



## LIT 4333: LITERATURE FOR THE ADOLESCENT

Jaquelin Elliott

[jpaigee@ufl.edu](mailto:jpaigee@ufl.edu)

Office: Zoom (Meeting ID: 737 440 1326)

Office Hours: Fri. Per. 7 – 8 (or by Appt.)

Fall 2020, Sec. 8061

Class # 26754

Online/Distance Learning

MWF 9 (4:05 – 4:55 pm)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine some of the major themes and trends in American “Young Adult” literature (or “YA”). Concentrating on culturally-constructed understandings of adolescence, our course will trace the emergence of the YA genre from the 1950s onward with special attention paid to contemporary works of the last 15 years. Students will be asked to consider the ways in which young adult literature serves a multiplicity of material and sociopolitical functions and in what ways YA’s heroes and villains both inform and react to a particular historical moment’s conceptions of adolescence, gender, sexuality, race, nationality, and class.

Discussions will include examinations of YA’s often fraught definitions and its early roots in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (*Northanger Abbey*); the birth of the “All-American” teenager in the mid-twentieth century (*Rebel Without a Cause*; *The Outsiders*); the popularity of paranormal romance and the fairy tale remix; the history of LGBTQ representation in YA (*Annie on My Mind*); the Black Lives Matter movement and young adult literature as activism (*Tyler Johnson Was Here*); YA initiatives like “We Need Diverse Books” (*American-Born Chinese*) and recent remixes of Young Adult classics with an eye towards improving inclusivity (*Carry On*; *Akata Witch*; *Every Heart a Doorway*); and of the popularity of the genres still dominating the Young Adult market, including contemporary romance (*To All the Boys I've Loved Before*), fantasy and magical realism (*Cemetery Boys*) and dystopia (*The Hunger Games*).

Texts our course will engage with includes literature, film, academic scholarship/cultural commentary, and graphic narrative. Class assignments will consist of short response papers, presentations or projects with a creative component, and a final research paper.

## A WORD ABOUT DISTANCE LEARNING

LIT 4333 is a course that would normally be taught face-to-face, but, of course, social distancing to prevent the spread of Covid-19 has necessitated that it be moved online. While I am disappointed to not be working with you face-to-face this term, I am optimistic that we, as a class community, will be able to replicate as much of a normal classroom experience as possible and that our course remains as rigorous (and, I hope, enjoyable for you) as it would have been in person.

While our course will include some working/reading on your own, it will be conducted over Zoom, as, under usual circumstances, this course would be largely discussion- and activity-based. Again, I intend to preserve as much of that model as possible. That said, given the extraordinary circumstances in which we find ourselves, I will also do my best to be as flexible as possible for extenuating circumstances (especially illness; I do ask that you please communicate any issues that may arise for you as soon as possible).

As discussions of technology and accessibility are critical right now, I wanted to outline the basic tech requirements for this course as transparently and early as possible.

### Tech Requirements for Our Course:

- Access to a **computer** and **webcam/microphone** (internal mics and built-in cams are fine). I do encourage you to please have your webcam on during Zoom, as I have found that faceless Zoom chats stunt discussion. If you need dispensation from using a webcam (either for a single day or for the whole of term, please let me know and we can discuss accommodations/allowances).
- A **Zoom account**
- A **Discord account** (needed by the end of Week 1; we will be having several scheduled discussions on Discord, but I would like to encourage you to post questions and comments to our class Discord as often as you like and to talk to your fellow classmates there since we will not be able to interact in a classroom)
- A **micro-blog** specifically for our course (Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, or other blogging platform are all acceptable)



## REQUIRED TEXTS

- Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey*. [Gutenberg Files](#). Or, for hard copy, Penguin Classics. ISBN: 978-0141439792
- McGuire, Seanan. *Every Heart a Doorway*. Tor. ISBN: 978-0765385505
- McLemore, Anna-Marie. *Blanca y Roja*. Square Fish. ISBN: 978-1250211637
- Hinton, S.E. *The Outsiders*. Speak. ISBN: 978-0142407332
- Garden, Nancy. *Annie on My Mind*. Square Fish. ISBN: 978-0374400118
- Yang, Gene Luen. *American-Born Chinese*. Square Fish. ISBN: 978-0312384487
- Sachar, Louis. *Holes*. Yearling. ISBN: 978-0440414803
- Coles, Jay. *Tyler Johnson Was Here*. Little Brown. ISBN: 978-0316472180
- Okorafor, Nnedi. *Akata Witch*. Speak. ISBN: 978-0142420911
- Rowell, Rainbow. *Carry On*. Wednesday Book. ISBN: 978-1250135025
- Thomas, Aiden. *Cemetery Boys*. Swoon Reads. ISBN: 978-1250250469

\* Any edition of *Northanger Abbey* will be fine, including public domain editions on Project Gutenberg. Kindle editions of any of the above texts are also fine. All other readings will be available on Canvas.

### Required Films:

- *Rebel Without a Cause*
- *Sixteen Candles*
- *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* [Netflix]\*\*
- *The Hunger Games*
- *Catching Fire*
- *Mockingjay Pt. 1 and 2*

\*\* If you do not have Netflix and would like to take advantage of its free 30-day trial period, sign up in Week 7 (10/12). All other films can be rented/purchased on Amazon, iTunes, or Youtube for \$2-4.



## COURSE POLICIES

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. Because this is a distance-learning course, students will be required to sign up and main accounts with Zoom and Discord for class discussions. It is imperative that you sign up for both a Zoom and Discord account the first of class, if not earlier.
3. *Attendance:* Attendance and participation in this class is required. **You are permitted up to 3 absences in this class throughout the semester. Each absence beyond three will lower your overall course letter-grade by 5 points. If you miss more than five (5) classes, you will fail the course.** Bear in mind that in-class work may be excused/made up only under the following circumstances:
  - Student is absent for a religious holiday
  - Student is absent for an athletic or other university-sponsored event (student athletes/students in band, theater, etc.) – documentation required
  - Student is absent due to illness – documentation required

For any of these instances, you are required to contact me and provide documentation as noted. In-class work missed for any other reason cannot be made up. Any blog post or paper due on a day you are absent is still due.

4. *Zoom chats* are mandatory. **Please note that missing a zoom chat counts as an absence.**
5. *Tardiness:* If a student enters our Zoom chatroom after roll has been called, they are late, which disrupts class. **Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.**
6. *Paper Format & Submission:* All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) documents to Canvas, unless otherwise noted (blog posts, etc.). Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. **All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.** Please do not email your paper to your instructor. When submitting digital papers, please also include your last name in the file name. (Example: ElliottProposal.doc).
7. *Late Papers/Assignments:* All assignments are due at the end of the day indicated (before Midnight), unless otherwise noted on the syllabus. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** If you find yourself in a situation that requires an extension, you must contact me **before the due date** to discuss it.
8. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.* Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
9. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism.* Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Plagiarism: A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without

proper attribution.

b. Submitting a document or assignment, which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007)

10. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss accommodations within the first week of class.
11. For information on UF *Grading* policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
12. *Course Evaluations*. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>
13. Students who face *difficulties completing the course* or who are in need of *counseling* or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
14. *Behavior*: please keep in mind that a) students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds and b) it is vital that you demonstrate respect for ideas that differ from your own (with the exception of systemic forms of bigotry). **Disrespectful behavior in Zoom chats or Discord chats will not be tolerated.** Disrespectful behaviors include: Phone calls, texting, checking Facebook, leaving class repeatedly, sleeping, failure to bring texts, disrespectful language, bullying, etc.
15. *UF's policy on Harassment*: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>
16. For the latest updates on Covid-19 and what it means for the UF community, please see: <http://www.ufl.edu/health-updates/> and <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/>
17. **If you are concerned you may have contracted Covid-19 and/or are exhibiting symptoms, immediately contact your primary care provider or the UF Student Health Care Center Special Clinics nurse at 352-294-7472** [if you are experiencing extreme symptoms, including intense shortness of breath, blue lips/fingertips, or sudden confusion, call 911].

## GRADING

## Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Course grades will be determined based on the following point system:

<u>Final Grade</u>	<u>1000 points</u>
Participation	150 points
Blog Posts	200 points
Mid-term paper	250 points
Final Paper/Project	400 points

## GRADING RUBRIC

<b>Grade</b>	
A work	You have completed the assignment at a very high quality level. Content is complete, well-organized, pays special attention to genre and style, and is free of typos and grammatical errors. Work in this range demonstrates a high level of critical engagement. You have gone above and beyond what was expected.
B work	The assignment has been completed at a satisfactory level, but may still be in need of minor revisions. Content is complete and well-organized with special attention paid to style, genre, audience, grammar, and mechanics.
C work	The assignment is complete and logically organized, but is notably in need of revision. It may include multiple typos or grammatical errors that suggest a lack of proofreading. Additionally, style and level of critical engagement may be lacking. The bare minimum of what was required of you.
D work	You have mostly done what was asked of you, but at a very poor quality level. Little to no attention has been paid to style, grammar, and mechanics; the work is in need of significant revision. The work may also be missing some of the requirements of the assignment, incomplete, or poorly organized.
E work	An “E” is usually reserved for students who have failed to complete the assignment or have failed to meet the minimum word requirement for the assignment. However, an “E” may be given if the work in question blatantly fails to meet the aforementioned criteria for evaluation.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Participation (150 points; 15% of grade):** Students are expected to participate in class activities, including writing exercises, Zoom discussions, Discord chats, and more. Students are expected to contribute constructively to each class session.

**Blog Posts (200 points; 20% of grade):** Eight times over the course of the semester you will be required to write a brief (250+ word) meditation on an assigned reading or screening once you have finished the novel/text. These responses will be uploaded to a personal blog (Tumblr, Wordpress, or student's platform preference), which the student will create and maintain for the purposes of engaging with the course.

If you would like, you may also create an alternative meditation in the form of a meme or short work of fanfiction. If a meme, please create a meme that captures a central theme, dynamic, relationship or take-away from the text in question and at least one paragraph of explanation. If a fanfiction, please write a piece of "flash" fanfiction of at least 250 words for the text in question (any genre of fic is suitable). Please don't forget appropriate tags (genre, pairings, etc.)!

Deliverable: Reading response blog posts (8 posts of 250 words each) posted to micro-blog

**Mid-term Essay (250 points: 25% of grade):**

Students will write an analysis of any work of adolescent/YA literature that we have read/viewed together thus far. You may develop the essay any way you like (close reading, comparative analysis, or short research paper) and through any kind of theoretical lens, as long as you have a strong thesis and draw from supporting evidence.

Deliverable: 5-7 pages, double-spaced pages in 12-point font; Word Document (.doc, .docx) uploaded to Canvas

**Final Paper or Creative Project (400 points; 40% of grade):**

The final paper (8-10 double-spaced pages) for this course will be a research paper related to one or more of the topics and texts that have been discussed throughout the semester. In this paper, students will make a clear, specific argument about a topic of their choosing that relates to the theme of the course. The argument must be supported with evidence from both the texts we shall read together in class, outside academic/critical sources (facts, statistics, and quotations from experts in the field relevant to the student's chosen topic), and at least one literary text that we did NOT read together in class.

**or**

Alternatively, you may complete a creative project in the shape of an 8-10-page piece of fan fiction or original YA fiction. The piece can either be a short work or part of a longer work (if longer, students will be required to provide outline for rest of project). Please feel free to discuss options with instructor.

**or**

A video essay in the style of Lindsay Ellis' "Dear Stephenie Meyer" that performs a media analysis of a YA text, genre, or phenomenon with an accompanying Works Cited page of secondary research that went into the creation of your video and a 2-3-page rationale, explicating the video.

**Deliverable:** Will take different forms depending on chosen format:

Traditional essay: 8-10 double-spaced pages in 12-point font; Word Document (.doc, .docx) uploaded to Canvas

Fanfiction/Original Fiction: 8-10 double-spaced pages in 12-point font; Word Document (.doc, .docx) uploaded to Canvas

Video Essay: Media file of essay (.mov, .mp4, .avi), 2-3 double-spaced rationale in 12-point font and accompanying Works Cited page for project via Word Document (.doc, .docx) uploaded to Canvas



## SCHEDULE

This schedule may be subject to change according to the needs of the course. Readings available on Canvas will be indicated as such.

### UNIT 1 The Fairy Tale of Childhood (and the Perils of Novel-Reading!)

#### Week 1

8/31 Syllabus and Introductions | What is YA?

9/2 Watch Lindsay Ellis' "[Dear Stephenie Meyer](#)" and Amanda the Jedi's "[Stop Hating Teenage Girls | Why Everyone Hates Young Adult](#)"

9/4 Read Gregory's [A Father's Legacy to His Daughters](#) (only "Introduction," "Conduct and Behavior," and "Amusements" sections) | Read *Northanger Abbey* Vol. 1 Chaps. 1 – 5 | Discuss young readerships, "novel-reading," and proto-YA

#### Week 2

9/7 **NO CLASS - University Holiday**

9/9 Finish *Northanger Abbey* and read "[A Paradox at the Heart of Jane Austen's Defense of the Novel](#)"

9/11 Read *Every Heart a Doorway* Chap 1 - 3 | Discuss the "dangers" of imagination and the moralist fairy tale wars of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

#### Week 3

9/14 Read *Every Heart a Doorway* Chaps. 4 – 6 | Discuss postmodern YA fantasy

9/16 Finish *Every Heart a Doorway* | Discuss YA and trauma studies

9/18 Read Rossetti's [Goblin Market](#) and "Snow-White and Rose Red" | Discuss literature "for" young people and the question of audience

#### Week 4

9/21 **NO ZOOM** | Read *Blanca y Roja* pgs. 1- 158 | Discuss YA and the fairy tale remix

9/23 Read *Blanca y Roja* pgs. 159 – 205 | Read "[The Rise of Magical Realism in Young Adult Fiction](#)"

9/25 Read *Blanca y Roja* pgs. 206 - 263

## UNIT 2 The “All-American” Teen

### Week 5

9/28 Finish *Blanca y Roja*

9/30 Watch *Rebel Without a Cause* | Discuss the creation of the modern “teenager” and introduce *The Outsiders*

10/2 **NO CLASS - Homecoming**

### Week 6

10/5 Read *The Outsiders* Chaps. 1 - 9

10/7 Finish *The Outsiders*

10/9 Read *Annie on My Mind* Chaps. 1 - 5 | Discuss queering YA

### Week 7

10/12 **NO ZOOM** | Read *Annie on My Mind* Chaps. 6 - 13

10/14 Finish *Annie on My Mind*

10/16 Watch *Sixteen Candles* | Discuss the troubled legacy of the 1980s teen film and its revisions

### Week 8

10/19 **FREE DAY (work on your papers!)** | **MID-TERM PAPER DUE before midnight**

10/21 Read *American-Born Chinese* pgs. 1 - 130 | Discuss comics and YA

10/23 Finish *American-Born Chinese* and watch *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* | “Own Voices” narratives and YA

## UNIT 3: “The Odds Are Never in Our Favor”

### Week 9

10/26 Read *Holes* Chaps. 1 - 24 | Discuss young adults and “discipline” in fiction

10/28 **NO ZOOM** | Read *Holes* Chaps. 25 - 38

10/30 Finish *Holes* | Discuss racism and the “school-to-prison pipeline” in *Holes*

## **Week 10**

11/2 Watch *The Hunger Games* and *Catching Fire* | [“Yes, There Are Black People in Your Hunger Games: The Strange Case of Rue & Cinna”](#) | Discuss YA dystopia, political satire, and The Romantic Child

11/4 Watch *Mockingjay Pt. 1* and *Pt. 2* | Discuss race, revolution, and technology in *THG* in the wake of Ferguson and BLM

11/6 Read *Tyler Johnson Was Here* Chaps. 1 – 7 and selection of tweets from Jay Coles [Canvas] | Discuss police brutality and the problem of the contemporary “problem novel”

## **Week 11**

11/9 Read *Tyler Johnson Was Here* Chaps. 8 - 17

11/11 **No Class – Veteran’s Day**

11/13 Finish *Tyler Johnson Was Here*

## **UNIT 4 Revisions, Remixes, and Looking Forward**

## **Week 12**

11/16 Read [“This is Afrofuturism”](#) and *Akata Witch* Chaps. 1 – 8

11/18 **NO ZOOM** | Read *Akata Witch* Chaps. 9 - 11

11/20 Finish *Akata Witch*

## **Week 13**

11/23 Read Tosenberger’s “Homosexuality at the Online Hogwarts: Harry Potter Slash Fanfiction” (Canvas) | Read *Carry On* Chaps. 1 - 6

11/25 **No Class**

11/27 **No Class**

## **Week 14**

11/30 Read *Carry On* Chaps. 7 -78

12/2 Finish *Carry On* | Read Zacny’s [“JK Rowling’s Transphobia Wasn’t Hard to Find, She Wrote a Book About It”](#)

12/4 Read *Cemetery Boys* Chaps. 1 - 6

## **Week 15**

12/7 Read *Cemetery Boys* Chaps. 7 - 20

12/9 Finish *Cemetery Boys* | Closing Thoughts and Evaluations | **FINAL BLOG POST DUE**  
**(blog should be complete by midnight on this date)**

**12/16 Final Paper/Project DUE by Midnight**