English 3356.001: Young Adult Literature
Ferguson 183
Monday and Wednesday: 2:30-3:45
Spring, 2024

Instructor: Dr. Michael Martin
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Office Hours:
Monday: 8-930, 1230-130
Tuesday: 11-2
Wednesday: 8-930, 1230-130
Thursday: 11-2
Or by scheduled appointment

**Office hours may change due to conflicts, but alternate times will be offered in those instances**

Course Description: The current university bulletin describes English 3356 as a “[s]tudy of the major genres of literature for a young adult audience. Focus on primary texts from each genre.”

Credit Hours Justification: “Young Adult Literature” typically meets on a twice a week schedule for 75-minute sessions or three times a week for 50-minute sessions. The class will also meet for a 2-hour final examination. Students are expected to complete a significant amount of weekly reading of primary and/or secondary source material that will cover the historical scope of the field. The weekly reading will be accompanied by such assignments as reading quizzes, in-class and out-of-class writings, and class presentations. The amount of writing will average between 16-24 pages over the semester and will, at times, require substantial research. The required outside of class workload will average 6 hours per week.

Course Description: In the next sixteen weeks, we will explore the genre of YA literature. Specifically, using Roland Barthes’s terms, we will break our study into “texts of pleasure” versus “texts of bliss”—we will also refer to these as readerly and writerly works. The semester will begin with a foundational week of theoretical/definitional study. Then, we will move in to a study of both seminal and not-so-seminal (and mainly realist) works that explore common and important teen issues and concerns (“teen angst”) in a more controlled and pleasurable manner. Then, around midsemester, we will use Kristin Cashore’s *Jane, Unlimited* to deconstruct notions of pleasure and take steps into the world of bliss (again, in the Barthes-ian sense).
We will cover one text each week—with certain days built in for different exercises. It is the expectation that students will come to the Monday class meeting having completed the novel for the week along with any additional readings or videos. It is important that you CRITICALLY engage these novels, additional readings, and/or videos; while we may read YA for enjoyment purposes, to not study these works in terms of craft and purpose—even those texts of pleasure—we do a disservice to the work and the field. So, when reading your novels, you should be marking them up as you would a text by Cervantes or Austen or Barth.

Program Objectives: The Program Learning Outcomes for the English major are as follows:
1. The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze works accurately through close reading.
2. The student will demonstrate the ability to conduct and apply effective textual research.
3. The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes.

Required Texts:
Perks of Being a Wallflower, Stephen Chbosky
The Outsiders, S.E. Hinton
Forever, Judy Blume
Cut, Patricia McCormick
Jane, Unlimited, Kristin Cashore
The Chocolate War, Robert Cormier
Female of the Species, Mindy McGinnis
Challenger Deep, Neil Shusterman
How it Went Down, Kekla Magoon
One more book to be named

Along with our novels, there will be times that you will be required to read secondary/tertiary materials that will be made available via D2L. Alongside or instead of such texts, there may be mini-lectures posted to our D2L page. In either case, you are expected to read these essays or watch these videos, and you will be responsible for knowing the information found within.

Course Requirements:
--A cumulative final exam. This will be worth 25% of your final grade.
--Memes and soundtracks or topic responses. 8 weekly posts. 325-350 words required. Each post is worth 12.5 for a total of 100 points. At the end, this will be worth 10% of your final grade.
--Beyond the Classroom Critical Engagement Papers: These papers will be due during the first half of the semester. These will be worth 15% of your final grade.
--Voyage Engagement Paper. During the semester, each student will be required to read a short piece of YA fiction from https://www.unchartedmag.com/genre/voyage-ya-by-uncharted/. I will assign stories. 4 pages. 15% of your final grade.
--Seminar Process. There will be a variety of mini-assignments done throughout the semester that will lead to your seminar paper. Completing this process will count for 10% of your grade.
--Seminar Paper. 7-8 pages. This will be worth 25% of your final grade.
Grades
All assignments will be graded on the standard 100 point scale.
A: 90-100
B: 80-89
C: 70-79
D: 60-69
F: 0-59

Assignments:
Memes and soundtracks or topic responses
This is what students should see as low-stakes writing and grading. For 8 of our books—beginning with The Outsiders and ending with How It Went Down—you will have to do a weekly post to D2L. This post will be due by the start of class on each Monday (2:30 PM). For three of the books (you get to choose which 3), you will have to choose a song that you believe speaks to the ideas present in that book (think of it as a soundtrack song). In your D2L post, you will include a link to the song (a YouTube link or lyrics link) and then include a 325–350-word (equivalent of one page) response as to why you see that song connecting to that work. When working with the song connection, you can choose any song as it connects to any of the many different themes/issues. For three of the works, you have to do a 325-350-word “key scene” response. In this response, you are to write about a specific scene/event within the text that you believe offers the reader a place to enter the larger, more implied conversation of the text. This is only a one-page response, so direct readers to the scene (for example, chapter and/or page) and display how it helps us “see” the central, implied discussion. Finally, for two of the books, you are to generate your own meme that you believe could be attached to the book. Then, in a 325–350-word response, discuss how your meme exactly works with one’s engagement with the theme of the novel.

As stated, this is low stakes. This should not be done last minute, but this should also not take you all week. I do expect thought and engagement, and this is where you will be graded. The writing style/tone can be conversational. I will not be grading on grammar and spelling—though this does not mean that you can turn in something unintelligible. Instead, I will be looking for originality and critical thought. Each of these responses—there will be 8—will be worth 12.5 points. I will provide a general rubric. At the end of the semester, they will be added up and can equal up to 100 points.

Also, these will be due by 2:30 on Mondays. The discussion board will lock at 2:30. You will not be allowed to turn these in late nor can you make these up. If you miss one, you miss one.

Beyond the Classroom Critical Engagement Papers
As explained, we will be spending two class periods each week on a single text. I have set a “dominant” discussion for each work AND we will hit on any number of other discussions. Furthermore, the different memes, songs, and responses completed each week will generate different topics of conversation. This is where we will initially explore our ideas.
However, beyond verbally working through our ideas, it is also important that we work out specific and defended arguments in writing. Therefore, each student will be assigned to complete a Critical Engagement Paper on a particular novel. However, in order to give you some foundation of support and strength, each week of study will end—as opposed to begin—with five students writing a formal, post-class paper. These papers will be due on the Friday of each week by 5:00 PM. The requirements for this paper are that the student is to continue a conversation that emerged from our class that week. In doing so, you will need to take a paragraph to a page to summarize that class conversation—what was the topic, the different opinions, disagreements, agreements, etc.—and then clearly express where you are going to take this discussion—either adding to it or going against it. Then, you will use the rest of the pages (3-4) to continue this discussion and make your argument. While you are not required to make use of sources beyond those provided to the class and our class discussion, you are allowed to make use of additional sources (as long as they are recognized and cited). As already stated, these papers are to be seen as formal, academic writing. While they will be generated by less formal conversations (class discussions and writings), they should be delivered as thought out, well structured, specifically supported arguments. Students are not allowed to make use of AI generators or AI generated text for this assignment.

Formal Requirements: 4 pages (works cited page can be page 5); 12 point font; Times New Roman; One inch margins; MLA 9. It is expected that these essays be complete and edited (sound argument and clear expression).

Voyage Papers: During the second half of the semester, you will be required to complete a critical response to an additional YA short story. The assigned a story that will be found at the following site: https://www.unchartedmag.com/genre/voyage-ya-by-uncharted/

For these papers, you will be required to read this story and complete a written critical response. A critical response is a paper that moves beyond just reacting to a piece of writing (sharing that you like or dislike a piece) and will instead be a focused, supported, thought out discussion and interpretation of a piece. So, you will read the assigned story and then, individually, develop a critical response to said story. When reading this response, I will look for a clear thesis, supported discussion (focused evidence and analysis), and the employment of ideas and terminology that we have covered throughout the semester.

As with your other engagement papers, these will be due on Fridays by 5:00 PM via dropbox.

Formal Requirements: 4 pages (works cited page can be page 5); 12 point font; Times New Roman; One inch margins; MLA 9. It is expected that these essays be complete and edited (sound argument and clear expression).

Seminar Paper:
This will be discussed at length later in the semester. However, be aware that you will complete a formal, academic paper of length. This paper will be due at the end of the semester. This is where our last, additional book will come in to play. I will provide the class with a list of textual options. Each student will choose one of those texts to serve as the primary work for their
seminar paper. In the first week of class, you will be provided with the list of books and you will be required to turn in your choice to me by **Monday, January 29th** at class. You will need to get a copy of this book and have it read by **February 26th**—we will complete the first part of the process for this seminar paper on February 26th and 28th. You will complete the second part of this process **April 8th and 10th**. The Seminar Paper will be turned in on Monday, April 29th via both print and D2L.

**Course Policies and Procedures:**

*Attendance and Late Work:*

I have found, and studies have shown, that students who attend class and are regular participants in activities will show improvement in the areas of critical thinking and writing and thus are more likely to earn better grades. As such, I do hold to an attendance policy. This being said, you will be allowed four absences without penalty. An absence will be counted on any day that you are not in class.

If you miss more than four class meetings, your final grade may be impacted in the following manner: if you miss 5 class meetings, your final grade may be no higher than a C; if you miss 6 class periods, you may fail the course (this is three weeks of the course). Again, remember that while your final grade will not be directly penalized for any early absence, the fact that you have missed the exploration of certain essays and ideas may ultimately impact your understanding of course material and thus impact your own work. Also, if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes missed from a peer or to meet with me during office hours. I will not “re-teach” an entire period to anyone through e-mail messages nor will I run through an entire lecture or presentation during office hours. I will gladly help to clarify and explore ideas, but I will not re-teach an entire period.

As for late work, I do my best to return all work in a prompt manner. In order to do so, I must have all assignments turned in on time. This being said, any assignment that is turned in late will be dropped 5 points for each day that it is late. Assignments will be turned in at the start of class. An assignment will be considered late if it is turned in more than 15 minutes after class has begun. As you will know of due dates in advance, I will not accept such excuses as my printer broke, the library printer did not work, something happened to my computer, etc. Plan ahead. Remember, the 8 low stakes writings cannot be turned in late.

The only absences that will count as excused absences will be DOCUMENTED family emergencies, university sanctioned events (this only includes sport/team events and will only count if I have documentation from the “coach”), and extreme medical issues. An excused absence does not include absences due to doctor appointments, personal illness (a cold, the flu, etc.), work, etc.. In the case of any excused absence, you must remember that any work that is due that day is still due that day unless you have contacted me in **advance** and I have agreed to other arrangements.
Academic Integrity:

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Chat GPT/AI Programs:

What is the rule on Chat GPT or other AI program for this course?

I understand that CHAT GPT can be used as a sort of tutor to help break down complex readings and ideas, and thus use of the program for tutorial purposes to help prepare you for class MAY be acceptable, ONLY if you acknowledge said use to myself and peers. However, as I will show you, most current programs do not work as well with our texts. In terms of your writing, though, any use of an AI program as an aid in completing your assignment is not acceptable; all writing must be original and come directly from you.
**Cell Phones:**

Unless instructed otherwise, all cell phones will be put up in your bag at the start of class. They will remain there for the period unless you are instructed otherwise. Please, remember, we are adults and I SHOULD NOT need to keep reminding you to put a phone away.

**Class Discussion and Class Conduct:**

In order to help improve our critical thinking and writing skills, we will regularly engage in class discussions and writings. The purpose of such work will be to recognize that while many of the students in the class may be similar in terms of age or year, there are different academic abilities in the classroom and different ways to look at an issue or piece of writing. In other words, one can always learn from his/her peers. In order for this to happen, students should come to class ready to engage in discussion and debate. Our goal is not to “win” an argument or roll over our peers, but to critically engage the texts and our own responses to these texts. This is a space where one must feel comfortable to express his/her ideas and be open to having those ideas questioned and debated. During any discussion, I will encourage debate, but I will not allow any student to employ sexist, racist, or homophobic speech, to commit a threatening action toward any peer, or to purposely work to silence or roll over a peer.

In the case of this course, disruptive behavior will include the following: consistent use of cell phones/texting during class, consistent side discussions that are not part of classroom dialogue, referring to your teacher or peers in an inappropriate way, physically threatening your teacher or peers, and/or completing homework assignments for another class. Students participating in such activities can be asked to leave the class and will be counted as absent.

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

**Withheld Grades:**

“Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”

For the complete policy, [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp)

**Students with Disabilities:**

“To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building
Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices.”

Student Wellness and Well-Being

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:

The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby) www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041
The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub” Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

• Health Services
• Counseling Services
• Student Outreach and Support
• Food Pantry
• Wellness Coaching
• Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008 thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
• Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
• National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
• Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255) • johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741