

English 341/553: Young Adult Literature

Instructor: Jeanie M. Reynolds
Office: HHRA 3106
Office Hours: by appointment

Email: jmreyno3@uncg.edu
Phone: 336.256.0486

Class Meeting Times:

W 5-7:50

MHRA 2209

Course Perspective:

This course focuses on the critical study and evaluation of the YA genre; examination of modes and themes found in the literature; strategies of effective reading; study of the relationship of the genre to children's literature and adult literature; discussion techniques for teachers.

It is my belief that this course is strengthened by the diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and backgrounds that students bring with them. It is my goal that the diverse learning needs of students be met in and out of class. I will conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I encourage your active participation in class discussions. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The conflict of ideas is encouraged and welcome. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is similarly welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. Please let me know if I can improve the effectiveness of this course for you or other students.

I will do my best to make this an enjoyable and worthwhile course for you, but you should know from the start that teaching—or at least teaching well—is hard work. There is no short cut or magic formula that will reduce the amount of time needed to do well in this course. It's the nature of the course, I'm afraid. To learn how to teach, you must be critical thinkers and present your thoughts in a manner that is understandable to a wide audience. In order to communicate effectively, you will have to practice the art of communication often and be prepared to receive feedback on each presentation and reflect on ways to improve your communication skills.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, the student will be:

1. familiar with an extensive body of literature for adolescents, the various genre, and the critical study of YA literature. Topics will include historical perspectives and current trends in literature, literature by and about women and minority groups, oral literature, and non-Western literature;
2. aware of current adolescent interests, including visual & audio stimuli & psychological development;
3. able to identify possible objectionable books & materials & prepare a rationale for either using or not using materials with students; aware of criteria for selection of print and non-print material;
4. acquainted with various theoretical lens by which to approach the study of YA literature;
5. acquainted with multi-media approaches to learning and to literature; familiar with new literature texts, and professional materials and organizations which will help them keep current in the future.

The course will also meet the following standards of state and national associations:

INTASC: available at www.dpi.state.nc.us/pbl/pblintasc.htm

NBPTS (Five Core Propositions): available at www.nbpts.org

ISTE: available at www.cnets.iste.org/teachstand.html

NCTE/IRA: available at www.ncte.org/standards/standards.shtml

NC Advanced Competencies: available at www.dpi.state.nc.us

Speaking Intensive Requirements:

In order to complete this course, the student will:

1. Demonstrate the ability to communicate course information clearly and concisely to a variety of audiences;
2. Be able to articulate a rationale for teaching various YA literature;
3. Demonstrate the ability to respond to questions “off the cuff” in a poised and articulate manner;
4. Demonstrate the ability to accept divergent views, manage conflict and use leadership behaviors;
5. Articulate constructive criticism of peers and reflect upon constructive criticism from peers in order to grow.

What You Will Need:

1. A **UNCG email account** with access to Blackboard (Moodle)
2. Articles that will be available on e-reserve
3. A Daybook (Mead composition notebook) and glue sticks

Texts:

Alexie, S. (2004). *The Lone Ranger and Tonto fistfight in heaven*. New York: Perennial.
Anderson, L. H. (2001). *Speak*. New York: Puffin.
Chbosky, S. (1999). *The perks of being a wallflower*. New York: Pocket Books.
Cisneros, S. (1991). *The house on Mango Street*. New York: Knopf Publishing Group.
Grimes, N. (2003). *Bronx masquerade*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books.
Hale, S. (2003). *The goose girl*. London: Bloomsbury Children’s Books.
Hesse, K. (1998). *Out of the dust*. New York: Scholastic.
Johnson, A. (2003). *The first part last*. New York: Simon Pulse.
Lee, H. (1960). *To kill a mockingbird*. New York: Warner Books.
Spinelli, J. (2002). *Stargirl*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

For week twelve, select and read **one** of the following Holocaust texts:

Bartoletti, S. C. (2005). *Hitler youth: Growing up in Hitler’s shadow*. New York: Scholastic.
Opdyke, I. G. (1999). *In my hands: Memories of a Holocaust rescuer*. New York: Anchor Books.
Spiegelman, A. (1986). *Maus: A survivor’s tale*. New York: Pantheon.
Spinelli, J. (2003). *Milkweed*. New York: Laurel Leaf.

Professionalism & Academic Integrity:

Teaching is a profession and as such establishes standards and expectations for its members. As in-service and pre-service teachers, we must hold ourselves to these standards. Such expectations include respect for self and others. Here are just a few of the ways we demonstrate respect:

- Be punctual to class (See below)
- Respect others even when you disagree with them
- Be a thoughtful and reflective practitioner
- Turn all cell phones and pagers off or to a silent mode before class begins.

Timeliness and Attendance:

This class is rooted in the idea that learning takes place in a community, so active attendance is required. I know life happens, therefore, you will be allowed ONE absence during this course, excused and unexcused. After two absences your grade will be affected, and after three absences, you will fail the course (each two tardies/early departure will equal one absence). If absent/late, you are responsible for acquiring work, assignments, handouts, etc. from that day. In short, be in class, be

prepared, and be on time. Finally, simply taking up space in the class is NOT enough—in order to receive full participation credit, you will need to participate in a meaningful way.

Papers Style Manual and Manuscript Requirements:

All written work (except in-class activities and 800 word posts) should be typed and reviewed for quality of content and mechanical correctness. For any written work requiring citations, students are expected to use the APA Style Manual or the MLA Style Manual. When posting PLEASE do not post a .docx document (this is Vista's default)—I cannot open it and it will be considered late.

Evaluation & Grading:

It is my hope that you will have opportunities to evaluate your own work and the work of others in the course. I will respond to assignments in what I believe is an appropriate manner, and I will ask you to respond to one another. I will provide detailed handouts for most assignments and grade according to the objectives and goals for both the content and the speaking intensive requirements.

I view grading as an individual and noncompetitive assessment of your performance and growth through the semester. I do assign credit or a grade for each assignment so that you will be able to assess your progress through this course. I encourage you to make an appointment with me to discuss specific assignments, concerns, or questions about your grade in this course.

Undergraduate & Graduate:

Speaking: 40%

Every student will participate in several speaking events: One informal presentation about an author, or a literary/theoretical/historical concept in YA literature; one in-class presentation of a lesson plan using YA literature; one read-aloud using a self-selected reading strategy for small groups; a podcast of a student-centered task to use with YA literature. Students will receive detailed instructions and rubrics for each task.

Writing: 40%

Our approach to writing is process-oriented. There will be regular shorter and informal writing assignments and two longer pieces, each with multiple rewrites. Each assignment needs to be typed, 12 point, double-spaced with 1" margins and handed in on time. Specific guidelines will be given in advance of each assignment, along with information regarding the features that are expected. First drafts are returned with extensive feedback (peer and instructor feedback) to help students revise their work. Revised essays can improve the final essay grade.

Class participation: 20%

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of active class participation. I expect you to have read each of the required texts **before** coming to class on the first day we are discussing that text. I expect you to contribute to class discussion by sharing your own ideas and by listening to the ideas of others.

Specific Assignments Undergrad/Graduate:

1. Book cards (20%)

In order to receive an "A" on the book card requirement for the course, you will need to read a total of at least 3,000 pages of books written for adolescents or likely to be read by adolescents (outside of required readings). Not only the quantity of pages read but also the quality of the book cards submitted will determine your grade.

2. Reading Memoir (20%)

At the beginning of the semester, to help us frame our discussion of adolescence, adolescents, and literature, you will examine your own in-school and out-of-school reading experiences, grades five through twelve. You will create an Origami Journal and write a 2-3 page paper focusing on and analyzing a particular moment in your reading development. One quarter of your grade will be in the form of a podcast.

3. Research project (20%)

To help explore and demonstrate your knowledge of subject matter in this course, you are asked to design your own research project. You may choose to explore a particular theory concerning adolescent literature; develop a unit plan around a selected author, theme, or genre; or examine the concept of identity through texts you have read on your own. You will be expected to demonstrate your research to the class. I will touch base with you throughout the semester to help you develop a project reflecting your individual interests and needs. You will need to prepare a brief presentation (10-15 minutes) to share your research with your colleagues.

4. Speaking Assessment (20%)

The speaking assessment will challenge you to draw connections among the adolescent literature you have read throughout the semester. It will extend concepts learned in class through reading, writing, and discussion. For this assessment, you will be asked to conduct an impromptu discussion (5-7minutes) on an adolescent issue utilizing the various texts you have read. The issue will be drawn at random and you will be graded not only on the content but also on the ways you speak and engage the class. You will then write a reflection regarding your presentation.

Graduate Only:

1. Clinical Case Study: During the course of the semester, you will interview and observe two teachers and two students from those teachers' classrooms.
2. You will be required to choose one professional text and present a book talk to the class.

Grades will be earned as follows:

93-100 points = A

85-92 points = B

77-84 points = C

70-76 points = D

69 points or below = F

For further policy regarding grades, see

<http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/Grading.html>

Late work and staples:

Late work will lose one letter grade for each day it is late (including weekends). I do not accept late posts to our Moodle. I would like to make this course as green as possible, so all work should be submitted via Moodle and all hand outs will be posted there. Please be sure that you DO NOT use Word 2007 when you upload files (you will know it's '07 if it has a .docx). I cannot read them and your work will be considered late. Also, and this is very important – **E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** Finally, please staple all of your work submitted as a hard-copy.

Disability Services:

If you have any sort of disability that could affect your performance in the class or for which you need accommodation, please contact me and/or the Office of Disability Services at 334-5440.