

**UNIV 103: Identity, Community, and Teen Angst:  
Understanding the High School Experience Through Young Adult Literature  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2013**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this seminar, students will reflect not only on their high school experiences but also on how high school is understood in young adult literature, popular culture, and across a range of disciplines. The goal is to introduce students to various interpretations, conceptions, and manifestations of how high school works and how young people navigate the institution. This seminar will encourage students to reflect on their own high school experiences through a range of academic, literary, and theoretical lenses. High school, as an institution and its associated traditions (prom, football, band, etc.), will be examined. Students will apply personal perspectives while considering psychological, educational, and social implications. As a community of future educators, this course offers students the chance to think critically about the nature of high school and adolescence as well as the transition to adulthood and professional life as a teacher. Students will be supported in their transition from high school student to college student and mentored into the culture of teacher preparation at Millersville University.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Critically discuss the stories within the young adult literature, with particular attention to narrative elements and motifs.
- Identify the characteristics of young adult literature as a genre and delineate trends in the portrayal of adolescents and high school within this canon.
- Make intertextual connections among a range of different texts, across genres, forms, and other media.
- Analyze high school and adolescence as a cultural phenomenon and social institution, especially with regard to issues of identity (gender, sexuality, social class, ethnicity).
- Question understandings of themselves as students and members of school communities.
- Compare the portrayals of various issues presented in the books to information about the issues provided in other formats (scholarly research, theoretical articles, journalism, etc).
- Demonstrate a mastery of the skills and dispositions necessary for success as a college student

## COURSE TEXTS

- Kanar, Carol C. (2012). *The Confident Student* (8<sup>th</sup> edition – custom edition)
- Bayoumi, M. (2008). *How does it Feel to be a Problem: Being Young and Arab in America*. NY: Puffin.\* MU Common Read
- Selected articles available via e-reserve (see bibliography)
- Other instructor-provided readings

### **Young Adult Literature**

- Alexie, S. (2007). *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. NY: Little Brown and Company.
- Berk, J. (2010). *The Dark Days of Hamburger Halpin*. NY: Knopf.
- Bissinger, H.G. (2004). *Friday Night Lights*. Cambridge, MA: DeCapo Press.
- Grimes, N. (2002). *Bronx Masquerade*. NY: Dial Press.
- King, A.S. (2012). *Ask the Passengers*. NY: Little Brown.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **Service Learning**

This course, like all first year experience courses, will contain a service-learning component. You will choose from a variety of options for your service learning. These options will be reviewed in class but may include becoming a pen pal with a high school freshman, volunteering in a local high school or with teens in another context, or an experience designed by you.

### **That's on Tuesdays (TOTS)**

A helpful program that is run by the peer mentors is called “That’s on Tuesdays.” This program highlight various issues confronting many first-year students. The TOTs program will be held in the SMC Multipurpose Room at 9 p.m. These are really great events that can help many of our Dates and topics of discussion are

September 10th	Purpose for College / Critical Thinking
September 17th	Managing Time
September 24th	Learning Styles
October 1st	Emotional Intelligence
October 8th	Study Skills
October 22nd	Test Anxiety
October 29th	Learning to Read and Reading to Remember
November 5th	Research Skills
November 12th	Writing and Speaking
November 19th	Managing Money

## Conceptual Framework for Professional Education

In this course, we will be enacting the MU Professional Education Unit's Conceptual Framework that contains the following foci:

Learning Communities of Inquiry and Action	We will engage in learning communities in which reflection, collaboration, lifelong learning, and habits of mind are developed and nurtured.
Focus on Students	We will balance knowledge and the principles and concepts delineated in professional and state standards with an appreciation of all students' individuality, diversity, and cultures.
Exemplary Professional Practices	We will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions of exemplary professionals. We will have strong competence in our content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills as delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. We will demonstrate professional dispositions or standards of conduct, will be supportive of students, families, and the school and community and will serve as catalysts for positive and responsible change.

*To view the full text of the Conceptual Framework & Dispositions Guidelines, visit the School of Education web page linked to MU's home page.*

### **Dispositions Statement:**

The Professional Dispositions of all of our Candidates are supported and continuously assessed by the Professional Education Unit. If these Dispositions are found to be less than proficient, programs may require evidence of successful remediation before an individual is permitted to progress. Students are expected to: (1) Communicate Professionally, (2) Demonstrate Professional Growth, (3) Demonstrate Professional Relationships, (4) Exhibit Attributes Suitable to the Profession, and (5) Display Responsible and Ethical Behavior. Students are referred to the evaluation criteria and the administrative policy online at <http://www.millersville.edu/education/>

This course is part of your preparation for a professional career in education. During the class sessions and during any interaction with the instructor or class members, you are expected to exhibit professional attitudes, behavior, and those qualities that characterize professional teachers. When the professor determines that you display unprofessional behavior, you will receive a warning. Subsequent unprofessional behavior will result in the loss of points, a meeting, and a dispositions citation filed with the department chair and the Dean of the School of Education.

Specifically, in this seminar, we will expect that you demonstrate the following dispositions both on campus and in the schools:

- Attend all classes—on time and for their duration. Excused absences are explained on-line at <http://www.millersville.edu/registrar/faculty/attendance-policy.php>
- Actively participate in all class activities and discussions.
- Complete all readings and assignments on time. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.
- Monitor, reflect upon, and evaluate your own performance regularly.
- Speak and write in a professional manner.
- Demonstrate a resilient work attitude toward change and demonstrate flexibility.
- Demonstrate respect for peers and faculty.
- Demonstrate responsible and constructive ways to express disagreements, if they occur.
- Become lifelong learners who make the most of every class period.
- Accept constructive suggestions in a positive manner.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Academic integrity includes refraining from cheating and/or plagiarizing from the work of others. All students are expected to act with personal integrity at all times. **PLEASE NOTE: USING ANOTHER STUDENT'S WORK AS YOUR OWN IS CONSIDERED PLAGIARISM, EVEN IF YOU GIVE CREDIT TO THAT STUDENT. YOUR LESSON PLANS AND ALL OTHER ASSIGNMENTS ARE TO BE YOUR OWN WORK.**

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include but are not limited to cheating, copying, plagiarizing, submitting other persons' work as one's own, using Internet sources without citation, fabricating citations, tampering with the academic work of another student or facilitating other student's acts of academic dishonesty.

Students charged with a breach of academic integrity will receive due process and if the charge is found valid, academic sanction may range depending upon the severity of the offense, from an F for the assignment to an F for the course. The University's statement on academic integrity is available on the MU website.

Students should become familiar with and abide by the University's policy on academic honesty and dishonesty found in the Student Handbook and the Academic Honesty and Dishonesty brochure. Copies may be obtained in the Student Life Office in the Student Memorial Center, in the Provost's Office in Biemesderfer Executive Center, or on the MU website. The content of the Student Handbook applies to this course. If you are uncertain as to any of the information provided, please consult with me before you undertake any projects in this course.

### **Accommodations for Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs should submit pertinent documentation to the Office of Learning Services within the first week of class. This will allow the professor to better accommodate those students with special needs. Additionally, individual students are encouraged to approach the instructor directly at any time during the semester regarding necessary accommodations.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### **Class Participation** (10% of total grade, Due: On-going)

This course is intended to be highly collaborative in nature. Emphasis on utilizing skills that you might use in your future classrooms will be a priority. Daily participation is an expectation. Engagement is a shared responsibility between teacher and students. Teaching is not a “dog and pony show” where the teacher is expected to entertain the students. Rather, students are expected to participate in all class discussions, simulations, exercises, etc. and come to class prepared to engage in high-level, thoughtful discussions on all topics.

Throughout the semester you be engaged in this class beyond the walls of Stayer. This included online activities through D2L and attending events on campus on your own time. Participation in the service-learning component of this course is a requirement, not an option. Understanding how involving your future students in service-learning activities is a vital part of becoming a teacher.

### **Personal Narrative Assignment** (10% of total grade, Due: 9/16)

For this assignment, you will write a college-level paper that reflects on a pivotal high school experience, either in a positive or negative manner. Following are the guidelines:

1. Since this essay is about your life, you should use the word “I.” (first-person)
2. Based on *Bronx Masquerade* you should consider who you were in high school as well as how you were perceived in high school.
3. You must use a poetic device (such as metaphor) as the focus of your paper.
4. Your essay will directly reference *Bronx Masquerade* and should contains details about your high school and home community.
5. You are not writing a full-length autobiography; you are describing one pivotal personal experience. Your essay should fall somewhere in the range of 7-9 pages and you should be prepared to share your paper in some form in class (mostly likely within a small group).

### **Reflections on Learning** (10% of grade, Due: 10/7, 11/18 , and 12/9)

You will select three activities related to class to reflect on throughout the course. One of these must be a transitional activity, one will be your service-learning experience, and one must be a campus cultural event. Each reflection will follow the format of, “*I used to think \_\_\_\_\_, but now I’m learning \_\_\_\_\_.*” Each reflection should be approximately 1-2 pages in length, double-spaced.

### **Reading Response Requirements - RRR** (10% of total grade, Due: 9/23, 10/7, and 11/4)

Active reading is an expectation. Students are expected to read the assigned reading(s) outside of class and come to class prepared to discuss the text and synthesize understandings from the text with information from other sources. The professor will expect to see evidence of active reading in the form of margin notes, chapter notes, highlights, post-its, etc. Class discussion will drive our time together so it is essential that all students be prepared to share their thoughts and opinions. Three times throughout the semester you will be required to “produce” a response to a novel the class has read. You have a wide

range of options for how to capture and share your response. You may be as creative as you'd like. You may simply write about your response or you may find a much more visual or artistic way to share how you engaged with the book. Ideas will be explored further in class. The key requirement is that you capture your experience as a reader of the book and help to initiate discussion of the issues presented in the text.

**Media Analysis Assignment** (10% of total grade, Due: 11/18)

For this assignment you will compare a TV show or movie portrayal of high school to the ones we've been exploring in class. You should choose a show that involves content similar to one of the novels we've read or that connects to discussions we've had in class. For instance you might look at the TV show version of *Friday Night Lights* or you might look more specifically at a character in a book compared to one in a show (a coach from *Glee* or a principal from *The Breakfast Club*).

**Online Module Activities** (10% of grade, Due: Ongoing)

You will have the opportunity to use D2L for a variety of activities and assignments. You will participate in a discussion of MU's common read, *How Does it Feel to be a Problem?* In addition, you will get practice with quizzes and other tools within D2L throughout the semester. More details of the requirements will be provided within D2L.

**Quizzes** (10% of grade, Due: Ongoing)

Periodic quizzes (announced and/or unannounced) will be utilized throughout this course. Quizzes may cover young adult novel, the textbook (Kanan), or articles.

**Position Paper and Presentation** (30% of grade, Due: finals week (12/11 at 10:15))

Based on our ongoing reading and discussion of the nature of high school and related issues, you will select a topic to study in more depth. This will provide you with the opportunity to utilize library resources to conduct research on your topic or issue. You will then synthesize your findings and take a stand on the topic under consideration. You will present your paper in class and invite your peers to debate the issue with you.

## CALENDAR

*Tentative schedule, plan for changes and additions. Bring required literature and other readings with you to class*

Class Date	Topic	Transition Activities	Reading/Due
8/26	Welcome and Course Overview	Reading a syllabus/ Planning for the semester	
9/2	NO CLASS: Holiday		
9/9	The Power of Stories: Personal Narrative and Identity Development		<b>Read:</b> - <i>Bronx Masquerade</i> - Banks chapter <b>Due:</b> Bring your yearbook
9/16	Utilizing the Library and Mastering D2L	<i>Guest Speakers:</i> Library, Jessica George D2L, Marie Firestone	<b>Read:</b> - <i>Kanar 3</i> (Thinking Critically and Creatively) <b>Due:</b> Personal Narrative
9/23	Dancing, Dating, and Sex: Examining Romance, Gender, and Heteronormativity	<i>Guest Speaker:</i> A.S. King	<b>Read:</b> - <i>Ask the Passengers</i> - Lo blog <b>Due:</b> RRR 1
9/30	Team Building and Leadership Development *Meet at Ropes Course by Pucillo Gymnasium – dress accordingly	Team Building with Dr. Nesbitt (Wellness and Sport Science)	<b>Read</b> - <i>Kanar 13</i> (Health and Well Being)
10/7	A Sense of Place: Understanding How Where You Are Connects to Who You Are	Getting involved with student groups/ Attending campus events <i>Guest Speaker</i> – Student Organizations, Lilly Leone (1:00-1:45)	<b>Read:</b> - <i>Absolutely True Diary..</i> - Fryburg article <b>Due:</b> RRR 2, RoL 1
10/14	NO CLASS: Fall Break		
10/21	Taking Responsibility for Your Academic Path: School of Education Resources & Requirements	DARS, Advisement, Certification. Scavenger Hunt	<i>Kanar 4</i> (Goals)

10/28	Keys to Academic Success	Active Reading Exercise <i>Guest Speaker:</i> Career Services, Margo Sassaman	<i>Kanar 7, 10</i> (Active Reading & Using Textbooks)
11/4	Defining Cool: Social Status, Cliques, and Peer Pressure		<b>Read:</b> - <i>Dark Days of Hamburger...</i> - Golos, et al. article <b>Due:</b> RRR 3
11/11	Making a Difference and Expanding Horizons: Service Learning and Cultural Affairs	<b>Online Module:</b> Common Read Book Discussion Make time for Media Analysis	<b>Read:</b> - <i>How Does it Feel to be a Problem?</i> <b>Due:</b> Book Club and Quiz
11/18	The Power Structure of High School: Teachers, Teasing, and Team Sports		<b>Read:</b> - <i>Friday Night Lights</i> - Ferguson, et. al. article <b>Due:</b> Media analysis, RoL 2
11/25	NCTE Conference <i>Enjoy Thanksgiving!</i>	Library research on position paper and presentation.	Library Webquest
12/2	Stress and Time Management	Preparing for finals <i>Guest Speaker:</i> Upperclassmen Panel	<b>Read:</b> - <i>Kanar 6 &amp; 11</i> (Time Management and Test Prep)
12/9	Synthesizing our Learning: Research Findings	Research work day Writer's workshop	<b>Due:</b> RoL 3
12/11	10:15-12:15 Wed. 12/11	<b>Presenting Your Research</b>	<b>Due:</b> Position paper & oral presentation