



Department of English and Writing Studies

## English 2034F: Young Adult Literature Fall 2025

**Instructor:** Dr. Miranda Green-Barteet  
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**Class Time:** M 11:30-12:30, W 11:30-1:30  
**Class Location:** M: AHB 1B04, W: TC 341  
**Office Hours:** M 12:30-2:00, By appointment

### Calendar Description

This course examines literature for and about adolescents to interrogate what it means to be adolescent and how the adolescent experience is represented in literature. Focusing on texts written from the 1940s on, we use key critical and theoretical debates to understand literature's place within larger scholarly trends.

### Course Description

In *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*, Roberta Seelinger Trites argues that "Young Adult novels are about power" (3). Trites explains that in YA novels "protagonists must learn about the social forces around them. They learn to negotiate the levels of power within which the myriad of social institutions they must function including family; the church; school; the government; social constructions of sexuality, gender race, and class; and social mores surrounding death" (3). According to Trites YA novels can help adolescents learn how to negotiate their place in the world. Her assessment, along of that with many scholars studying Children's and YA literature, stands in stark contrast to the popular perception of YA lit as vapid, insignificant, and distinctly not literary. Drawing on a variety of genres and starting with S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, the text that is widely considered to start the "Golden Age" of YA literature, this course takes for granted that YA literature is aesthetically and critically complex, as we focus on the political and social history of young adults and their lived experiences. We will also consider the place of young adult literature within larger scholarly trends and conversations.

Throughout the semester, we will discuss YA books as literary and aesthetic texts, considering them through a range of critical frameworks. We will consider how young adult and adult readers respond to the texts differently as well as how the representation of adolescence has changed over time. We will conclude the semester with a firm understanding of how to read texts for adolescents. We will consider a variety of topics, including:

- How does YA lit represent the lives of adolescents?
- What socio-cultural, philosophical, and/or artistic purpose does YA lit serve, particularly when such books are written for an implied audience of young people?
- What kinds of definitions and/or portrayals of femininity, masculinity, and adolescence does YA lit tend to offer?
- In what ways does YA lit consider, represent, or challenge power structures experienced by actual adolescents?
- Why does the popular perception of YA lit differ so from the perceptions of those who study and research YA lit?

### Course Objectives

In addition to gaining and sharing knowledge through the assigned readings, during the semester, successful students will

- Gain a basic knowledge of the development of young adult literature and be able to define young adult

literature;

- Develop an understanding of literary genres and periods, specifically of contemporary Young Adult literature;
- Develop a sense of the way literature influences and is influenced by social constructions of age;
- Develop a basic understanding of how to apply theory to literature;
- Begin to identify the changing forms and expectations of literature across time;
- Begin to apply theory to literature;
- Analyze how adolescence is represented in literature;
- Expand on their research skills; and
- Learn to assess, synthesize, and apply theoretical and critical sources to literature.

## Required Texts and Course Materials

*The Outsiders* (1967) by S.E. Hinton, Penguin Classics, 1995. \$20.00

*Forever. . .* (1975), by Jude Blume, Atheneum Books, 2003. \$16.99

*The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, HarperCollins, 2017. \$21.00

*The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline, Cormorant Books, 2017. \$19.95

*Blood Water Paint* by Joy McCullough, Penguin, 2018. \$17.99

*Heartstopper*, Vol. 1, by Alice Oseman, Scholastic, 2018. \$19.99

*New Kid* by Jerry Craft, HarperCollins, 2019. \$19.99

**\*These texts and editions are required, and students are expected to bring copies of books to class.** For example, on the days we discuss *The Outsiders*, students are expected to have a copy of that novel in class. In addition to these texts, we will read secondary articles that will be posted to OWL. Students are expected to print a copy of these readings and bring that copy to class. The reason for this is that we retain information better and are less distracted when we use hard copies of books and essays as opposed to digital copies. Additionally, students who have these specific editions will be permitted to use the editions in the final exam.

Students also need a one-subject notebook, duo tang, or file folder for Reading Journals.

## Course Requirements

\*Please note: some assignments will be completed in-class. You will need to bring paper and pen or pencil to each class.

|                                                                            |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Class Engagement                                                           | 10% |
| Reading Journal                                                            | 10% |
| Reading Quizzes                                                            | 10% |
| Short Essays<br>(1 <sup>st</sup> essay @ 10%, 2 <sup>nd</sup> essay @ 15%) | 25% |
| I-Search Essay                                                             | 20% |
| Final Exam                                                                 | 25% |

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## **Assignment Format**

### **Class Engagement:**

In my opinion, the most successful college classrooms have students and instructors equally engaged in a discussion about the readings and assignments. I expect that all students will complete assigned course readings and will be prepared to discuss those readings on the appropriate day as well as prepared to participate in any other in-class activities. Lecture, class discussion, and in-class writings will comprise a large part of class, and while I recognize that not all students are comfortable speaking in class and that there is some difficulty in holding class discussions via Zoom, I do expect that all students will be engaged and actively listening.

Students are required to complete an Engagement Achievements Worksheet throughout the term and to submit it electronically by the last day of class. Students who do not submit the Worksheet will receive a 0 for participation. We will review the Engagement Achievements Worksheet on the first day of class.

### **Reading Journal:**

Each student will keep a reading journal, and each student must complete a minimum of six journals throughout the term. Journals must be kept in a file folder or a duotang, and all journals must be handwritten. The purpose of the Reading Journal is for student to reflect and respond to what they have read. While I do expect the journal entries to be critical, I do not expect them to be planned out or argumentative. Rather, I want students to spend about 20-25 minutes writing down their initial thoughts and/or responses to a novel. A detailed prompt will be reviewed on the first day of class.

### **Reading Quizzes:**

We will complete pop Reading Quizzes throughout the semester as I deem them necessary. The purpose of Reading Quizzes is to ensure that students are reading, and as the term “pop” suggests, these will not be announced prior to the day they are given. Quizzes will be based on the any reading that has been assigned up to the day of the quiz, and they will take no more than 10 minutes. Students should anticipate at least one quiz per novel, and students who require accommodation may speak to me individually to ensure they receive accommodation.

### **Short Essays:**

Students will complete two short essays (maximum of 3 pages) throughout the semester. Students will be given several topics on which to write, and students will receive a detailed prompt several weeks before each assignment is due.

### **I Search Essay:**

For this assignment, students will develop a research question, complete research, and write an essay that details their research process. Students will receive detailed directions several weeks before the assignment is due.

### **Final Exam:**

Students will complete an in-person Final Exam during the exam period. We will review the format several weeks prior to the exam, and we will review materials as well.

## **Course Policies**

### **Discussion Guidelines:**

We will cover a variety of topics pertaining to young adult literature. Among other topics, we will consider how race, class, gender, sex, and sexuality are presented within the genre. Some of the materials we will consider may include topics that may be difficult to read about and to discuss. Ensure you are comfortable discussing this potentially sensitive material. Additionally, this class is a space in which students are free to

express their views, to post questions, or to raise issues without reprisal. Students are expected to be thoughtful, respectful, and kind.

Students should also feel free to address any topics in their written assignments, taking care to do so within the parameters of the assignment.

**Professionalism & Privacy:**

Western Students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations apply to this course:

- Students are expected to be courteous and kind and to follow online etiquette expectations provided on OWL.
- All course materials created by the instructor are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared.
- All course materials created by graduate students (i.e., presentations, handouts, discussion questions, etc.) are the intellectual property of the student creating the materials and cannot be sold/shared.
- Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without the instructor's or the students' explicit permission.
- Permitted recordings are only to be used for class and are not to be distributed.
- All recorded sessions, if any, will remain within the course site or unlisted if streamed.

**OWL/Brightspace:**

The use of OWL/Brightspace is necessary for successful completion of this course. This includes accessing readings as stipulated in the course outline, downloading instructions and guidelines for assignments, and submitting assignments through OWL/Brightspace. All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website.

**Communicating with Instructor:**

Email is the best way to communicate with me. It may take up to 24 hours for me to respond to you during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. Note: all email communication to me should be respectful in tone. Be sure to include an appropriate subject line—e.g., Missing Class, Oct. 13 or Extension Request for Novel Chunk.

**Assignment Format, Submitting Assignments, Late Submission:**

All assignments are due on the date stated on the class schedule. All assignments that are completed outside of class must be submitted to Brightspace as .doc or .dox files. Do not submit PDFs. Individual assignment prompts will include specific instructions for submitting assignments. Some assignments will be completed in class. All in class assignments must be handwritten on paper and submitted to the instructor upon completion.

It is your responsibility to submit assignments on time. *Late papers will not be accepted.*

Note: If you need an extension, email me 48-hours before the assignment is due to request an extension. You do not need to share with me the intimate details of your life. That information is none of my business, and you should never have to disclose private information to get support. If you feel compelled to offer a reason for requesting an extension, I encourage you to be creative (e.g., your cat vomited on your rough draft or you're a Marvel super-villain who is planning an inter-galactic heist and need more time to plan.)

**Electronic Devices in the Classroom:**

Cellphones are not permitted in class. Laptops are not permitted unless it is your turn to serve as the designated note-taker. The reason for this policy is that screens and internet access detract both from the communal, social environment of the classroom and from your own learning experience. You will learn more and retain more of what you have learned if you work with your textbooks in class and write down notes by hand or listen actively and rely on the note-taker's notes. We will all communicate better with one another if we do not rely on screens.

Please note that this policy extends to students with approved accommodations. Because our class will always have at least two designated note-takers using a laptop, students with accommodations will not require their own laptops and will not be permitted to use them except when it is their turn to serve as designated note-taker.

There will be two to three designated note-takers per class, and following each class, designated note-takers will email notes to the instructor, who will then post notes to the “Note” file in Brightspace.

**Attendance and Illness Policy:**

To do well in a literature class, you must attend class. I expect you to attend class and to participate in each class.

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. This means that the first three class hours you will be recorded as absences but *excused provided you don't miss any more*.
- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours without academic consideration or accommodation (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a 72).
- If you miss more than nine hours of class without academic consideration or accommodation (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g., an earned final grade of 80 will be reported as a 68).
- Please do not come to class if you're feeling ill. As stated above, you will receive three hours' worth of excused absences.

**Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism:**

“Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, which can be found here:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Plagiarism includes the use of ChatGPT and other kinds of generative AI.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently Western and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.”

**Note:** you may not submit any work for this class that you have submitted for another class.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies in English and Writing Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

**Generative AI:**

“In this course, the use of AI (such as automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is prohibited, unless there has been discussion with and agreement by the instructor before beginning an assignment. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and/or other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.”

**Prerequisites:**

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees if you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Academic Consideration Policy:**

“University policy on academic considerations is described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar’s webpage:

[https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/index.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html)

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation.”

**General information about missed coursework:**

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar’s webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this and, therefore, always require formal supporting documentation:

- Short Essays
- I-Search Essay

**Intellectual Property and Copyright:**

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites such as OneClass, Quizlet, or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

**Accessible Education:**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf). Please speak to me, either in person or via email, by the end of the second week in class to discuss any accommodations you may have.

**Mental Health Supports**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 after class hours and on weekends.

**Religious Accommodation:**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

**Statement on Gender-based and Sexual Violence:**

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentsupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

**Other Student Support Services:**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

## Class Meeting Schedule

**\*OWL: Readings are posted to OWL.**

**\* Readings may be amended with notice from the professor.**

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mon., Sept. 8  | First Day of Class<br>What is Young Adult Literature?                                                                                                                                        |
| Wed., Sept. 10 | OWL: Cart, "The Sixties and the Seventies: The Rise of Realism and the First Golden Age" (second chapter in PDF entitled "That Was Then"<br>Hinton, <i>The Outsiders</i> , Ch. 1-3, pp. 1-41 |
| Fri., Sept. 12 | <b>Due:</b> Syllabus Quiz, complete by midnight                                                                                                                                              |
| Mon., Sept. 15 | Hinton, <i>The Outsiders</i> , Ch. 4-8, pp. 42-99<br>Review: I-Search Essay                                                                                                                  |
| Wed., Sept. 17 | Librarian Visit: Jason Dyck<br>Hinton, <i>The Outsiders</i> , Ch. 9-end, pp. 100-136                                                                                                         |
| Mon., Sept. 22 | Blume, <i>Forever . . .</i> , Ch. 1-10, pp. 1-60                                                                                                                                             |
| Wed., Sept. 24 | Blume, <i>Forever . . .</i> , Ch. 11-15, pp. 61-160<br>OWL: Trites, "'All of a sudden I came': Sex and Power in Adolescent Novels"                                                           |
| Mon., Sept. 29 | Blume, <i>Forever . . .</i> , Ch. 11-15, pp. 160-end                                                                                                                                         |
| Wed., Oct. 1   | Craft, <i>New Kid</i> , Ch. 1-9, pp. 1-163                                                                                                                                                   |
| Fri., Oct. 3   | <b>Due: Short Essay 1</b><br><b>Submit to Brightspace by Midnight!</b>                                                                                                                       |
| Mon., Oct. 6   | OWL: Bishop, " <a href="#">Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors</a> "<br>Craft, <i>New Kid</i> , Ch. 10-end, pp. 164-249                                                                |
| Wed., Oct. 8   | OWL: Halko and Jimenez, "Race"<br>Thomas, <i>The Hate U Give</i> , Ch. 1-5, pp. 1-93<br><b>Due:</b> First Set of Reading Journals                                                            |
| Mon., Oct. 13  | Thanksgiving, No Class                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Wed., Oct. 15  | OWL: Trites, "'Do I dare disturb the universe?': Adolescent Literature in the Postmodern Era"<br>Thomas, <i>The Hate U Give</i> , Ch. 6-12, pp. 94-219                                       |
| Mon., Oct. 20  | Thomas, <i>The Hate U Give</i> , Ch. 12-21, pp. 227-334                                                                                                                                      |
| Wed., Oct. 22  | OWL: Gubar, " <a href="#">Empathy is Not Enough</a> "<br>Thomas, <i>The Hate U Give</i> , Ch. 22-end, pp. 337-end                                                                            |

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|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mon., Oct. 27 | <b>Workshop: I Search Essay</b><br>Directions will be given a few days prior to the workshop.                                                                          |
| Wed., Oct. 29 | McCullough, <i>Blood Water Paint</i> , Part I and II, pp. 1-88<br>OWL: Cadden, "The Rhetoric of the Verse Novel"                                                       |
| Fri., Oct. 31 | <b>Due: Short Essay 2</b><br><b>Submit to Brightspace by Midnight!</b>                                                                                                 |
| Mon., Nov. 3  | Reading Week                                                                                                                                                           |
| Wed., Nov. 5  | Reading Week                                                                                                                                                           |
| Mon., Nov. 10 | McCullough, <i>Blood Water Paint</i> , Part III, pp. 90-171                                                                                                            |
| Wed., Nov. 12 | McCullough, <i>Blood Water Paint</i> , Part IV V, pp. 171-256                                                                                                          |
| Mon., Nov. 17 | McCullough, <i>Blood Water Paint</i> , Part V, pp. 259-end                                                                                                             |
| Wed., Nov. 19 | OWL: Basu, Broad, Hintz, Introduction to <i>Contemporary Dystopian Fiction For Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers</i><br>Dimaline, <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> , pp. 1-79 |
| Fri., Nov. 21 | <b>Due: I-Search Essay</b><br><b>Submit to Brightspace by Midnight!</b>                                                                                                |
| Mon., Nov. 24 | OWL: Rose, "Coming of Age in Indigenous Science Fiction"<br>Dimaline, <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> , pp. 80-129                                                           |
| Wed., Nov. 26 | Dimaline, <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> , pp. 130-170<br><b>Review: Final Exam</b>                                                                                         |
| Mon., Dec. 1  | Dimaline, <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> , pp. 171-end<br><b>Due: Final Set of Reading Journals</b>                                                                         |
| Wed., Dec. 3  | OWL: Clark, Lo, and Chen, "Queerness"<br>Oseman, <i>Heartstopper</i> Vol. 1, pp.1-194                                                                                  |
| Mon., Dec. 8  | Last Day of Class<br>Oseman, <i>Heartstopper</i> Vol. 1, pp. 195-end                                                                                                   |