COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore multicultural youth literature, covering literature for ages 0 to young adult. Students will engage with literature that represents a diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds, primarily in the American context. We will read books such as *Brown Girl Dreaming*, *The Hate U Give*, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* and Lenore Look’s *Alvin Ho* and *Ruby Lu* books.

Multicultural Youth Literature is often discussed in terms of mirrors (reflections of one’s own experience) and windows (insights into other people’s experiences). Recently the debate about diverse literature, its importance, and who possesses the authority to write it has heated up. In this course we will explore examples of inclusive literature, reflecting on questions such as: Why does diverse literature matter? How do we identify quality diverse youth literature that accurately portrays culture beyond “food, fashion, fiestas, folklore, and famous people”? How can cultural outsiders write and/or evaluate diverse literature?

COURSE OVERVIEW

**COURSE GOALS**
1. To explore examples of and learn to evaluate inclusive literature.
2. To provide students with the skills to integrate multicultural literature into their reading.
3. To be aware of the issues and debates surrounding diverse literature.
4. To develop the tools to remain up-to-date on multicultural literature.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**
1. Why does diverse literature matter?
2. How do we identify quality diverse youth literature that accurately portrays culture beyond “food, fashion, fiestas, folklore, and famous people?”
3. How can cultural outsiders write and/or evaluate diverse literature?
4. How can we engage with classic literature whose language and/or message is not inclusive?
REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Diversity in Youth Literature* by Jamie Campbell Naidoo
- *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz
- *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
- *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things* by Lenore Look
- *Ruby Lu, Brave and True* by Lenore Look
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- *How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds
- *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* by Duncan Tonatiuh
- *Separate is Never Equal* by Duncan Tonatiuh
- *Dear Primo* by Duncan Tonatiuh
- *The Princess and the Warrior* by Duncan Tonatiuh
- *The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *New Shoes* by Susan Lynn Meyer
- *Red: A Crayon’s Story* by Michael Hall
- *A Family is a Family is a Family* by Sara O’Leary
- *The Seven Princesses* by Smiljana Coh
- *The Case for Loving* by Selina Alko

Additional Required readings will be made available through CANVAS.

- **Please be sure not only to read them, but to have them available in class.**

COURSE WORK

- **In-Class Activities/Participation:** Participation from all students is expected. A consistent lack of preparation for class will be noted and will affect the student’s final grade. During select class sessions, students will be asked to complete an activity either individually or in small groups. Participation in these activities will count toward their final grade. These activities can only be made up in the case of an excused absence.

- **YA Novel Assignment:** Each student will select a young adult novel (from a provided list). They will write a 3 to 4 page paper discussing the book and how it succeeds and fails at being diverse literature. Students should be prepared to discuss their book in class.

- **Goodreads Reviews:** Each student will set up an account on Goodreads, a book review social media site, and review a selection of books read for the class. The reviews should include a brief summary (1-2 sentences), key strengths and weaknesses of the book, and a discussion of how diversity is represented (150–250 words). Ten total entries are required; students can select the 10 books from the course’s required texts.

- **Controversial Books Group Presentation and Handout:** Students will form groups of approximately 5 to present on a book that is controversial and/or has been challenged because of racism or racist language. The group will summarize the main themes of the books, examine the issues surrounding the controversy, and make an argument for or against the book’s continuing value. The presentation should last 15 minutes and should be followed by prompts for class discussion. As well, students will prepare a one-page handout summarizing the key points of the presentation.

- **Final Essay:** Each student will select two books (at least one from the course) to examine the differences between insider and outsider perspectives. The books should be aimed at a similar age level, and have similar themes or subject. The essay will be 6 to 8 pages and provide brief summaries of the books highlighting the main similarities between the books,
an analysis of each novel’s contribution to multicultural literature, and a comparison of how the insider and outsider perspectives are employed by the authors. Before the paper is submitted, students are responsible for a proposal:
  o **Proposal for Final Essay:** Each student will write a one-page proposal for their intended paper. This proposal should explain why the two books were chosen and the key arguments of the paper.

**GRADING**
Please keep in mind that A grades will not be awarded for work that merely satisfies the minimum requirements of a particular assignment. If you are seeking an A, you should strive to complete the assignment not merely adequately, but exceptionally. If, for any given assignment, it is not clear to you how to do so, please feel free to come and discuss it with me.

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Activities/Participation</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>YA Novel Assignment</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Goodreads Reviews (10)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Controversial Books Group</td>
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<td>Presentation + Handout</td>
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<td>Proposal for Final Essay</td>
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<td>Final Essay</td>
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**COURSE POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE**
Because the objectives of this course require active participation, your learning will be impaired if you do not attend class. Indeed, you can learn a lot in life simply by showing up. That said, I understand that sometimes circumstances beyond a student’s control can make attendance difficult. If you must miss class, please let me know (in advance if possible). Work missed due to an excused absence may be made up or turned in late. Work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.

**HONOR CODE**
Using the ideas of another person—be it a professional writer, speaker, or a classmate or friend—without proper acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism. Even when it is unintended, plagiarism carries significant disciplinary action. Do not take this issue lightly. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the guidelines for acknowledging the work of others as outlined on the UO website: http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism. Ignorance of the guidelines is not an acceptable excuse for student misconduct.

**DISCRIMINATION**
The University of Oregon affirms and actively promotes the right of all individuals to equal opportunity in education and employment without regard to any protected basis, including race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression or any other consideration not directly and substantively related to effective performance.

The university is committed to providing a respectful environment for all members of the campus community. Prohibited discrimination and discriminatory harassment, including any form of sexual harassment, which subvert the mission of the university and jeopardize the educational or employment experience of students, faculty, and staff, will not be tolerated. If you have a concern of any sort, contact the Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity: https://aaeo.uoregon.edu/content/raise-concern.
I support all students regardless of immigration status or country of origin. For more information and resources please visit our Dreamers page (https://blogs.uoregon.edu/dreamers/) and the Immigration FAQs page (http://international.uoregon.edu/immigration_faq). Students, remember, when interacting with faculty, staff, and offices around campus you are never required to reveal your status.

ACCESSIBILITY
The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

OFFICE HOURS
My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus and I will also be available at a variety of times by appointment. Please come and see me any time you are experiencing difficulty with the class material, would like more information about the texts we are reading, or have other more general questions.
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<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/9 Introductions; discuss the assignments</td>
<td>1/11 Discuss the readings&lt;br&gt;Readings: Ch 1, 2, 4, articles on Canvas&lt;br&gt;<strong>DUE:</strong> Sign up for YA Book Assignment</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/16 Discuss <em>Aristotle and Dante</em>&lt;br&gt;Readings: p. 1-154 <em>Aristotle and Dante</em>, Ch 4 and Sliding Door 1 of <em>DYL</em></td>
<td>1/18 Discuss <em>Aristotle and Dante</em>&lt;br&gt;Readings: p. 155 - end <em>Aristotle and Dante</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/23 Discuss <em>The Hate U Give</em>&lt;br&gt;Readings: <em>The Hate U Give</em></td>
<td>1/25 Discuss <em>How It Went Down</em>&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>How It Went Down</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1/30 Discuss American Boys&lt;br&gt;Reading: American Boys</td>
<td>2/1 Discuss <em>The Hate U Give, How It Went Down and American Boys</em></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2/6 Discuss: YA Novels, create mini bibliography&lt;br&gt;<strong>DUE:</strong> YA NOVEL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT</td>
<td>2/8 Discuss the readings&lt;br&gt;Reading: Chapters 6, 7, 8, &amp; 9 of <em>DYL</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2/13 Discuss <em>Brown Girl Dreaming</em>&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>Brown Girl Dreaming</em>, Ch 3 of <em>DYL</em></td>
<td>2/15 Discuss <em>The Crossover</em>&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>The Crossover</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>DUE:</strong> FIRST 5 GOODREADS REVIEWS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2/20 Group discussion of Middle Grade Book #1&lt;br&gt;Reading: Choice of Middle Grade Book from group #1</td>
<td>2/22 Group discussion of Middle Grade Book #2&lt;br&gt;Reading: Choice of Middle Grade Book from group #2</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2/27 <strong>DUE:</strong> PRESENTATION ON CONTROVERSIAL BOOKS (15MINS) + PRESENTATION HANDOUT</td>
<td>2/29 <strong>DUE:</strong> PRESENTATION ON CONTROVERSIAL BOOKS (15MINS) + PRESENTATION HANDOUT</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/6 Discuss <em>Alvin Ho and Ruby Lu</em>&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>Alvin Ho, Ruby Lu</em></td>
<td>3/8 Discuss assigned picture books&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>The Other Side, New Shoes, Red: A Crayon’s Story, A Family is a Family is…, The Seven Princesses, The Case for Loving</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>DUE:</strong> PROPOSAL FOR FINAL ESSAY</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/13 Discuss assigned picture books&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote, Separate is Never Equal, Dear Primo, The Princess and the Warrior</em></td>
<td>3/15 Class wrap-up; discussion and questions about final essay&lt;br&gt;<strong>DUE:</strong> REMAINING 5 GOODREADS REVIEWS</td>
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**FINAL ESSAY DUE: TUESDAY, MARCH 20th**