Course: ENGL 4/5295—Young Adult Literature
Day and Time: W, 5:30-8:00 p.m.
Location: PAF 110
Credit Hours: 3

From Primers to Problem Novels and Beyond: Young Adult Literature Grows Up

“Genius burns!”
—Jo March, Little Women

THE CONTACT INFORMATION
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THE COURSE
How the Course Fits into the English Program:
The course is required for the English Education major and for certification in Secondary Education; English Literature majors may also take the class to satisfy the Genre and Theory 1 or 2 (English Major Area C1 or C2) requirements. MAT students in English from the COE also take the course to fulfill that program’s requirements.

Section-Specific Course Description:
Each year the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) hosts its workshop concurrent with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) convention. This year promoters in Boston promise to honor fifty years of Great Books for adolescents. Attendees will experience “a celebration of the emergence of young adult literature—both fiction and non-fiction—as a driving historical, sociological, literary and contemporary force in today’s culture.” Sounds like a great time, no? But think about this: when is the last time that organizers of, say, a Virginia Woolf conference felt the need to defend her as a prominent figure in the canon of British literature? Do scholars in British literature center entire conferences on establishing a niche for their work so as
to claim cultural relevance? Perhaps at one time they did, but most view literary periods and genres in them as codified systems possessing implicit credibility.

Ethos is not always so generously bestowed upon the genre of Young Adult literature; thus, the need to define and defend the genre as a cultural boon continues. This class will take its cues from the theme of ALAN’s workshop, focusing on the history of the genre, the rise of contemporary Young Adult literature, and the target audience for these sorts of texts: adolescents who gorge themselves on words written expressly for them, transforming right before us into lifelong readers and thinkers.

We will analyze representative primary texts in prose, poetry, and film and explore secondary materials in order to expand our knowledge of important transitional periods in Young Adult literature. Finally, we will sometimes turn our attention to various teaching strategies, since most students in the course plan on teaching at some level. Such major class endeavors seek to enrich student understanding of the genre and highlight the ongoing scholarly conversation in the field.

Course Objectives:

- Students will develop an understanding of basic reading processes.
- Students will exhibit familiarity with a range of classic and contemporary Young Adult texts, many customarily taught in grades 7-12, and will participate in reading, reviewing, and critiquing such literature in a collaborative manner with peers and instructor.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of students’ abilities to learn from reading and the language arts and understanding of the ways in which novice readers process textual information.
- Students will demonstrate how to provide support to students at every stage of that process both by scaffolding specific reading skill exercises and creating accessible textual, contextual, and illustrative material for novice readers.
- Students will show an understanding of higher-order literacy, including how to build language development, strategies to advance analytical and concept development, and ways to teach both efferent and aesthetic reading.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the development of various types of moral reasoning skills through literature.
- Students will learn to select instructional strategies and develop lesson and unit plans that demonstrate a sincere effort to teach reading-learning strategies in a literature environment.
- Students will learn about the “Classics versus Moderns” debate in YALit studies and then work to devise methods that can bridge distances—perceived and real—between classic literature and Young Adult texts.
- Students will define the rights and responsibilities of teachers, parents, students, and other groups with respect to literature curriculum content and establish proficiency in writing rationales for texts that may be challenged.
- Students will demonstrate an awareness of ways to create a multicultural and gender-balanced curriculum.
- Students will advance personal-professional development through self-examination.
✓ Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well-supported analysis of related material.
✓ Students will demonstrate the command of academic English and the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

**THE WORK**

**Required Texts (in the order we will read them)**:

✓ John Bushman and Kaye Parks Haas, *Using Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom*
✓ Louisa May Alcott; Eds. Siobhan Kilfeather and Vinca Showalter, *Little Women*
✓ J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*
✓ Judy Blume, *Blubber*
✓ Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*
✓ Pat Mora, *My Own True Name*
✓ Ruta Sepetys, *Between Shades of Gray*
✓ Majid Majidi, *Children of Heaven*
✓ M.T. Anderson, *Feed*
✓ Ally Condie, *Matched*

*You may obtain your texts at the University bookstore, may purchase them from an online outlet, or may even borrow my text to Xerox and/or read before returning it in a reasonable time period. The library has copies of *Children of Heaven* on four-hour reserve. Some are available on Kindle or Nook. Whatever retailer you use to purchase these required readings, one aspect is constant: each is a required text, and you are expected to bring these texts and annotations to class for our spirited discussions—no exceptions.

**Major Assignments:** **

✓ Daily Driving Questions (10%)
✓ “On the Brink” Essay written on either *Little Women* or *The Catcher in the Rye* (15%)
✓ Take Home Mid-Term Examination (20%)
✓ Take Home Final Examination (25%)
✓ Final Project and Proposal: a three-page proposal and either a 10-12 page Pedagogy Project or a 10-12 page Scholarly Research Paper (25%)
✓ Engagement in all classroom activities, especially any collaborative assignments and class discussions related to primary and secondary materials (5%)

**MAT and MA students will complete a 15-18 page Final Project and will complete an Annotated Bibliography of eight sources. See me and/or the class resource page for helpful links related to crafting Annotated Bibliographies.**

**Details and Directions for Each Major Assignment:**

**Daily Driving Questions**

Beginning September 4th, students will participate in an assignment called Daily Driving Questions (DDQ’s). This assignment helps students begin to understand how to formulate complex questions for classroom discussion. The audience for this assignment is your classmates. The assignment requires that for each class period listed on the daily
syllabus below you craft two complex questions related to our assigned primary or secondary readings. Each question you create should not induce discussion of pure plot but should, instead, drive us towards reflective, analytical discussion.

Appropriate questions could lead us to analyze a character or concept in a new way (e.g. “How does the relationship between Archie and Obie or Archie and Emile evidence homoerotic tension in The Chocolate War? Or “How does Salinger’s reference to David Copperfield on the first page of The Catcher in the Rye set up a literary dialog with other Bildungsroman texts that came before it?”). Other questions could relate to our secondary materials (e.g. “Why do some believe that teaching classics is of the utmost importance for a “proper” education?” or “Should we save the classics for college, or should we introduce them during high school? Why or why not?”). You might also ask questions that would lead us to discuss ways to teach close reading skills or literary elements like metaphor, motif, theme, symbolism, allegory, etc.

Superlative DDQ’s will reflect your close reading and complex thinking about primary and secondary materials and will not simply rehash ideas but ask us to flesh out, expand upon, or even refute them. The best DDQ’s will not ask for simple yes or no answers or cut a wide swathe across a whole text. Instead, high-scoring questions will be open-ended to allow for reflection and discussion but will be anchored in the text. Thus, the best DDQ’s will evidence that you have read the material but, more importantly, that you have begun to think about ways in which the material fits in with critical course ideas, our course objectives, or even ongoing scholarly conversations in the field of Young Adult literature.

On the evenings for which you complete DDQ’s, be prepared to provide answers to your own and to others’ questions during our class discussion. I will collect the questions at the end of each class period, and I can accept no late questions or questions via e-mail. Students can expect to engage in this daily assignment often and will receive daily grades (✓+ [95]; ✓ [75], or ✓- [55]) for each pair of questions they turn in at the end of class. There are twelve DDQ’s in all. At the end of the semester, I will drop the lowest grade you earned on a DDQ.

I have provided exemplars of high-scoring DDQ’s on the class resource page for your reference.

“On the Brink” Essay
Two of our texts—Little Women and The Catcher in the Rye—illustrate the tradition of early YALit and represent the historical periods from which they come. Each book also works to challenge dominant cultural ideologies in place at the time of its publication. For this essay, students will create an argument focusing on how one of these texts exemplifies yet challenges the zeitgeist of its age. During class, we will use scholarly articles as well as contemporary reactions to each book. We will begin to explore how each book challenges the established traditions of literature for young adults and the cultural moment in which it is entrenched. On your own you will devise your own essay that presents an original claim with support from the text, at least one secondary critical source, and your own analysis. MLA documentation and formatting applies. Papers should be 4-5 pages in length.
Mid-Term and Final Examinations

Both examinations in our class are take-home tests comprised of one, three-four page essay and three, paragraph-long quotation analyses. In the essay portion of each examination, you will argue a point, support it with specific primary and secondary evidence from course texts, and expound upon how your evidence supports the argument. Students will choose one from three prompts. Students will also choose three from five quotations to analyze in paragraph-long answers. For both examinations, students must work independently and will have a week in which to work before submitting the final products. MLA format and documentation as well as current rules of grammar convention apply, and all work must be word-processed and delivered in hard copy on the due dates prescribed below.

Final Project and Proposal

There are two types of Final Projects in our class, designed to cater to students on both major tracks in English: either a Pedagogy Project, described below, or a paper containing an argument and robust analysis rooted in scholarly research. Both options require that you choose a single true YALit text.

The Pedagogy Project, the option required for all English Education majors and MAT students, is one that requires students to choose a true YALit text and justify its use in a specific classroom setting via narrative before crafting two days of detailed, procedural Lesson Plans that include reference to and hypothetical fulfillment of ELA Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. The paper is written in two parts: Part One—the Justification—and Part Two—the two days of Lesson Plans.

Students will turn in a three-page Project Proposal at the beginning of class on November 13, 2013. There are three goals for this proposal: to introduce the text and a rationale for choosing it; a working thesis—the answer to a research question that emerges through study—and, most importantly, a preliminary Works Cited that evidences scholarly research. While the general plan and source list may well change after completion of the proposal, students cannot change their text. Students must receive professor approval on their proposal before proceeding.

Note: Because The House on Mango Street and American Born Chinese are often taught in other courses like ENGL 3000 or ENGL 1102, no student in this class may write on either of these texts for the Final Project. Also: strive to choose texts new to you—texts that will expand your interpretive horizons—not simply to readdress texts or recycle materials already completed for other courses. It is through negotiation with new bodies of knowledge that we gain intellectual prowess.

THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Assessment Instrument:
All English courses 2000-level and above use a departmental grading scale. Please familiarize yourself with it, as it is the scale I use to grade all Major Assignments discussed above. To view this rubric, please click on the link entitled “Grading Rubric (upper division),” located on the class resource page. Should you have questions
about the rubric, we can discuss them during office hours or spend some time in class discussion assessment.

**University of West Georgia Honor Code:**

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing.

The Department of English defines plagiarism as “taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources.” The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. Plagiarism is grounds for failing this course.

**Did you know?** “Excessive collaboration” includes having family members, friends, or significant others edit your work. This means that no one should “fix” your grammar for you or “write in” sentences/ sources/ documentation for you. This sort of behavior is also cheating and will be treated as such. We will collaborate in class, and you have the University Writing Center as well as my input should you need extra advice about your writing. All assignments are included here in the syllabus on this first day, so you have ample time to complete work and/or get feedback, should you choose. Should I have evidence of any cheating, you will earn an “F” for the course. My policy, then, is a zero tolerance one.

**Website/Paperless Policy:**

Many of your past professors may have used Course Den (now D2L) for getting information to you. However, I primarily use my website (www.westga.edu/~ainsenga) and often e-mail the class with my thoughts, suggestions, or announcements. Most information for this course—this document, information about exams, short required texts, announcements, and resources—are hyperlinked on the website. Please check the site regularly for updates. You will be responsible for printing out all assigned documents from my website or those sent to you via e-mail for class and bringing them with you on the days designated on the detailed daily syllabus below.

**Attendance and Disruptive Student Policies:**

Our class meets once per week on Wednesday evenings. Students who miss more than two class periods cannot pass the course, as the missed work and classroom activity will significantly impact any student’s ability to perform well. Arriving or leaving at the break counts as one full absence. No distinction exists between excused and unexcused absences, so please make use of absences wisely. Finally, avoid repeated tardiness in a class where we seek to hone professionalism; entering class after we begin disrespectfully disrupts ongoing teaching, discussion, and learning.
Required Format:
Each major assignment, including DDQ’s, must be word-processed and delivered in hard copy. When formatting and citing, please use MLA documentation. If you need a refresher on MLA format, please see the MLA documentation link on the class resource page or feel free to talk with me in conference.

UWG Email Policy:
University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student’s responsibility to check his or her email.

Please send all communication to me via your “My UWG” account. Further, all students should assume a professional disposition when e-mailing or communicating about or in class and/or when speaking to fellow students, guest speakers, and/or professor about the course, scheduling conferences, or English programs.

Students should check university e-mail daily to avoid missing important messages. E-mailing is an essential part of effective and professional communication for this class, for the English Education program, for the university at large, and for the teaching profession many of you seek to enter. I also ask that you utilize your West Georgia e-mail when communicating with me electronically. Remember, too, that FERPA law prevents me from discussing grades online or over the phone.

Americans with Disabilities Act and Accommodations:
Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Disability Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please notify your instructor in writing by the end of the second full week of class and include a copy of your Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Disability Services. Students are entitled to accommodations if they deliver the SAR to the instructor no later than the end of the second full week of class.

Any student who has a special need should inform me at the end of the first class. We will then set up a conference to discuss the specifics of SAR from Disability Services.

Late Work/Make-Up Work***:
As a general rule, late work is not accepted except under the direst of circumstances, and those who miss class cannot make up work missed or turn in any work that was due on the evening of their absence. However, if you believe your circumstance to be extenuating, make every attempt to see me in conference during office hours or during a scheduled conference to discuss the problem. At that time, I will
determine whether or not an assignment can be turned in late and what deduction, if any, will apply.

***I realize that, occasionally, “life happens” and that some problems beyond your control crop up once in a while. Never hesitate to discuss problems with assignments or attendance with me if you feel that your circumstance is dire. With honest and swift communication, many issues can be resolved to your advantage!

Credit Hour Policy:
The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

Words on Workload in this Course:
Our class meets once per week. While this schedule proves convenient for those who already teach and/or commute long distances to UWG, it also requires a serious work commitment from you. The time we spend together in class is not representative of the time it will take you to accomplish the work for this course. We will move at quicker pace. Each week, you will read approximately one full primary text and at least one chapter from our secondary reader. You may also have written work like an exam or essay due, and you will almost always have a DDQ due. Because we do not meet twice per week, our two and a half hours together must be structured to maximize discussion and collaborative possibilities as we learn about YALit as a scholarly field with a recognizable history and think about teaching possibilities for some of our assigned texts.

For these reasons, arriving prepared with adequate DDQ’s and intimate knowledge of assigned work is imperative. If you struggle with being autodidactic—self-motivated to learn on your own—then you may struggle with this class’s structure. Consider these parameters carefully and please visit my office to discuss any questions or concerns regarding the workload and class meeting structure.

Administrivia:
✓ The absolute best way to contact me outside of office hours is via your university e-mail account. Of course, you may call or come by during office hours or set up appointments with me to discuss class work. E-mail is not an appropriate venue to discuss grades or to hold extended conversation related to writing.
✓ Please turn off all electronic devices upon entering our classroom. Such noise distracts your fellow classmates and me and prevents us from doing our work together.
✓ I reserve the right to amend this document with future handouts.
✓ Coming to class unprepared will result in an automatic absence. You must have your materials in order to participate fully. Of course, you will be free to stay in class for the benefit of instruction and discussion, but you are essentially not here when you do not have your materials.

THE DETAILED, DAILY SYLLABUS

August 28
Course Introduction
A Concise History of YALit, with intentions of expanding as we go

For next class:
- Read Bushman and Haas, chapters 11 and 1 (in that order, please)
- Read chapters 1-18 in Little Women
- Daily Driving Questions (DDQ’s) commence next class period; you will turn in each pair of questions at the end of each class. Please see examples on the class resource page and reread the directions for this ongoing assignment in the section entitled “Detailed Description of Major Assignments” found earlier in this document.

September 4
Daily Driving Questions (DDQ) 1
Discuss Bushman and Haas and Little Women
Contextualization: Civil War Girls

For next class:
- Finish Little Women

September 11
DDQ 2
Discuss Little Women and close reading
“On the Brink” Essay Discussion

For next class:
- Read Bushman and Haas, chapters 2 and 3
- Read The Catcher in the Rye, chapters 1-8
- Begin your “On the Brink” essay

September 18
DDQ 3
Discuss The Catcher in the Rye and Bushman and Haas (particularly chapter 3)
Contextualization: the 1950s
“On the Brink” Essay Discussion

For next class:
- Finish The Catcher in the Rye
- Read Bushman and Haas, chapter 10
- Work on your “On the Brink” Essay

September 25
DDQ 4
Discuss The Catcher in the Rye and Bushman and Haas
“On the Brink” Essay Discussion

For next class:
- Read Blubber
- Finish your “On the Brink” Essay

October 2
DDQ 5
“On the Brink” Essay due
Discuss Blubber

For next class:
- Read Hatchet
- Read chapter 6 in Bushman and Haas

October 9
DDQ 6
Discuss Hatchet and Bushman and Haas
Pedagogy Practice with Blubber and Hatchet
Take-Home Mid-Term Assigned

For next class:
- Read the following poems in My Own True Name: “Mango Juice,” “Ode to Pizza,” “For Georgia O’Keefe,” “Fences,” “Sugar,” “Desert Women,” “En la Sangre,” “In the Blood,” “Abuelita Magic,” and “Now and Then, America”
- Read chapter 8 in Bushman and Haas
- Complete the Mid-Term examination

October 16
Turn in Mid-Term examination
DDQ 7
Discuss Mora’s poetry and Bushman and Haas

For next class:
- Read Between Shades of Grey, chapters 1-37

October 23
DDQ 8
Discuss Between Shades of Grey and Bushman and Haas

For next class:
- Finish Between Shades of Grey
- Helpful Hint: now is a great time to begin choosing and researching for the Final Project

October 30
DDQ 9
Discuss Between Shades of Grey
Discuss Final Project and Project Proposal, if needed

For next class:
- Read the links on the class resource page under the following subheadings: “Links to Resources for Reading Film (useful for Children of Heaven)” and “Link to Various Suggestions for Successful Film Annotation”
-Read Bushman and Haas, chapter 9
-Read and annotate the article distributed at the end of October 30th’s class
-View and annotate *Children of Heaven*

**November 6**
DDQ 10
Discuss *Children of Heaven*
Discuss Final Project and Project Proposal, if needed
*For next class:*
-Read Bushman and Haas, chapter 7
-Read *Feed*, parts 1 and 2
-Finish Final Project Proposal

**November 13**
Turn in Final Project Proposal
Discuss *Feed* and Bushman and Haas
*For next class:*
-Finish *Feed*
-Work on your Final Project

**November 20**
DDQ 11
Discuss *Feed*
Pedagogy Practice: Bridging and Pairing using *Feed*
*For next class (December 4):*
-Read *Matched*, chapters 1-19
-Work on your Final Project

**November 27:** no regular class or office hours—Thanksgiving break

**December 4**
DDQ 12
Discuss *Matched*
Final Examination assigned
*For next class:*
-Finish *Matched*
-Complete Final Examination
-Work on your Final Project
-Pair up with a peer to complete optional Peer Review using the Guideline Sheet I provide via e-mail; even if you choose not to pair up, the Guideline Sheet will prove useful as you revise and edit.

**December 11**
Turn in Final Examination
Discuss *Matched*
*For December 13:*
- Pair up with a peer to complete optional Peer Review using the Guideline Sheet I provided via e-mail—even if you choose not to pair up, this Guideline Sheet will prove useful as you revise and edit.
- Turn in your Final Project by 3:00 p.m. at my office—TLC 2248.
- Final debriefs with me—what’s next for you?