

**COURSE TITLE:** BOYS IN TROUBLE: Turnaround Strategies For Educators

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 30

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 2.00 credits]

**OREGON PDUs:** 30

**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 30

**INSTRUCTOR:** Lori Gibson  
loribgibson@hotmail.com

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

More and more boys are struggling. They are academically disengaged. They are facing social challenges alone. And they are struggling to imagine what their place will be in the wider world once they leave high school (if they even make it that far in school). It is estimated that only 35% of new college enrollees will be boys. Rosalind Wiseman, best selling author, wrote *Masterminds and Wingmen*, about boys, believes educators are in a prime position to reverse some of these trends.

In this course we will look at the troubling symptoms many of our boys are showing, and then we will pull back the curtain on their inner lives. We will look at the cultural expectations they are facing (both from adults, and each other), and we will look at how they think and feel about their lives. As we cultivate a new understanding of boys and their “Boy World,” new strategies for helping our boys feel more connected, more hopeful, and more interested in their academic futures will become apparent as well. This independent study course is appropriate for Pre-K through grade 12 teachers, administrators, support staff and parents.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

1. Studied the impact that the unwritten rules of boy world (“Act Like a Man Box”- ALMB) has on the social and emotional development of boys.
2. Identified the four (4) social groups that boys fall into and how popularity and status influence these hierarchies.
3. Examined the eight (8) different roles that boys can play within their individual groups and how the ALMB impacts the behavior of the boys within their groups.
4. Learned the 12 guidelines for a caring adult to follow to strengthen communication with boys.
5. Understood the five (5) reasons boys lie and the four (4) “reconnaissance strategies” that caring adults can employ to encourage boys to become honest men.
6. Considered how the ALMB dictates the expression of anger and how the strategy of S.E.A.L. can work to restore dignity to both parties in a dispute.
7. How the ALMB influences friendships and conflicts and how to support boys who are struggling in their relationships with peers.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%

3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

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**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalent on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

**ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Required text, *Masterminds and Wingmen*, is available used from Amazon.

None. All reading is online.

**MATERIALS FEE**

Text, *Masterminds and Wingmen*, is approximately \$10 from Amazon.

**ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

**A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

**Assignment #1: Introduction**

Read *Chapter 1: It's Time To Enter Boy World* and write 250 – 500 words in which you:

- Briefly introduce yourself, your current work situation and why you chose this course.
- Address the issue of respect and why it is the key to a positive relationship with boys.

**Assignment #2: Why Doesn't Bat Man Ever Smile?**

Read *Chapter 2: Why Doesn't Bat Man Ever Smile?* Write 250 – 500 words including the following:

- Describe your reaction to the worrisome boy statistics and issues presented by the author.
- Briefly describe the elements of the "Act Like a Man Box" (ALMB).

**Assignment #3: Popularity & Groups.**

Read *Chapter 3: Popularity and Groups*. Write 500 – 750 words addressing the following:

- Identify and briefly describe the four (4) distinct groups in the social structure of boys.
- identify and briefly describe each of the eight (8) roles boys can take on within a group. Be sure to include what the boy gains and loses from taking on each different role.

**Assignment #4: Breaking Through the Wall.**

Read *Chapter 5: Breaking Through the Wall*. Write 250 – 500 words addressing the following:

- Identify and describe at least six (6) of the 12 guidelines that are presented that are designed to strengthen communication with boys.

#### **Assignment #5: Lying & Reconnaissance.**

Read **Chapter 6: Lying and Reconnaissance**. Write 500 – 750 words addressing the following:

- Identify and describe at least three (3) of the five (5) reasons that boys lie.
- Identify and describe at least two (2) of the four (4) “reconnaissance strategies” that are presented.

#### **Assignment #6: Rage Against the Machine.**

Read *Chapter 7: Rage Against the Machine*. Write 250 – 500 words addressing the following:

- Describe how the ALMB dictates how boys can express their anger
- Identify and briefly describe each of the S.E.A.L parts and strategy for handling anger with dignity.

### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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#### **Assignment #7: The Complexities of Communication**

In **Chapter 5** the author discussed the complexities of communication between adults and boys. One of the interventions she suggests is that parents support the role that other caring adults can play in their sons' lives. She refers to this role as an “Ally.” This fits exactly with the goal of this course, which is to know how to best support the boys that we teach. Write 500 – 750 words addressing the following:

- Identify and briefly describe the characteristics of an Ally and the role that s/he can play in a boy's life.
- Describe a scenario that includes an Ally (from your own experience if possible) and the positive effect that s/he had on a boy's emotional development. Be sure to reference content from the Chapter in your discussion.

#### **Assignment #8: ALMB Dictates**

In **Chapter 7** the author discussed how the ALMB dictates the expression of anger in boys (and men). The primary strategy that was described was a four (4) step approach called SEAL. In 500 -750 words address the following:

- Describe the intended outcomes of using the SEAL strategy when a boy is facing conflicts.
- If possible, teach the four (4) step process of SEAL to a group of students and summarize their response to the approach **OR** create a fictitious scenario of a conflict between a boy and someone (parent, friend, enemy, coach, etc.), and describe how the SEAL strategy could be used (detailing the four steps) to express his anger in a manner that is respectful to everyone involved.

#### **Assignment #9: Friendly Fire.**

Read **Chapter 11: Friendly Fire**. The author states, “...beyond the put-downs, yelling and laughing, boys' friendship dynamics are just as complex and nuanced as girls”. In 500 – 750 words include the following:

- Describe the difficulty for boys, (ex. influence of the ALMB, lack of skills), that can keep them from being able to communicate effectively, work through conflict and maintain close friendships.

- Identify and describe at least three (3) of the strategies discussed for supporting boys who are struggling in their relationships with peers.
- Reflect and discuss in detail the information you have acquired from this Chapter, as well as the impact that it will have on your interactions with students.

### Assignment #10: Lesson Plan

Complete one (1) of the following options:

#### Option A)

- Adapt a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 250-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](http://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library). (www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library)
- Sample Lesson Plan Template: [www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/](http://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/)
- Send your modified lesson and your commentary via email to your instructor.

OR

#### Option B)

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Adapt a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](https://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library). (https://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library)
- Write a 500+ word article concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.
- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog [What Works: Teaching at its Best](https://www.hol.edu/blog) prior to writing your article. (https://www.hol.edu/blog)
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to Renee Leon THI blog curator and media specialist. ([renee@hol.edu](mailto:renee@hol.edu))
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Submit your modified lesson along with your article via email to your instructor.

### Assignment #11: (500 Level ONLY)

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one** of the following:

#### Option A)

Interview another educator about the class you are taking. Focus on his/her perspective and thoughts on the topic of Boy World. To document completion of this assignment, include the following:

- The date of the conversation.
- The role of the person with whom you spoke (colleague, supervisor, friend, etc.)
- Why you chose this person.
- In a 500 -750 word summary highlighting key insights from your conversation.

Send to instructor: loribgibson@hotmail.com. Subject line to read 'Boys In Trouble #11-A'.

OR

#### Option B)

Interview a male student, a group of male students, or a parent of a male student with the purpose of discussing what Boy World is like for them. The purpose of this assignment is to listen to others' experiences with these issues in order to know how to better support students (and their parent). Please organize your interview around one or more of the following ideas (as appropriate):

- Describe what their experience has been in the social hierarchy of Boy World.
- Describe what their experience has been in handling conflicts in Boy World,
- Describe their reaction to the concept of the Act Like A Man Box (ALMB) and their experiences of how it influences (or does not influence), their social interactions.
- Discuss their suggestions for ways that educators can better support male students.
- Other content as you deem appropriate based on the student(s)/parent you are interviewing.

As evidence of assignment completion submit a 500- 750 word summary of your interview and reflections of the experience and how it will impact your work with anxious students and/or their parents.

Send to instructor: loribgibson@hotmail.com. Subject line to read 'Boys In Trouble #11-B'.

**OR**

**Option C)**

- Another assignment of your own design with prior approval from the instructor.

Send to instructor: loribgibson@hotmail.com. Subject line to read 'Boys In Trouble #11-C'

**C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #12: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

**SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
  2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
  3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
  4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
  5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?
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**INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Lori Gibson, M.A., E.S.A.**, is a dedicated school counselor with a wealth of experience in the field of education. She holds a Master's degree in counseling psychology from Gonzaga University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in both education and psychology from Whitworth University. With a career spanning 31 years, Lori has contributed her expertise to various educational institutions, including North Chicago High School in Illinois, Lake Washington School District and Spokane Public Schools, both in Washington state. For the past 21 years, Lori has been an instructor at The Heritage Institute, where she is deeply passionate about empowering fellow educators to excel in their noble work within schools. In today's evolving educational landscape Lori understands the shift on many fronts - including the mandates to integrate technology, embrace neurodiversity, foster social and emotional growth and dig deep to understand the neurological basis for challenging behaviors. Lori recognizes that our students, pre-K to 12th grade face an array of challenges, from learning, social and emotional gaps due to the ripples of the pandemic, family stressors, poverty, the impact of social media and entitlement issues, among others. She firmly believes that educators must be equipped with the latest research and practical strategies to address these multifaceted needs effectively. In her courses, Lori's primary aim is to provide educators with respectful and encouraging guidance to navigate these challenges. Her courses and workshops are designed to empower teachers and administrators with the knowledge and tools necessary to create a supportive and inclusive environment that prioritizes the well-being and development of every student so they can be about the business of learning!

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**BOYS IN TROUBLE: Turnaround Strategies For Educators**

**Gurian, M.** *The Purpose of Boys: Helping Our Sons Find Meaning, Significance and Direction in Their Lives.* Jossey-Bass. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010 This book is a wonderful resource for educators and parents. It discusses some of the reasons that boys are struggling. Gurian believes that boys need a significant sense of purpose and that it is the responsibility of families, coaches and mentors, along with the institutions of schools, churches and community groups to encourage boys to get back on track. There are many useful suggestions in this book to help educators become part of the solution to effectively support our boys.

**Hartley-Brewer, E.** *Raising Confident Boys: 100 Tips for Parents and Teachers.* Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press 2001. This is an easily accessible resource for parents and educators. The basis of this book is that boys need intentional emotional support from caring adults. It is full of 100 tips on a wide range of strategies that can be employed by educators to encourage confidence in male students.

**Reichert, M., & Hawley, R.** *Reaching Boys, Teaching Boys: Strategies That Work-and Why.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010. This book is the result of an international study of the kinds of teaching strategies that truly engage boys in their education. There are three overarching findings from "The Teaching Boys Project" (sponsored by the International Boys' School Coalition). They also found nine focus areas for best practices in engaging and educating boys. This is a must-read for every educator interested in making their classroom and school more responsive to the needs of boys!

**Pollack, W.** *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood.* New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1998. This book is a classic. It is based on research done by Pollack at Harvard Medical School and was a ground-breaking exploration of the emotional development of boys. The author postulates that it might be a man's world, but it is not a boy's world. He believes that our culture has created a harmful mandate, which he calls the "Boy Code," that determines what it means to be a boy. In most cases that means suppressing or covering up their emotions. It discusses the impact this dynamic has on boys and how it exists to their detriment.

**Sax, L.** *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know About the Emerging Science of Sex Differences.* New York, N.Y.: Random House, 2005. This is a controversial book as Dr. Sax is one of the leaders of the single-sex education movement. The author is a psychologist and a family physician. He discusses the biological differences between the genders and then applies those findings to how boys and girls learn, take risks, and many other important issues. It is an interesting read regardless which side of the single-sex education debate you find yourself on.

**Wiseman, R.** *Masterminds and Wingmen,* New York, N.Y.: Harmony Books, 2013. This is the course text and is a comprehensive look into the inner-lives of pre-teen and adolescent boys. It is a must read for everyone who has, works with, or is interested in reaching out to boys. It pulls back the curtain on what is really happening on the ground in boys' lives. What makes this book special is that the author worked with over 200 editors throughout the writing. These were boys (and a few girls) from every socio-economic status, type of school and from all over the United States.

**Wiseman, R.** *The Guide: Managing Jerks, Recruiting Wingmen, and Attracting Who You Want.* Ebook format RPW, Inc., 2013. This is the companion guide to the course text. It is written for adolescent boys and is a pared-down version of the original book. This is a good resource for students as it delves into the issues of social hierarchies, friendships, anger, jerks, parents, girls, problems with authority and more.