This is an intermediate course on the art and craft of fiction writing in the young adult genre.

In the first half of the quarter, we'll read widely in the genre. The aim of our reading will be to discover principles of craft, at the sentence level and at the narrative level, that generate powerful and enduring fiction. As we read, we'll work to develop a writer’s definition of YA. What are the differences between great YA and great adult literature? What are the best ways to understand quality in a YA text? Within what bounds—stylistic, ethical, and otherwise—are we working as practitioners of the art form?

In the second half of the quarter, our class will convene as a traditional fiction workshop. You and your fellow writers will read one another’s fiction. You will give one another commentary and counsel in the light of our ongoing discoveries about craft.

This course welcomes, and is appropriate for, students with experience writing young adult novels. However, all material submitted to our workshop must be new, written this quarter for this course.

**Required Texts**


All prices given are list prices. Texts will generally be cheaper on Amazon or from a used-book vendor. Please be aware that I have NOT asked the Stanford bookstore to stock these titles. If you’re considering borrowing from the library, act quickly! No matter what, you are required to have the books with you in class on the days we discuss them.

**Graded Assignments**

1. *Short Writing Exercises* (1-3 pages). You will complete two short creative exercises. These will require you to practice an aspect of craft considered in class.
2. **Novel Chunks** (10-20 pages each) and **Novel Pitch** (1-2 pages). You will submit to our workshop two chunks of a novel-in-progress. The chunks must belong to the same novel and should preferably be continuous. The first chunk you submit must be the opening of the novel. As an addendum to your first chunk, you will submit a short pitch sketching the plot and theme(s) of the novel-in-progress. **You will be required to provide a hard copy of all your workshop submissions to each person in the class, including me. Please budget for this expense.**

3. **Response Letters.** During the workshop part of the course, every time a fellow writer’s work is up for discussion, you will respond to it in a short letter. I require a copy of every response letter you write. Detailed guidelines for the writing of response letters will be provided.

4. **Revised Novel Chunk** (at least 10 pages) and **Process Paper** (1-2 pages). At the end of the quarter, you’ll submit a substantive revision of either your first or second novel chunk, plus a short paper about your writing process.

**Other Expectations**

1. **Reading.** This is a reading-intensive course. The attached calendar shows the novel(s) we’ll be reading during the first five weeks of the quarter, as well as their length in pages. **Plan ahead and give yourself enough time to finish each book by the due date.** I expect you to read attentively and in a spirit of curiosity and intellectual engagement.

2. **Class Participation.** You will receive full credit for class participation when you:
   - Come to every class, on time.
   - Offer your thoughts in class discussion.
   - Listen carefully and open-mindedly to your fellow writers and to me.
   - Lead discussion at least once during the quarter.
   - Are a good citizen of the writing workshop (see below).

3. **Good Workshop Citizenship.** When we come together in workshop, we become part of a community of and for writers. To be a good workshop citizen is to take others’ work as seriously as you take your own. Both in discussion and in your response letters, engage respectfully and rigorously with the work of others. Be committed to supporting and challenging your fellow writers. Be especially careful to be on time to workshop. Take responsibility for making the room feel safe and fun.

4. **Creative Writing Program Event Attendance.** You are required to attend three events sponsored by the Creative Writing Program. You’ll receive email announcements of upcoming events (including readings by great writers, conversations with great writers, and workshops in poetry and fiction). An up-to-date list of most events is at [http://creativewriting.stanford.edu/event-list](http://creativewriting.stanford.edu/event-list). No written responses to events are required. It is your responsibility to let me know which events you attend.

**Grading**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novel Chunks &amp; Novel Pitch</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised Novel Chunk &amp; Process Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Writing Program Event Attendance</td>
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Policies

• **Canvas.** As soon as the course roster is finalized, I will add you to our Canvas site. I will post all assignments and all handouts on Canvas (https://classes.stanford.edu/).

• **Attendance.** I take attendance at the beginning of class. If you’re late, it’s up to you to remind me at the end of class to record your presence. I will subtract 5 points from your final grade for each unexcused absence. If you’re absent four times, you fail the course. If you must miss class (due to illness or athletic commitments, for example) and you believe your absence should be excused, contact me as soon as you know you will be absent, not five minutes before class. Remember to check Canvas for handouts distributed or work assigned in your absence, and contact one of your classmates to catch up on discussion.

• **Punctuality.** If, after the first day, you are more than ten minutes late to class (or leave early without my prior permission), it’ll count as an absence. If there’s a valid reason why you may sometimes be late—e.g. a class immediately before on the other side of campus—let me know.

• **Electronic Devices.** No laptops or tablets, please. Phones must not make sounds.

• **Late Assignments.** A late writing exercise or late response letter will receive a maximum grade of B. If one of your novel chunks is late, or if your revision is late, it will receive a maximum grade of B-.

• **Office Hours and Conferences.** I encourage you to stop by during my office hours. I also highly recommend conferencing with me after your workshop. While it’s not required, conference is our chance to debrief after workshop, cover anything we missed, and create a revision plan.

• **Communication with Me.** Email is the best way to reach me. I check email twice a day and respond as promptly as I am able. **I will address all communications to your Stanford email and expect you to check it at least daily.**

• **My Basis for Grading Fiction.** I expect you to do your best creative work for this class. However, you won’t be graded on my perception of your talent! Your grade is based on your development as a writer over the course of the quarter. I recognize and value creative risk-taking.

• **Formatting Guidelines.**
  o All creative assignments should be double-spaced. Response letters, single-spaced.
  o Use 12-point font.
  o Margins should be reasonable (1” or close).
  o Use print, not web, formatting. That means: indent your paragraphs; no double line breaks between paragraphs.
  o Number the pages of your document.
  o Write your name on your document.
  o Double-sided printing is encouraged.
  o Staple anything over one page.
  o Please spell-check and proofread.

• **Plagiarism.** The Board on Judicial Affairs says: “For purposes of the Stanford University Honor Code, plagiarism is defined as the use, without giving reasonable and appropriate credit to or acknowledging the author or source, of another person’s original work, whether such work is made up of code, formulas, ideas, language, research, strategies, writing or other form(s).” If you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism in the context of this course or a particular assignment, ask me.

**Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE), providing all required documentation. Professional staff will evaluate the request, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter. Students should contact the OAE as soon
as possible, since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (voice: 723-1066, TTY: 723-1067, http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

**Honor Code**
The Honor Code is the University’s statement on academic integrity, written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work.

1. The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:
   1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
   2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
2. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
3. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

**Tentative Course Calendar** (will be revised once course roster is finalized)

**WEEK ONE**
- **Tues 1/5** Welcome and introduction
- **Thurs 1/7** The uses of genre; the tasks of adolescence; the teenage reader; the state of YA today

**WEEK TWO**
- **Tues 1/12** S. E. Hinton, *The Outsiders* (224 pages) and *Rumble Fish* (144 pages)
- **Thurs 1/14** John Green, *Looking for Alaska* (221 pages)

**WEEK THREE**
- **Tues 1/19** Ned Vizzini, *It’s Kind of a Funny Story* (448 pages)
- **Thurs 1/21** Walter Dean Myers, *Lockdown* (272 pages)
- **DUE**: Short Writing Exercise 1

**WEEK FOUR**
- **Tues 1/26** Nancy Farmer, *The House of the Scorpion* (400 pages)
- **Thurs 1/28** Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* (384 pages)
- **DUE**: Short Writing Exercise 2

**WEEK FIVE**
- **Tues 2/2** Rainbow Rowell, *Carry On* (352 pages)
- **Thurs 2/4** Meg Rosoff, *What I Was* (224 pages)

**WEEK SIX**
- **Tues 2/9** Workshops 1, 2, 3
- **Thurs 2/11** Workshops 4, 5, 6
WEEK SEVEN
Tues  2/16  Workshops 7, 8, 9
Thurs  2/18  Workshops 10, 11, 12

WEEK EIGHT
Tues  2/23  Workshops 13, 14, 15
Thurs  2/25  Workshops 16, 17, 18

WEEK NINE
Tues  3/1  Workshops 19, 20, 21
Thurs  3/3  Workshops 22, 23, 24

WEEK TEN
Tues  3/8  Workshops 25, 26, 27, 28
Thurs  3/10  End-of-term party