Course Overview: The trials and tribulations of adolescence have long served as the central focus for myriad authors and filmmakers. In this course we will closely analyze contemporary literature and film made for adults, but concerned primarily with the teenage experience. We will read two novels and a novella and watch two feature films. We will examine why the teenage years serve as such a preoccupation for so many authors and auteurs, and look at what these depictions tell us about not only our culture’s view of adolescence but also of itself, as a whole.

Some questions we will examine are: What do these depictions of teenage life say about our culture’s notions of childhood and adulthood? What do coming of age stories tell us about the particular values of our society? And, importantly, what cultural mores, moralities, fears or ambivalences are projected through these portrayals of teenage life?

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, you will not only have improved your understanding of the use of adolescence in contemporary film and literature, you will also be able to critically analyze both written and visual texts. You will be able to compose short and long college-level analytical papers. You will be able to devise your own arguments and offer support for those arguments. You will be able to effectively participate in and facilitate course discussions, as well as engage in online discussions. You will be able to offer peer feedback on your classmates’ work. In short, you will leave this course with competency in the key elements needed for success in the college classroom.

Required Texts/Materials:
Books:

Films:
*Harold and Maude*, dir. Hal Ashby, 1971
*Maria Full of Grace*, dir. Josh Marston, 2004

Fifth text to be decided by you as a class.

All books are available at the University Bookstore. All books and films are on Reserve at the Knight library.

Course Assignments: Along with active participation in all discussions, the course requirements are:
- Five two-page papers in response to course books and films
- Participation in five online discussion board conversations
- During the first eight weeks: Small group facilitation of half of one class session (40 minutes)
- For the final two weeks: Students will select the course’s fifth book or movie from a list provided. For three class sessions, students will teach the text to each other and to Miriam.

Paper formatting: For all papers, the margins should be standard margins in Microsoft Word: 1
Participation: Active participation is necessary for this course to succeed. This includes speaking in large and small groups and facilitating discussions. If speaking in a group is difficult for you, come see me early in the term to discuss strategies for participation.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to show up on-time and prepared for every class. You are allowed two absences. Each absence after the first will result in the final course grade being lowered by one third. If you must be absent, you are responsible for turning in all assignments by the start of the missed class session. Assignments will not be accepted via email. They must be turned into the classroom or 124 PLC. You are also responsible for any homework assigned on the day of your absence. It is your responsibility to find out about missed assignments from classmates, Miriam or Blackboard.

A Note about Movies: In this course, film and literature will both be treated as text. That is to say, both will be read closely and carefully. Films will be watched once in class and then you are expected to watch it again outside of class (both films are available on reserve in the Knight library). The first viewing is for absorbing overall content. A second viewing is required to more closely examine the details of the story and production.

Late Assignments: Late work will not be accepted.

Grading:
- Participation: 30%
- Online discussion board participation: 15%
- 40-minute student led class discussion: 10%
- Response Papers: 20%
- Teaching of the fifth text: 25%

Plagiarism: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course.

Access for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability (physical or learning) which you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can discuss whatever accommodation may be necessary.

Blackboard: The discussion board is located on the Blackboard website: http://blackboard.uoregon.edu. All assignments, course documents and information are also available on the Blackboard website. You will need to log into Blackboard ASAP. If you have trouble accessing the Blackboard site, contact the Computing Center Micro Services at 346-4412.
Tentative Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change. All assignments are DUE on the date they appear.

Week 1
T 1/4  Syllabus & Intro

R 1/6  The Virgin Suicides, CH 1 (1-31)

Week 2
T 1/11  The Virgin Suicides, CH 2-3 (32-140)
Copy of The Virgin Suicides discussion board postings due (Original discussion board question, answer and responses due on Blackboard before the start of class. Consult Blackboard for details.)

R 1/13  The Virgin Suicides, beginning of CH 4 (141-185)
Group Facilitation 1
Opening of Boyz N the Hood: How to critically view film

Week 3
T 1/18  The Virgin Suicides, end of CH 4 (185-249)
Group Facilitation 2
Guidelines and Selection process for 5th course text

R 1/20  MOVIE: Harold and Maude: Begin viewing
Response Paper 1 due: The Virgin Suicides

Week 4
T 1/25  Harold and Maude: Finish viewing
Harold and Maude discussion

R 1/27  Harold and Maude discussion
Group Facilitation 3
Copy of Harold and Maude discussion board postings due (Original discussion board question, answer and responses due on Blackboard before the start of class. Consult Blackboard for details.)

Week 5
T 2/1  Selection and delegation of duties for 5th text
Online Discussion Board for 5th text open
Response Paper 2 due: Harold and Maude

R 2/3  The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, CH 1 (1-49)

Week 6
T 2/8  The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, CH 2-3 (50-165)
Group Facilitation 4
### Copy of discussion board postings due (Original discussion board question, answer and responses due on Blackboard *before the start of class*. Consult Blackboard for details.)

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| R 2/10 | *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, CH 4 (168-261)  
**Group Facilitation 5**  
Continued planning for 5th text |
| Week 7 |                                           |
| **T 2/15** | *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, CH 5-end (263-335) |
| R 2/17 | *Maria Full of Grace* begin viewing  
**Response Paper 3 due: The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao** |
| **Week 8** |                                           |
| **T 2/22** | *Maria Full of Grace* finish viewing |
| R 2/24 | *Maria Full of Grace:* discussion  
**Group Facilitation 6**  
**Copy of Maria Full of Grace discussion board postings due** (Original discussion board question, answer and responses due on Blackboard *before the start of class*. Consult Blackboard for details.) |
| **Week 9** |                                           |
| **T 3/1** | *Fifth Text TBD*  
Groups A & B  
**Response Paper 4 due: Maria Full of Grace** |
| R 3/3 | *Fifth Text TBD*  
Groups C & D |
| **Week 10** |                                           |
| **T 3/8** | *Fifth Text TBD*  
Groups E & F  
**Copy of 5th text discussion board postings due** Original discussion board question, answer and responses due on Blackboard *before the start of class*. Consult Blackboard for details.) |
| R3/11  | Wrap-up  
**Response Paper 5 due: Fifth Text** |