

Dr. Lynne Vallone

FALL 2021

Office: Room 204, Artis Building (329 Cooper Street)

Office Hours: M 1:00-3:00pm and by appointment

Email: vallone@rutgers.edu

YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE 50:163:361
Gen Ed: AAI and WRI

Teaching Assistant: Sebastian Barajas
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Office: 329 Cooper Street
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11am-12 noon and by appointment

Class Time: MW 9:35am-10:55am
Class Location: BSB 334

Course Description:

This course is a survey of (primarily) American literature of the 20th and 21st centuries written especially for an adolescent audience. Book selections, both classics of the genre and very recent publications, will be discussed within the contexts of the history and development of young adult literature, American literary history and popular culture. The course requires careful reading, active discussion, critical thinking, and literary analysis (expressed in both formal and informal papers and assignments). **This is a writing intensive class in which a significant portion of the class will be devoted to writing as an intellectual practice.** To that end, we will spend time in class discussing the writing process, revision process and workshopping writing skills and we will spend time outside of class in writing itself.

Course Objectives:

- Teach and improve students' ability to write clearly and effectively about literature through a variety of written forms including, but not limited to, the thesis "statement", outline, paragraph, and analytical essay
- Reinforce students' commitment to academic integrity, correct citation and documentation formatting, among other aspects of information literacy
- Increase students' knowledge of the history, development and diversity of the young adult novel set within the contexts of both American literary history and popular culture

- Increase students' knowledge of the contested nature of young adult fiction as a genre that has been both reviled as trash and celebrated to the extent that it dominates both the best seller list and the multiplex cinema marquee
- Reinforce students' ability to think critically and deeply about literature written for young adults
- Practice students' skills in discussion and oral presentation
- Enhance students' enjoyment in reading and writing about literature featuring young adult protagonists

Learning Outcomes:

“Learning outcomes” reflect the knowledge, skills, and awareness students should gain and demonstrate by the end of the course.

By the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand and write effective theses/arguments and outlines for literary critical essays
- Write well-organized, comparative and synthetic short essays about course readings that communicate ideas and supportive evidence well using the text and outside research
- Correctly document, cite, and incorporate research in written work, avoiding plagiarism and violations of academic integrity
- Identify and describe key themes and issues represented in American young adult literature of the 20th and 21st centuries
- Perform close readings of young adult literature
- Work cooperatively in a small group environment
- Present ideas about young adult literature and its contexts in a well-organized and well-argued manner in front of class

General Education AAI and WRI: Please note that this class is approved for the *Art, Aesthetics, and Theories of Interpretation (AAI)* and *Writing Intensive (WRI)* designations within the General Education curriculum.

This course fulfills the following expectations required by all approved WRI courses:

- Course learning goals reflect a focus on writing as an integral mode of learning and information literacy
- At least 33% of the course grade based on writing
- At least 20% of class time dedicated to writing in the form of direct instruction, examining models, drafting work, peer review, and instructor feedback

- At least 14 pages of formal writing required and distributed over multiple assignments
- Opportunities for revision after substantive instructor feedback integrated into syllabus

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to do the following required by all approved AAI courses:

- Analyze works of literature using various critical and theoretical methodologies
- Situate works of literature in their relevant historical, cultural and intellectual contexts
- Construct creative and cogent interpretations of literature in written, oral, visual or digital presentations

Canvas: Please visit our Canvas course site at least weekly for the overview of each unit, reminders of due dates, detailed assignment descriptions, readings and resources, and discussion question instructions. If you experience any trouble, please reach out to me and/or the Help Desk.

Course Books (required): All books may be purchased at the Barnes and Noble University Bookstore (located on Cooper Street). You are also encouraged to rent books and to buy used copies. Please do not share books as you will need to bring the texts under discussion to class.

- The Outsiders, Hinton
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Haddon
- Speak, Anderson (graphic novel version)
- The Hunger Games (Book One), Collins
- The Fault in Our Stars, Green
- The Hate U Give, Thomas
- Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda, Albertalli
- Clap When You Land, Acevedo

Additional readings and material available on our Canvas site. See the list of materials at the end of this syllabus.

Course Schedule:

***Please read the entire work before the first class during which it will be discussed.**

***Changes may need to be made to this schedule. It is each student's responsibility to keep up with any necessary changes made to due dates, readings, etc. Any changes will be announced and posted.**

Unit 1 Theme: What is "Young Adult Literature"?

W. Sept 1: Introduction to course; syllabus overview: what does "writing intensive" mean?

M. Sept. 6: NO CLASS—Labor Day

W. Sept. 8: YA Lit overview

M. Sept. 13: YA Lit overview

Unit 2 Theme: YA Lit Innovations

Writing Skills: Writing about Literature and Information Literacy

W. Sept. 15: The Outsiders; quiz on “what is YA Lit” & “Who is the Young Adult”?

M. Sept. 20: The Outsiders and YA films + music

W. Sept. 22: Speak and the YA graphic novel; Latham article

Latham, D. Picturing Silence: The Visual Grammar of *Speak: The Graphic Novel*. *Child Lit Educ* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-021-09436-x>

M. Sept. 27: Speak

W. Sept. 29: Workshop: Writing about literature

<https://libguides.uta.edu/literarycriticism/steps>

M. Oct. 4: Workshop: information literacy and how to document, cite, research correctly and paper topic brainstorming, beginning research, focusing

Unit 3 Theme: Young Adult Identity

Writing skills: Drafting Outline

W. Oct. 6: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time; **due: topic and beginning research 1-page paper**

M. Oct. 11: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time; Workshop: writing a thesis/argument

W. Oct. 13: Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda

M. Oct. 18: Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda;
<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2016/01/28/2016-morris-award-winner-interview-becky-albertalli/>

W. Oct. 20: Workshop: drafting an outline

Unit 4 Theme: Adolescents and Power Relations

Writing skills: drafting introduction and 5-page paper

M. Oct. 25: **due: 2-page draft introduction and outline;** Workshop: peer review

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/teaching_resources/peer_review_presentation.html

W. Oct. 27: Hunger Games and YA Dystopia

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/06/14/fresh-hell-laura-miller>

M. Nov. 1: Hunger Games;

W. Nov. 3: In-class writing reflection exercise; **due: 5-page paper**

M. Nov. 8: The Hate U Give

W. Nov. 10: The Hate U Give; Shelat article

Shelat, Jay. "'I swear those things are so fresh': Sneakers, Race, and Mobility In *The Hate U Give*." *CEA Critic*, vol. 81 no. 1, 2019, p. 70-74. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/cea.2019.0011.

Unit 5 Theme: Grief and Love

Writing Skills: revision + peer review

M. Nov. 15: Workshop: revision

W. Nov. 17: The Fault in Our Stars; interview with John Green;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5fCKVxSgpl>; **due revised 5-page paper**

M. Nov. 22: The Fault in Our Stars; Kirkman, et. al. article

W. Nov. 24: NO CLASS: Thanksgiving holiday

M. Nov. 29: Clap When You Land

W. Dec. 1: Clap When You Land; Workshop: peer review for 7-page paper thesis and introduction

M. Dec. 6: Workshop: 7-page paper

W. Dec. 8: Workshop: group projects

M. Dec. 13: **Due: Group project presentations**—last day of class

TH. Dec. 16: **Due: 7-page paper**

Please note that there is no comprehensive final exam for this class.

Policies and Requirements:

Covid-19 safety precautions: As per University requirement and CDC guidelines, every member of the class will wear a mask indoors, including during class. Please remember to wear a mask to class every day. I am considering making a seating chart so that if a situation arises in which we need to know who sat where, it will be easy to determine.

Attendance: Students are expected to come to class on time, to have completed the reading and any homework assignments and to be prepared to participate actively in class discussion. Attendance will be taken every class meeting by Mr. Barajas. Missing more than 4 classes (without a valid excuse accepted by the instructor within one week of the missed class) is grounds for lowering the final average: 3 points per unexcused class beyond 4. In other words, a final average of 88 points would be lowered to an 85 if a student had missed 5 classes without being excused for any of those absences, etc. Please contact me if you have any questions about the attendance policy.

Grading: The instructor will grade the formal papers. Our teaching assistant will grade the quiz and discussion questions in consultation with me. Informal writing assignments grading will be shared between the instructor and teaching assistant.

Late Assignments: Students should be prepared to take the examinations when scheduled and to hand in all work on time. Late work will be assessed a penalty (a ½ letter grade penalty per day an assignment is late). If an emergency arises that makes it impossible to adhere to the schedule of due dates, please contact me as soon as possible.

Incompletes: Incompletes will be given only in rare instances and in accordance with Rutgers University regulations.

Assignment Due Dates and Weights:

Assignment	Due Date(s)	Weight
Quiz	Sept. 15th	5%
1 pg Topic and Beginning Research	Oct. 6th	5%
2 pg Draft Thesis and Introduction	Oct. 25th	5%
5 pg paper	Nov. 3rd	15%

Revision of 5 pg paper	Nov. 17th	20%
Group Project	Dec. 13 th	15%
7 pg paper	Dec. 16 th	20%
Discussion Questions and participation	Throughout the semester	15%

Brief Description of Assignments:

Quiz: you will take a short quiz in class on **Sept. 15th** over the lectures on “What is Young Adult Literature?” The quiz is worth 5% of your final average.

Writing Process Assignments: A primary goal of this class is to help you to understand and practice the process of writing analytical essays about literature. To that end, we will break down the process of writing a short analytical essay about the first content Unit of the course: Innovations in YA Literature. The **first writing process assignment** will be to write a **1-page topic and beginning research for a literary analysis**—informed by research—of either Speak: The Graphic Novel or The Outsiders (or a comparison essay). In this assignment you will demonstrate your brainstorming about a topic, questions that have arisen, and fruits of your forays into researching the topic. The **second writing process assignment** will be to write a **2-pg draft thesis and introduction to the same essay** that builds upon the topic, brainstorming and initial research and responds to instructor feedback. Each assignment is worth 5 % of your overall grade.

Formal Essays: You will write two formal essays in this class and in so doing, practice the art of composition and argument, research and revision: **a five-page essay that continues to develop the first two writing process assignments, worth 15 % of your final average**, and a **7-page essay** worth 20% of your final average. You will also **revise your 5-page essay**, after instructor feedback, for a grade worth **20% of your final average**. This essay should include at least 3 sources.

The 7-page paper represents the culmination of the writing process and revision assignments in that you will demonstrate greater independence by devising a topic and thesis, researching your topic, and composing the essay for review without assessment along the way--although significant supports will be offered through workshoping and in peer review. This essay should include at least 4 sources; you may choose among any of the books of the course (except for the work you wrote about in the 5-pg essay), or write a comparative essay, as the topic for your essay.

The formal essays should contain clear thesis statements, make arguments that respond to the topic chosen, and use the text (via specific quotations and close readings) as well as research (in the form of scholarly articles) to support the arguments being made. Each written assignment should be clearly written and well-organized. Essays will be graded on content as well as style (grammar, punctuation, etc.)

Group presentation on YA Lit in Popular Culture: This assignment asks students to work together and extend their knowledge of YA literature via a **10-12 minute presentation** on some aspect of young adult literature in popular culture that engages everyone's interest in the group. Many of the works on our syllabus have been adapted for film, television or stage. They have inspired music and fan fiction and enhanced the celebrity of actors associated with the books. Elements from some of the books have entered the popular lexicon ("hunger games") or extended the popularity of a growing sub-genre (the coming out story, etc.). The class will be divided into groups of 3-4 students and will choose their own topic (although we will have to cooperate with each other to make sure that each group does not work on the same text). Each group will present their findings in an engaging PPT presentation in front of the class on December 13th, the last day of class. The group project will be graded on the oral presentation and the PPT presentation and each participant will receive the same grade. This assignment is worth 15 % of the overall grade.

Participation: Each student is expected to **participate actively and intelligently in class discussions** about the readings, to attend class and arrive on time, and to **participate actively and intelligently in in-class activities**. **Attendance will be taken** and participation will be noted. In addition, as a means to enhance student engagement with each other's ideas, students will typically **post two discussion question responses**—available on our Canvas course site—per thematic unit: What is Young Adult literature?, YA Lit Innovations, Young Adult Identity, Adolescents and Power Relations, and Grief and Love. Together, discussion question post grades and participation are worth 15% of your overall average. Our TA will grade the discussion posts.

Additional information on each assignment, plus grading rubrics where appropriate, will be made available on our course Canvas site.

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism—passing off another's ideas or words as one's own—is a serious act of academic dishonesty and represents a serious violation of the academic integrity policy of Rutgers University. Careless or inadequate citing of ideas or words borrowed from another also constitutes an act of academic dishonesty. While we will discuss and workshop the actions that constitute plagiarism, it remains each student's responsibility to acquaint him/herself with Rutgers University's rules on academic integrity:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Any actions of academic dishonesty will be adjudicated. If, after reviewing these rules, you are unsure about which actions constitute violations of the academic integrity policy, please contact me before you hand in any written work. I will be happy to help you.

ADA Statement:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as early as possible in the semester. I cannot accommodate a disability if it has not been documented and shared with me.

Office of Disability Services:

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) provides students with confidential advising and accommodation services to allow students with documented physical, mental, and learning disabilities to successfully complete their course of study at Rutgers University – Camden. The ODS provides for the confidential documentation and verification of student accommodations, and communicates with faculty regarding disabilities and accommodations. The ODS provides accommodation services, which can include readers, interpreters, alternate text, special equipment, and note takers. The ODS acts as a signatory for special waivers. The ODS also works with students, faculty, staff and administrators to enforce the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

For more information, please visit this website: <https://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>

Bibliography of Articles and Links to Resources

1. Latham, D. Picturing Silence: The Visual Grammar of *Speak: The Graphic Novel*. *Child Lit Educ* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-021-09436-x>
2. <https://libguides.uta.edu/literarycriticism/steps>
3. <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2016/01/28/2016-morris-award-winner-interview-becky-albertalli/>
4. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/teaching_resources/peer_review_presentation.html
5. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/06/14/fresh-hell-laura-miller>
6. Shelat, Jay. "'I swear those things are so fresh': Sneakers, Race, and Mobility in *The Hate U Give*." *CEA Critic*, vol. 81 no. 1, 2019, p. 70-74. *Project MUSE*, [doi:10.1353/cea.2019.0011](https://doi.org/10.1353/cea.2019.0011).
7. Interview with John Green: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5fCKVxSqpl>
8. Anna Oberfell Kirkman, Jane A Hartsock, Alexia M Torke. How *The Fault in Our Stars* Illuminates Four Themes of the Adolescent End of Life Narrative. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/medhum-2017-011400>