

**575 Valuing Diversity: International and Intercultural Resources for Youth
Multicultural Children's and Young Adults' Literature
First Summer Term 2007
Monday June 4 to Friday July 6th
Section 001**

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Children's and young adult's literature published in the United States has only fairly recently begun the large task of addressing the representation of diverse cultures. As multicultural children's literature expert, Rudine Sims Bishop, has observed: "Children need literature that serves as a window onto lives and experiences different from their own, and literature that serves as a mirror reflecting themselves and their cultural values, attitudes and behaviors." Information professionals serve an important role in mediating children's and young adults' access to this literature that serves as both window and mirror.

This course will provide an introduction to multicultural literature for children and young adults for information professionals. "Multicultural" is interpreted broadly and includes race/ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender and bodily ability.

Course Description from SIS Graduate Student Manual:

"(3) Examines texts and materials for youth that reflect the contemporary settings and lives of young people from all over the world. This course will review the scholarship of literature and film to determine how to recognize stereotypes; how to understand publishing worlds; and how to recognize universal themes that transcend ethnicity, religion, gender, class, and nationhood."

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 3.0

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, you will:

- be familiar with some multicultural literature for children and young adults
- be familiar with some of the major issues and concerns with respect to multicultural children's and young adult's literature
- be familiar with professional literature concerning multicultural children's and young adult's materials
- be familiar with many major multicultural authors and illustrators

- be familiar with major awards of multicultural children's literature
- be aware of strategies to select multicultural children's and young adult's literature
- understand how to evaluate multicultural children's and young adult's literature for school and public library use

Required Text:

There is no required text for this class. There will be, however, assigned readings on the calendar (please see "IS 575 Reading List") as well as children's titles that you will have to select and read. Some readings are available on the World Wide Web while others will be made available through Blackboard (available via Online@UT <http://online.utk.edu/>). You may borrow children's and young adult's titles from Hodges or your local public library as needed. Please let me know if you have any trouble accessing these readings or finding appropriate children's and young adult texts to read for the course.

Method of Instruction:

This course will be delivered through Blackboard (available via Online@UT <http://online.utk.edu/>). Please **log into Blackboard at least twice every week** to retrieve class readings, lectures and assignments and to participate in required discussions. New material will be added to Blackboard every Monday and Thursday.

The class will be conducted asynchronously, so you will be responsible for making sure that you log-in with regularity and keep up with lectures, assignments, readings and required participation. Optional face-to-face meetings and synchronous text chats can be arranged according to the needs and wishes of the class (however, participation in these is not mandatory).

Each Monday and Thursday the following will be uploaded into the appropriate folder in "Assignments" tab in Blackboard:

- Recorded lecture for the unit
- PowerPoint slides for lecture
- Assigned articles to be read the unit
- A book list of recommended children's and young adult's titles from which you must select two (2) and read both for each unit in addition to the assigned articles

Academic Honesty:

The highest standards of academic honesty and integrity are expected; cheating and plagiarism are simply unacceptable. Any student found guilty of cheating or plagiarism on any class assignment or test will be given a grade of F for the

course. Definitions and details of the university policy on academic honesty can be found in Hilltopics (<http://web.utk.edu/~homepage/hilltopics/HILLTOPICS2006-07.pdf>). The policy specifically states:

Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

1. Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

-- Hilltopics, p. 11

Adaptations or Accommodations:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, please contact the Office of Disability Service at 191 Hoskins Library or at 865-974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Assignments and Grading:

The following grading scale will apply to all assignments and to the final course grade:

A 100 - 92

B+	91 - 86
B	85 - 80
C+	79 - 75
C	74 - 70
D	69 - 65
F	51 - 0

The final course grade will be based on the following assignments:

Postings to Blackboard (see below) 70% throughout the term

Response to articles - 5 posts - (10%)

Critical analysis of texts - 7 posts - (50%)

Response to classmates – 5 posts - (10%)

Term Paper 30% July 8th

Grading – 100 points total (100%)

Postings to Blackboard:

Discussion Thread Assignments

I. Read all professional/scholarly articles assigned for each unit. Write and post a thoughtful response or critique to any **five** of the professional/scholarly articles assigned throughout the course. This response should be a minimum of two paragraphs long and should provide an analysis or critique of the author's argument or thesis. This can be a personal or intellectual response to a portion or the entire article. This should **not** be a simple summary of the article. You may want to address how the article made you feel or whether you agree or disagree with the author and why. You may want to compare or contrast what others have said in other professional/scholarly readings.

Post responses to critical articles to any five (5) professional/scholarly articles from Weeks 1-5

(5 posts total) - 10 points of final grade (2 points per post)

II. In addition to this, for Weeks 2 – 5 (Units III – IX), select and read two (2) children's or young adult's texts for each cultural grouping. A list of recommended authors and/or titles will be provided for each grouping. Perform a close reading of one of the texts and then write a critical analysis and visual interpretation (if the title is illustrated) of **one** text and post it to Blackboard for a grade (if your selection is a children's book with illustration, provide a visual interpretation of the images as well as an analysis based on a close reading. If your selection is a young adult text, then a close reading of the title is fine). Post the author and title of the second text that you have selected.

Analysis of a Children's or YA text for each of the following cultural groupings:

- 1) Native American/Indigenous
- 2) African/African-American
- 3) Hispanic "American"/Latin American
- 4) Asian/Asian-American
- 5) U.S. Regional/European Ethnic
- 6) Religious Traditions
- 7) Gender/Body/Ability/Appearance

(7 posts total) - 49 points (7 points per post)

III. Please read the posts of your classmates and post a thoughtful response to five posts of your classmates. You should engage in a constructive (and hopefully lively) dialog with the literature, with criticism of the literature and with your classmates. You may share an anecdote that confirms their position, expand or contribute to an argument made or politely challenge an assertion or claim.

Responses to classmates -

(5 posts) – 10 points (2 per post)

You will need to make a minimum of 17 posts for the course. You may make additional posts if you would like to do so.

Term Paper 30% (30 points)

The final assignment is a research paper. An original, 5 to 7 page research paper (double-spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins) is required. The research paper can be written on any topic generally related to multicultural children's or young adult's literature. A handout on possible topics will be provided. A research paper is defined as: "A written composition, usually five or more pages in length, assigned as an exercise in a formal course of study. The writer is expected to state a thesis and advance a logical argument based on supporting information found in a systematic investigation of the topic. The source of quotations, facts, and ideas not those of the author must be documented in footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography." (From "ODLIS: Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science by Joan M. Reitz" http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_r.cfm accessed January 6, 2005) Please use at least five sources which may include any of those read or discussed in class (books, journal articles, web pages) and provide a full citation to all sources used with any appropriate style manual (APA, MLA, Turabian, etc.); the "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" page is included in the final page count. Correct usage of academic English, spelling, grammar and composition is expected. Five to ten double-spaced pages.

Course Calendar: (please see reading list for articles)

Week One

Monday, June 4 – Unit I - Preliminaries

What is a close reading?
What is visual interpretation?
What is culture?

Thursday, June 7 – Unit II - What is Multicultural Literature?

What is multicultural children's and young adult literature?
Why is this literature important?
What are the politics of children's literature?
What are some general criteria for evaluating multicultural literature?

Week Two

Monday, June 11 – Unit III - Native American/Indigenous Literature

Who are some important Native American authors/titles?
How to evaluate Native American literature?
Cultural appropriation or appreciation?

Thursday, June 14 – Unit IV - African/African American Literature

Who are some important African/African American authors/titles?
How to evaluate African/African American literature?
What is authenticity in literature?

Week Three

Monday, June 18 – Unit V - Hispanic "American"/Latino/a Literature

Who are some important Hispanic "American"/Latino/a authors/titles?
How to evaluate Hispanic "American"/Latino/a literature?
What is the role of language in literature?

Thursday, June 21 – Unit VI – Asian/Asian-American

Who are some important Asian/Asian-American authors/titles?
How to evaluate Hispanic Asian/Asian-American literature?
How does literature influence identity (and vice-versa)?

Week Four

***Monday, June 25 – Unit VII - Ethnic Europe/European Ethnic America/
U.S. Regional Literature***

Who are some important Ethnic Europe/European Ethnic American and U.S. regional authors/titles?

What is race? What is ethnicity? Are Europeans “ethnic”?

U.S. mass culture versus regionalism? Are regional differences in the US important?

Thursday, June 28 – Unit VIII – Religious Traditions

How are religious traditions presented through literature?

Who are important authors/titles from various religious traditions?

How do you evaluate these titles?

Week Five

Monday, July 2 – Unit IX – Gender/Sexuality/The Body: Disability, Illness, Appearance and Age

Who are important authors/titles that deal with gender, gender roles and sexuality in children’s and young adult’s literature?

How are issues of the body such as age, physical appearance/physical difference, illness and disability handled in children’s and young adult’s literature?

Thursday, July 5 – Unit X – Conclusion: Bringing it All Together: The Multicultural Landscape

Note: Course objectives derived from Patricia Montiel Overall’s IRLS 695 at <http://www.sir.arizona.edu/syllabi/spring/sp04/695h2/index.htm>