Course Purpose

This course is designed for beginning English language arts teachers, library media specialists, reading specialists, and other individuals interested in middle school and high school literature. Through this course, teachers will gain knowledge and appreciation of young adult literature. We will read representative texts covering the history, genres, authors, themes, literary theories, and issues of literature for students in the middle school and high school. We will engage in literature circles, book talks, and large and small group discussions, and integrated language arts activities as we respond to and reflect upon our reading processes and preferences.

This course embodies the UM College of Education’s Conceptual Framework through the 3 essential elements of learning communities: Integration of Ideas, Cooperative Endeavors, and Respect for Individual Worth.

This course is a pre-requisite or co-requisite to ENT 441 Teaching Reading and Literature.

Course Objectives and Topics

To provide beginning teachers with knowledge of and experience with young adult literature, including an understanding in the following:
-- history of young adult literature
-- themes and genres of young adult literature
-- major authors, texts, and awards in young adult literature
-- literary analysis and literary criticism/theories in young adult literature
-- reading process and reader responses to young adult literature
-- selection and censorship issues in young adult literature
-- media, interdisciplinary, and multicultural connections in young adult literature
-- relationship between young adult literature and traditional/classic literature
-- Montana’s Indian Education for All and Native American young adult literature and authors

To provide beginning teachers with opportunities to practice and develop the following abilities:
-- plan and lead discussions and integrated language arts activities on young adult literature
-- research and present information on texts, authors, themes, genres, theories, and issues in young adult literature
-- write rationales for selecting and teaching young adult texts
-- reflect and evaluate their teaching presentation skills

To develop in beginning teachers the following attitudes:
-- all readers have value and worth
-- teachers need to know how to develop, extend, accept, and respect all responses to literature
-- teachers need to encourage all readers to value their own and others’ ideas
-- teachers need to help students become critical, creative readers
-- teachers need to be lifelong readers and learners who model good reading habits
Requirements and Assignments

1. Regular class attendance. Excessive absences are considered in the final grade. If you must be absent, please inform the instructor. Also contact two other classmates to learn what was covered in your absence and what is expected for the next class meeting.

2. Completion of weekly assignments and full participation in the literature circles, book talks, and large and small group discussions and activities.

3. Weekly written response papers for each young adult text. For each of the whole class texts, submit 2 copies of your 1-page, single-spaced response paper that shows your engagement, analysis, and/or evaluation of the text. (Refer to Characteristics of Good Response Papers.) The response paper is due on the day that text is presented by discussion leaders/presenters. (NOTE: The response papers are not the same as the brief homework assignment given by the presenters.)

   Presenters do not write a response paper on their text because they turn in a team resource packet (see below).

4. Presentation and discussion of young adult texts. Each person will work with 2 classmates to present one text. You will have 65 minutes for your presentation. (Refer to Guidelines for Presenting Young Adult Literature.) Each team will turn in to the instructor a packet of resources used to research, prepare, and present the text.

   After your presentation, you (individually) will write a 1-2 page, single-spaced self-assessment/reflection on your ability to promote critical, creative thinking about the book and to engage classmates in thoughtful, respectful discussion. (Refer to Reflection/Self Assessment questions.) Turn in 1 copy of this self-reflection paper. This is due the week following your presentation.

   GRADUATE STUDENTS: Students enrolled for graduate credit must plan and present an additional presentation on a young adult text or issue. Please consult with the instructor regarding this project.

5. Final synthesis paper. At the conclusion of the course, you will submit a 4 page, single-spaced paper that synthesizes your course knowledge and experience with young adult literature. You will also rank the texts you liked most and least. Be sure to keep all course materials to use as you write this synthesis paper.

6. Professional membership: Students in the English Teaching Program are required to join National Council of Teachers of English <www.ncte.org>. Students are also encouraged to join the NCTE state affiliate, Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts <www.opi.state.mt.us/MATELA>

7. Course evaluation. On the final day of class, you will complete the university evaluation form and an open-ended written evaluation of the course and instructor.
Criteria for final grade
Weekly response papers to young adult texts  20%
Teaching presentation and individual self-assessment/reflection  20%
Packet of Resources (one packet per teaching team)  20%
Final synthesis paper  20%
Attendance and participation  20%

GRADUATE STUDENTS are required to complete an additional project.

Course Policies
1. Regular attendance and full participation are expected. Absences and/or lack of participation will affect the final grade.
2. You must elect to take this course for a letter grade.
3. Plagiarized work results in an automatic F in the course. Please see university catalog for definition and consequences of plagiarism.
4. Late assignments may be penalized.
5. Please consult this semester’s university class schedule for deadlines on fee payments, withdrawal deadlines, and other important dates.
6. A grade of “Incomplete” may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when a student has petitioned in writing to receive this incomplete grade. The instructor may consider an incomplete grade only when a student a) has been in regular attendance, b) has participated fully in class, and c) is currently passing the course. Please see university catalog for circumstances regarding incomplete grades.

Required Core Course Text: Bring this text to each class meeting
LITERATURE FOR TODAY’S YOUNG ADULTS, 8th ed., by Alleen Nilsen & Kenneth Donelson

Young Adult Texts:
Anderson, Laurie.  SPEAK
Anderson, M.T.  FEED
Auch, Mary Jane.  ASHES OF ROSES
Barron, T. A.  THE LOST YEARS OF MERLIN
Bitton-Jackson, Livia.  I HAVE LIVED A THOUSAND YEARS: GROWING UP IN THE HOLOCAUST
Bruchac, Joseph.  THE HEART OF A CHIEF
Collard, Sneed.  FLASH POINT
Collins, Suzanne.  HUNGER GAMES
Cormier, Robert.  I AM THE CHEESE
Crutcher, Chris.  WHALE TALK
Curtis, Christopher Paul.  THE WATSONS GO TO BIRMINGHAM-1963
Farmer, Nancy.  THE HOUSE OF THE SCORPION
Grant, K. M.  BLOOD RED HORSE  
Hartinger, Brent.  THE GEOGRAPHY CLUB  
Hiaasen, Carl.  FLUSH  
Ingold, Jeanette.  THE BIG BURN  
Jiang, Ji Li.  RED SCARF GIRL: A MEMOIR OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION  
Mikaelsen, Ben.  PETEY  
Ryan, Pam Munoz.  ESPERANZA RISING  
Sachar, Louis.  HOLES  
Staples, Suzanne Fisher.  SHABANU, DAUGHTER OF THE WIND.  
Venkatraman, Padma.  CLIMBING THE STAIRS

Other recommended texts

BOOKS THAT DON’T BORE ‘EM by James Blasingame  
YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE AS A COMPLEMENT TO THE CLASSICS, Vol. 1, 2, 3, 4, edited by Joan Kaywell  
INTERPRETING YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE by John Moore  
YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE AND NEW LITERARY THEORIES by Anna Soter

Additional Resources

TEACHING MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE: A WORKSHOP FOR THE MIDDLE GRADES  
<www.learner.org/resources/series203.html>  
Dr. Chin was Editorial Director/Lead Content Advisor for this Annenberg Media series.

THE EXPANDING CANON: TEACHING MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN HIGH SCHOOL  
<www.learner.org/resources/series178.html>  
Dr. Chin appears as Literary Scholar/Teacher Educator in this Annenberg/CPB and NCTE series.