



**George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Secondary Education Program**

**SEED 370-DL1: “Young Adult Literature in Multicultural Settings” (3 credits)  
Distance Education Course**

**Faculty**

Instructor: Michelle Lague, M.Ed., PhD Candidate

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Office Hours: Virtual ([via Zoom](#)) each Wednesday 6-7pm ET or by appointment

Contact me via email or during office hours for any questions, concerns, or clarifications regarding assignments or course readings.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Examines literary works written for and about young adults, introduces critical issues surrounding teaching of young adult literature in multiculturally diverse schools, and requires reading and review of young adult literature.

**Course Overview**

This course will introduce students to the concept of using Young Adult Literature to understand and connect with young people in diverse settings. The course readings will also provide an avenue to discuss relevant social issues and how these issues impact young people in and outside of school. Students will compose critical reflections to explore elements of literature and genre, make cross-curricular connections, and apply readings across a variety of social, political, historical, and cultural contexts. Students will analyze and apply their understandings of a variety of texts by participating in course discussions, reflections, small-group activities, and multimodal presentations.

***This course fulfills the Mason Core Literature requirement and addresses the following learning outcomes:***

- 1) Read for comprehension, detail and nuance.
- 2) Identify the specific literary qualities of language employed in the texts they read.
- 3) Analyze the ways specific literary devices contribute to the meaning of texts.
- 4) Identify and evaluate the contribution of the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts in which

literary text is produced.

- 5) evaluate a critical argument in others' writing as well as one's own.

### Course Delivery

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on [DATE]. Students may be required to use other, free online platforms to accomplish weekly assignments or collaborate with classmates.

### Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)  
To get a list of supported operating systems on different devices see: [https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### Expectations

- Course Week  
Our course week will begin on each Monday and end on each Sunday as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructors, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- Technical Competence  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the class schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Accommodations  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

*For Online Courses Only: Under no circumstances may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.*

## **Learner Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

- Read for comprehension, detail, and nuance
- Analyze the ways specific literary devices contribute to the meaning of a text
- Demonstrate knowledge of the emergence of the genre known as young adult literature through course assignments
- Review (through course assignments) a wide range of young adult literature, including literature that is popular with adolescents, that is well regarded among ELA educators and media specialists, and that represents a wide range of cultural experiences
- Demonstrate familiarity with some of the most well-known authors of young adult literature through course assignments
- Develop and demonstrate awareness of issues associated with the use of young adult literature in today's public schools through course assignments (e.g., censorship)
- Identify and evaluate the contribution of the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts in which a literacy text is produced
- Consider and articulate instructional purposes and strategies for incorporating young adult literature into the middle and high school curricula (or another relevant field of interest to the student) through course assignments
- Explore and demonstrate knowledge of research, theory, and practice associated with young adult literature, through course assignments

## **Professional Standards**

Upon s of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

### **INTASC (The Interstate Teacher Assessment & Support Consortium):**

- **Standard #1: Learner Development.** The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard #2: Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- **Standard #3: Learning Environments.** The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- **Standard #4: Content Knowledge.** The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- **Standard #5: Application of Content.** The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- **Standard #7: Planning for Instruction.** The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- **Standard #8: Instructional Strategies.** The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their

connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

## Required Texts

Cisneros, Sandra. (1984). *The House on Mango Street*.  
Reynolds, Jason. (2015). *Long Way Down*.  
Sánchez, Erika L. (2017). *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*.  
Thomas, Angie. (2017). *The Hate U Give*.  
Takei, George. (2019) *They Called Us Enemy*.

## Choice Texts

In addition to the requires texts listed above, each student will read six additional young adult texts of the many listed below. Please note these books will NOT be shelved with the course texts, but you can find them in any bookstore or on Amazon or other bookselling websites. Finally, the list below is neither exhaustive nor complete.

### Classics

Anderson, Laurie Halse. (1999). *Speak*.  
Bloom, Judy. (1970). *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret*.  
Hinton, S.E. (1967). *The Outsiders*.  
Lowry, Lois. (1993). *The Giver*.  
Paulsen, Gary. (1987). *The Hatchet*.  
Taylor, Mildred. (1976). *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.  
L'Engle, M. (1962). *A Wrinkle in Time*.

### Relationships, Gender, & Sexuality

Albertalli, Becky. (2015). *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*.  
Callender, Cacen. (2020). *Felix Ever After*.  
Lo, Malinda. (2021). *Last Night at the Telegraph Club*.  
Menon, Sandhya. (2017). *When Dimple Met Rishi*.  
Rivera, Gabby. (2021). *Juliet Takes a Breath*.  
Rowell, Rainbow. (2012). *Eleanor & Park*.  
Sáenz, Benjamin Alire. (2014). *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*.  
Silvera, Adam. (2017). *They Both Die at the End*.  
Wang, Jen. (2018). *The Prince and the Dressmaker*.

### Historical/Memoir/Nonfiction

Beah, Ishmael. (2008). *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*.  
Hesse, Karen. (1999). *Out of the Dust*.  
Lerner, Sarah. (2019). *Parkland Speaks: Survivors from Marjory Stoneman Douglas Share Their Stories*.  
Lewis, John. (2015). *March*.  
Park, Linda Sue. (2010). *A Long Walk to Water*.  
Pitman, Gayle. (2019). *The Stonewall Riots: Coming Out in the Streets*.  
Saedi, Sara. (2018). *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card*.  
Satrapi, Marjane. 2003. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*.  
Sepetys, Ruta. (2016). *Salt to the Sea*.  
Slater, Dashka. (2017). *The 57 Bus*.

Spiegelman, Art. (1986). *Maus: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*. (Volume 1)

### **Family & Mental Health**

Alkaf, Hanna (2019). *The Weight of Our Sky*.  
Arnold, David. (2016). *Mosquitoland*.  
Caletti, Deb (2018). *A Heart in a Body in the World*.  
Fox, Helena. (2020). *How it Feels to Float*.  
Khorram, Adib. (2018). *Darius the Great is Not Okay*.  
Mahoney, Rebecca. (2021). *The Valley and the Flood*.  
Small, David. (2010). *Stitches: A Memoir*.  
Zentner, Jeff. (2016). *The Serpent King*.

### **Stories of Resilience**

Acevedo, Elizabeth. (2019). *With the Fire on High*.  
Anderson, Laurie Halse. (2019). *Shout*.  
Boulley, Angeline (2021). *Firekeeper's Daughter*.  
Jaramillo, Ann. (2008). *La Linea*.  
Nayeri, Daniel. (2021). *Everything Sad Is Untrue*.  
Palacio, R.J. (2012). *Wonder*.  
Warga, Jasmine. (2019). *Other Words for Home*.  
Woodson, Jacqueline. (2014). *Brown Girl Dreaming*.  
Zoboi, Ibi. (2017). *American Street*.

### **More Great YA**

***YOUR CHOICE – read ANY of the below recent award-winning YA texts OR any previous texts you have not yet read. OR email me if you would like to explore a text that is not listed here!***

Acevedo, Elizabeth. (2018). *The Poet X*.  
Alexander, Kwame. (2014). *The Crossover*.  
Adeyemi, Tomi. (2018). *Children of Blood and Bone*.  
Anderson, Natalie (2017). *City of Saints & Thieves*.  
Browne, Mahogany. (2021). *Chlorine Sky*.  
Emezi, Akwaeke. (2019). *Pet*.  
Frost, Helen. (2015). *Hidden: A Novel*.  
Gharib, Malaka (2019). *I Was Their American Dream: A Graphic Memoir*.  
LaCour, Nina. (2017). *We Are Okay*.  
Onome, Louisa. (2021). *Like Home*.  
Pullman, Phillip. (1995). *His Dark Materials: The Golden Compass* (Book 1).  
Saied Méndez, Yamile. (2020). *Furia*.  
Sharpe, Tess (2021). *The Girls I've Been*.  
Shusterman, Neal. (2016). *Scythe*.  
Stone, Nic. (2018) *Dear Martin*.  
Tahir, Sabaa. (2015). *An Ember in the Ashes*.

*Note: Additional, article-length required readings will be assigned during the course of our class and provided electronically.*

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor via Blackboard.

## Assignments

1. **Analytical Reflections:** Students will compose four, short (3-5 page) reflections in which they will synthesize readings and class discussion. In these analytical reflections, students will engage in literary analysis using specific details from the assigned texts to form a well-supported argument. Connections between students' experiences, other assigned texts, and social, political, historical, and cultural contexts should be discussed with an emphasis on teaching Young Adult Literature in the secondary classroom.
2. **Final Analytical Reflection:** A longer (5-8 page) final analytical reflection will serve as a culminating assignment for this course. Students will apply their knowledge of literary analysis in this summative assignment based on their ongoing peer discussions (via Literature Circles and the Reading Response Discussion Blog) and feedback from their previous Analytical Reflections.
3. **Virtual Literature Circle Discussion:** Students will participate in four Virtual Literature Circle Discussions based on our core texts. Discussions will be used to aid in the writing of Reading Response entries and Analytical Reflections. Each Literature Circle will focus on a different sample of Young Adult Literature and explore a particular theme or text.
4. **Reading Response Discussion Blog:** Students will produce ongoing documentation of their thoughts and analysis of each text on Blackboard. These responses will include, but are not limited to, students' personal response, connection, and understanding of the text; analysis of literary language and qualities, including symbolism, imagery, and other specific choices made by the author; and connections between the text and its social, political, historical, and/or cultural context, including connections to and implications for social, political, and youth-led movements. Students will also be asked to consider implications of this assignment for their own teaching and/or career path.

*More detailed assignment descriptions and grading expectations can be found on Blackboard.*

## Grading

Assignment	Points
Analytical Reflections	25
Final Analytical Reflection	35
Virtual Literature Circles Discussion	25
Reading Response Discussion Blog	15
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>100</b>

### Grading Scale

A+ = 99-100%

A = 94-98%

A- = 90-93%

B+ = 88-89%

B = 84-87%

B- = 80-83%

C+ = 78-79%

C = 74-77%

C- = 70-73%

D = 60-69%

F = Below 60%

### Grading Criteria and Mastery Grading

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system, the general rubric described below, and a specific rubric provided with each assignment. A student must demonstrate "mastery" of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a "B" level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he

be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant components. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- “C” level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- “D” level score = Student provides incomplete responses to assignment requirements. Student did not follow all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is extremely vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Very limited support for assertions is provided.
- “F” level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible.
- Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member.
- AB = A temporary grade of “AB” may be given to students with prior approval of their dean/director to be absent from the final examination/project. A final grade of “AB” will convert to “F” after the ten day make-up period unless a grade change is submitted.

### **Professional Dispositions**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles:

<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU/CEHD Policies and Resources for Students**

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

### **Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

### **GSE/CEHD Information**

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]

### **Resources and Selected Bibliography**

*The ALAN Review*

*The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*

*English Journal*

*The Horn Book Magazine*

*Interracial Books for Children*

*Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*

*Kirkus Review*

*Language Arts*

*The New Advocate*

*The New York Times Book Review*

*Publisher’s Weekly*

*The Reading Teacher*

*School Library Journal*

*Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)*

*Wilson Library*

### Reference Texts and Indexes

*Authors of Books for Young People*

*Best Books for Young Adult Readers*

*Black Authors and Illustrators of Books for Children & Young Adults*

*Book Review Digest*

*Book Review Index*

*Books for the Teen Age. New York Public Library*

*Children’s Book Review Index*

*Children’s Books. Awards & Prizes*



*Children's Literature Awards and Winners*  
*Children's Literature Review*  
*Something About the Author*  
*Something About the Author. Autobiography Series*  
*St. James Guide to Young Adult Writers*  
*The Coretta Scott King Awards Book, 1970-1999*  
*The Newbery & Caldecott Awards*

### Schedule of Topics and Assignments

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.*

Week	Topic(s)	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1 Jan 24-30	Introduction to YA Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access course</li> <li>Review syllabus</li> <li>Book Soak Discussion</li> </ul>
2 Jan 31-Feb 6	The How & Why of YA Lit Criticism of YAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cisneros (1984)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit reading plan to Reading Response Blog</li> <li>Lit Circle Discussion #1</li> </ul>
3 Feb 7-13	Critical Analysis of YA Lit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Choose from</i> Classics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Response Blog</li> <li>Reflective Analysis #1 Due (Cisneros &amp; Classics)</li> </ul>
4 Feb 14-20	Critical Conversations, Politics, & Censorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reynolds (2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Response Blog</li> </ul>
5 Feb 21-27	Exploring Identity: Race & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thomas (2017)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Response Blog</li> <li>Lit Circle Discussion #2</li> </ul>
6 Feb 28-Mar 6	Exploring Identity: Relationships, Gender, & Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Choose from</i> Relationships, Gender, &amp; Sexuality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Response Blog</li> <li>Reflective Analysis #2 Due (Thomas &amp; Identity)</li> </ul>
7 (Mar 7-13)	Exploring Identity: Family & Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Choose from</i> Family &amp; Mental Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Response Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Break</b> Mar 14-20			

8 Mar 21-27	Applications of YAL: Understanding Self & Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sanchez (2017)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading Response Blog</li> <li>● Lit Circle Discussion #3</li> </ul>
9 Mar 28-Apr 3	Applications of YAL: Trauma & Healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Choose from</i> Stories of Resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading Response Blog</li> <li>● Reflective Analysis #3 Due (Sanchez &amp; Trauma)</li> </ul>
10 Apr 4-10	Applications of YAL: Understanding History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Takei (2019)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading Response Blog</li> <li>● Lit Circle Discussion #4</li> </ul>
11 Apr 11-17	Applications of YAL: Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Choose from</i> Historical, Memoir, &amp; Nonfiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading Response Blog</li> <li>● Reflective Analysis #4 Due (Takei &amp; Empathy)</li> </ul>
12 Apr 18-24	Other YA Genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Choose from</i> More Great YA <i>or choose your own</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reading Response Blog Due</li> </ul>
13 Apr 25-May 1	The Future of YAL: What is/What isn't YA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● (Optional) Final Reflective Analysis Paper Draft Due</li> </ul>
14 May 2-8	Writing Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>
15 May 9-15	Reflection Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Final Reflective Analysis Paper Due</li> </ul>