The S.C.U.M. Manifesto
Homework: A one-paragraph reaction to the SCUM manifesto. How does it conform to our definitions of “subversion.” How does it diverge? Due on Latte by 11:55 PM

Week 6
**Unit 3: Research Essay**

*Wed. Oct 16*  
NO CLASS

*Fri. Oct 18*  
Pre-draft 2.3 (Outline) due by 11:55 PM via email

*Sun. Oct 20*  
Draft of Essay 2 with cover letter due on latte by 11:55 PM. I will assign peer reviewers. Please print out their paper, actively review it, and bring it to class on Wednesday.

*Wed. Oct 23*  
Read: Your peers’ essays  
Write: Peer review letters and comments on their essays due by **11:55 PM on Tuesday, Oct 22**. Email your peers their letters and essays and also post the peer letters to latte  
In-Class: Peer review, problem sentences

***CONFERENCES ON THURSDAY (10/24) AND FRIDAY (10/25)***

*Mon. Oct 28*  
In-Class: Readings, Introduction to research essay, “Scholarly Sources” (H) plagiarism  
Read: Passages from the Black Mask/ UAWMF (Online). Read as much as you can and be prepared to talk about it.

*Week 7*

*Wed. Oct 30*  
In-Class: Introduction to research essay, “Scholarly Sources” (H) plagiarism  
Read: None  
Write: Revision of Essay #2 with cover letter due via EMAIL by **11:55 PM**

*Mon. Nov 4*  
In-Class: ATTEND LIBRARY SESSION WITH ALEX WILLETT  
Read: Download Zotero and related links (at the bottom of our latte page)  
Write: None

*Tues. Nov 5*  
Attend: @ 5:30 PM in Sherman Hall: “Fiddling while Rome Burns: Understanding Humankind’s Inadequate Response to the World’s Climate Threat”  
Write: Imagine that you are Daniel from If a Tree Falls. Write a reflection on the event—what did they miss? What quotes stuck out to you? Do you think they are pushing humanity enough? How does our understanding of Subversion help us think critically about conventional conversations of climate change?

**Unit 3: Research Essay**
**Week 8**

*Wed. Nov 6*  
In-Class: Library session: meet at front desk of library at 8:55 AM  
Read: Complete library tutorial on Latte before class  
Write: None

*Mon. Nov 11*  
In-Class: Source functions across the disciplines, presentation handout  
Read: None  
Write: **Pre-Draft 3.1 (Research paper plan due in class).**  
**SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH ME FOR MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY (11/8 and 11/20)**

**Week 9**

*Wed. Nov 13*  
In-Class: MEET WITH ALEX WILLET FOR SECOND SESSION  
Read: None  
Write: Find 2 books at Brandeis and bring in the call numbers

*Fri. Nov 15*  
**Pre-draft 3.2 due to latte by 11:55 PM**

***CONFERENCES ON MONDAY (11/18) AND Wednesday (11/20)***

**Week 10**

*Mon. Nov 18*  
In-Class: Modeling a research essay  
Read: *Write Now* research essay TBA  
Write: A one paragraph response to the *Write Now* essay summarizing the argument and explaining how the author uses sources. Cite at least one piece of evidence. Responses are due by 11:55 PM on Sunday, November 17.

*Wed. Nov 20*  
In-Class: Short presentations on research papers, portfolio instructions,  
Read: None  
Write: None

*Fri. Nov 22*  
**Pre-draft 3.3 due by 11:55 PM to latte (outline)**

*Mon. Nov 25*  
In-Class: Discussion of anxieties, worries, and reflections on the research
paper.
Write: PROOF READ PAPERS!

Week 11

Mon. Dec 2  In-Class: Preparing for presentations, Subversion?
Write: Draft of Essay #3 due with cover letter due on latte by 11:55 PM. I will assign peer reviewers. Please print their essay out, actively review it, and bring it to class on Monday December 9th.

Week 12

Wed. Dec 4  In-Class: Short presentations on research papers
Write: Peer review letters and comments on their essays due by 11:55 PM on Tues., Nov 27. Email your peers their letters and essays and also post the peer letters to latte

Mon. Dec 9  In-Class: Short presentations on research papers
Write: None

Post Term

Wed. Dec 11  Portfolios due to me by email by 11:55 PM (must be in one document), including: portfolio cover letter, final research cover letter and final research essay. See portfolio handout for order of assignments.