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## Moving Toward a Method for YAL in Secondary English Teacher Education

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**Abstract:** In order to better understand how young adult literature (YAL) is used in secondary English teacher education, this study examines course syllabi submitted by researchers recently published in *The ALAN Review*. Using a framework built on Bakhtin's work, this article analyzes course objectives and goals for inherent social discourses to examine how syllabi establish practices to support student learning. The syllabi studied provided support for an understanding of how YAL fits into teacher education. The goal was to use Bakhtin's theories to analyze these syllabi to build a foundational understanding of how the discourses of education influence course design. Data were organized into four categories. The first examines the discourses of how YAL is used to teach English education methods. The second is to use YAL to understand discourses of critical education, social justice, and diversity. The third examines discourses on defining YAL and/or adolescence/adolescents. The fourth examines discourses on reflective practice. In the findings section, individual objectives and goals are analyzed so that an understanding of how these discourses meet at sites of tension allows for a discussion on how YAL is being used, and how might it be developed in the future.

**Keywords:** English education, Bakhtin, teacher education, young adult literature



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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, teachers and researchers alike hear much positive national conversation on young adult literature (YAL) in the secondary English classroom. YAL continues to break boundaries in the text selection discussion that is founded on decades of struggle to see YAL given a position of value within traditional English teacher methods (Glenn et al., 2009). As the cultural popularity of YAL has grown with many blockbuster movie franchises paving the way for universal acceptance, educators (e.g., George, 2001; Glenn, 2014; Moni, 2000; Pruzinsky, 2014) have spent much time showing how valuable these texts can be for teaching secondary students and preservice teachers to become or continue to be readers. YAL has continued to be used in secondary English teacher education to create readers of teacher candidates who will then use that identity in their future classrooms (Alston & Barker, 2014).

Educational researchers (e.g., Buehler, 2016; Connors, 2013; Glaus, 2014; Glenn, et al., 2009; Park, 2013) in teacher education and English education are theorizing about how they are teaching preservice teachers to use and implement a pedagogy specifically for YAL or adolescent literature. These researchers have examined preservice teachers' experiences with YAL as a part of their methods training for English teacher certification and have found great potential and a rationale for using YAL, alongside traditional texts, to help prepare teacher candidates to teach English in secondary classrooms. There is, however, a need to understand broadly how

teacher educators approach the teaching of YAL with preservice English teachers so that, with the knowledge of how things have been done, the field can begin to build toward the future.

This study examines how this need was being addressed within English teacher preparation programs by analyzing YAL course syllabi from colleges and universities. YAL has been examined in the context of the secondary classroom for its ability to reach the needs of secondary readers (Roberts et al., 2013), and it has been researched for its ability to show readers the stories of perspectives that are different from their own (Stallworth et al., 2006).

**“By studying current methods, best practices can be examined, and teacher educators can dream all over again about what the future of YAL might look like in secondary English education.”**

Now, it will be examined in the context of teacher education course syllabi, like Smagorinsky and Whiting's (1995) influential English education methods course syllabus study. Much can be learned about how YAL has developed in the field since Pope and Kaywell's (2001) study that showed how English teacher educators dreamed about how YAL might be used with

preservice English teachers. By studying current methods and examining best practices, teacher educators can dream about what the future of YAL might look like in secondary English education.

In this study, I examined these syllabi for their educational discourses and measured them against the context of my own social discourses and beliefs as a secondary English teacher educator using the theoretical frame. These YAL syllabi represent the discourses of public education, standardization, and the goals of individual programs and teacher educators in addressing the needs of beginning

<sup>1</sup> I acknowledge that there is a gender spectrum and that different pronouns exist that I can use when referring to individuals in my writing. Throughout this article I use

pronouns to refer to individuals that correspond with the pronouns that they use to refer to themselves.

English teachers (Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2015). I analyzed the major components of course syllabi—course descriptions or purposes, objectives or goals sections, and required reading or book lists that include YAL—to show how teacher education programs propose the use of YAL in secondary schools, as well as how they address the gaps (Petroni & Lewis, 2012) that teacher candidates may experience between their dual roles of students and teachers.

The theoretical lens, outlined below, shaped my understanding of my own position in relation to the data. There were times when my own understandings of the social discourses at play in the data brushed up against my own beliefs and feelings about those discourses, and I needed to pause during analysis so that my own subjectivities did not interpret the data for me. Where possible, I point out examples of when these pauses needed to take place, and otherwise kept the study and tone focused on the data and what it showed empirically, and used the theoretical lens to focus the study.

### **Historical Context of the Methods Course in English Education**

Researchers have examined methods courses and methods research in secondary English education (see Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995; Pasternak et al., 2014, 2017), but none specifically have looked at how YAL is taught across teacher education contexts in the United States. The historical context of the “methods” course within English teacher education frames this analysis. The syllabi examined in this study were drawn from teacher educators who had published recently in *The ALAN Review*, the journal associated with the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents, the special interest group on adolescent literature of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). (See the Method

section for a specific account of recruitment of participants.)

The history of NCTE’s view of the methods course over the past decades is important to situate the present study. Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) set the foundation for the study of course syllabi to understand methods in English education. In their study, published in a series sponsored by the Conference on English Education, the researchers gathered course syllabi from various institutions across the country to be able to create a portrait of the field of English education methods. They did this so that a state of the field could be understood, which would both be a resource to teachers needing ideas on what others were doing and also allow a conversation to start about where teacher educators would like to develop the field in the future based on the foundation of the data in the study.

Near the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, NCTE created the Commission on the Study of and Teaching of Young Adult Literature of the Conference on English Education (CEE; now English Language Arts Teacher Educators, or ELATE) to examine how the young adult literature methods course might be envisioned as separate from what had been thought of as just English methods before then (Pope & Kaywell, 2001). Commission members sought to define young adult literature as a genre and then began to theorize how YAL might best be studied and taught. The commission submitted course syllabi for how they would individually teach YAL, and then they compared broad focuses to begin to conceptualize a separate method for YAL in English education.

Pasternak et al. (2014, 2017) followed up on the research conducted by Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) by examining English education methods specifically in research publications. They argued that one of the issues facing English educators in the 2010s was that the findings of older studies (e.g., Pope

& Kaywell, 2001; Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995) still held sway even as 21<sup>st</sup> century issues in education had evolved and a focus on standardized instruction through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and subsequently No Child Left Behind (NCLB) changed the needs of the methods course in teacher education programs (p. 8).

To complicate matters further, Pasternak et al. (2014) also argued that these early studies and publications about English education methods did not consider program accreditation needs that have come about since Smagorinsky and Whiting's (1995) study. New pressures of state and national standards caused a change in education as "Districts varied in the extent to which they standardized instruction in their buildings, and textbook companies marketed packages guaranteed to help teachers and students 'meet' state standards" (Pasternak et al., p. 9). It was during this time that reading methods were integrated into secondary English education and were not solely the responsibility of reading teachers of younger students. Finally, Pasternak et al. argued that the economic downturn in 2008 also stretched the needs of teacher education programs as new English teachers needed to be taught how to deal with financial constraints and also how to work with increasingly diverse student populations. This study of English education methods in research was a timely update to the studies conducted in the 1990s as well as the position statements that organizations like NCTE put forward at the same time.

The study of YAL in the context of the English methods course has been largely missing. Both Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) and Pasternak et al. (2014, 2017) mention how YAL is being studied in English education programs in the United States, but the data available to them did not provide the depth needed to fully understand how a separate method for teaching young adult literature to secondary

English teacher candidates has grown alongside traditional methods.

### **Research Question**

An examination of the literature has shown a great deal about what is being done with YAL in educational research, but there is not a consensus on using a pedagogy of YAL specifically with preservice teachers in secondary English education or creating a methods class for how to use YAL with secondary students. This lack of consensus on how YAL should be used with preservice English teacher candidates was investigated through the following research question:

What are the specific objectives and goals of YAL courses in secondary English teacher education programs included on course syllabi, and what social and ideological discourses are present that influence these goals?

Looking at how objectives and goals are organized within YAL methods course syllabi in English teacher education can yield an understanding of what English teacher educators are doing now, and any gaps in these objectives and goals can be examined. This study will allow an argument for what the broad focuses of YAL courses are and how preservice teachers are coming into contact with YAL in their training.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The work of literary theorist Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1895-1975) provided the foundation for the theoretical and conceptual framework for the data analysis in this study. His sociocultural theories of language provide the basis for the understanding of education and literary texts used in this study. Bakhtin's (1981a, 1981b) concepts of heteroglossia (different and competing voices within discourse)

and the tension between the centripetal (centralizing) and centrifugal (individualizing or decentralizing) are important. Also, the nature of heteroglossia within authoritative (established, unchangeable) and internally persuasive (personal, individual) discourses, and the nature of dialogism (living and evolving dialogue including multiple voices and perspectives), as well as double-voicedness (the ability of language to serve and reflect two ideological discourses at the same time) have continued to be foundational to the understanding of classroom spaces as well as voices and discourses within texts.

At the surface level, Bakhtin was a literary theorist; his works, theories, and concepts were explained in the context of literary analysis of epic poetry and novels. However, his work directly applies to those working in English education, as English educators are often working with students in the analysis of texts. The value of his concepts to education comes more from their roots in sociocultural understandings of language and culture. Whether researchers are looking at how heteroglossia interacts in the context of a class discussion (Caughlan et al., 2013), the narratives of teachers (Fecho et al., 2010), or in the literary analysis of dialogue between characters in a young adult novel (Strickland, 2019), the cultural and historical influences of multiple, competing voices can be examined, and meaning can be made of every utterance within dialogue.

### **Heteroglossia**

Bakhtin's theory of dialogue and language provides an entry into understanding the heteroglossia of discourse in educational settings. Bakhtin looked at language and discourse at the level of the individual utterance (1981a) or a complete speech act. The utterance in the context of this article is conceptualized as individual goals or objectives on YAL course syllabi that serve to explain to students

what the expectations of the course are from both their instructor and the university or teacher education program at large.

Bakhtin (1981b) believed that each utterance is made with the anticipation of a response from another person in a particular time and place, which means that words, while not changing in definition, mean something new each time they are uttered in new contexts, at different times, with different speakers (Coulter, 1999). In the novel or in the classroom where heteroglossia is present, dialogue is a living being that is constantly evolving as new utterances are introduced and interact. Also, literary texts provide a heteroglossic context that reflects many social ideologies and can be a site where those ideologies can be analyzed (Medvedev 1978). The same can be said for classroom syllabi as reflections of the social ideologies that are present in teacher education. The double-voiced nature of the course syllabus allows for the language of a course instructor to reflect not only their own internally persuasive views on course methods, which are themselves heteroglossic, but simultaneously reflect the social and ideological discourses of the university, the state, the national discourses on education, and the influence of national educational organizations.

### **Authoritative and Internally Persuasive Discourses**

Bakhtin (1981b) argued that there are two categories of ideological discourses at play within a heteroglossic context. The first category is authoritative discourses, in which the established word of tradition is shared with already accepted authority infused within it. The authoritative word seeks to control meanings and understanding. In opposition to this authoritative, monological word, are internally persuasive discourses that represent the personal, historical, and social understanding of an individual. Individual seek to create their own



meaning in discourse even as authoritative discourses seek to control it.

### **The Centripetal and Centrifugal Nature of Language**

Language operates as a tool of both authoritative and internally persuasive discourses. The back and forth nature of utterances in dialogue creates a tension between authoritative and internally persuasive discourses. Bakhtin (1981b) explained that "Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear" (p. 272). This discursive interpenetration creates a site of tension where the centripetal (centralizing) forces of language seek to control meaning even as the centrifugal (personal) forces of language seek individualization, albeit that which is socialized through discourse. Centripetal forces of language have to do with how authoritative voices seek to control information and knowledge. The goal is to create knowledge owned by that authority. On the other hand, centrifugal discourses are personal forces within an individual that resist this authoritative control of knowledge. While centrifugal discourses are seeking to develop knowledge rather than accepting it as closed, centripetal discourses seek to maintain centers of authority.

### **Dialogism**

Bakhtin conceptualized dialogism as the back and forth nature of utterances within the living, evolving nature of historical and current heteroglossia. Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, when applied to education, focuses on examining the history of spaces or texts for the inclusion of diverse voices while also honoring all voices in a given context (Coulter, 1999). Dialogism counters the problem in school settings where discourse is monologic, where one voice is valued, and others silenced (Caughlan et al., 2013).

Bakhtin posited that meaning is in a constant state of development where it is unfinalized (Bakhtin, 1981b). In a heteroglossic context, language is always unfinished and, as voices compete to be heard; the context continually shifts and changes as new utterances and responses are introduced (Coulter, 1999). These competing voices can be analyzed for research using many different genres (Lin, 2014), such as course syllabi.

Dialogized language involves much more than one voice or perspective. Educational researchers planning on using Bakhtin's work must keep in mind "When we speak or write, we simultaneously enact the voices of others, inevitably taking into account what they might have responded to what we have uttered, in an attempt to anticipate future responses by incorporating them into our speech" (Lin, 2014, p. 63). The individual speaker, therefore, is constantly anticipating the potential responses to an utterance, which evolves the utterance before it is even spoken aloud.

When dialogue is examined for research, then, the researcher is able not only to analyze each utterance with the explicit meaning in mind, but also to analyze the response or potential response to the utterance in the dialogue. Analysis of dialogue in educational settings or in texts like course syllabi can involve a search for the worldviews and perspectives inherent beyond a literal meaning and represented in the discourses present in them (Bakhtin, 1981c). It is through analysis of the double-voiced language in course materials that the many competing discourses of education can be examined.

### **Double-voiced Discourse**

The final concept of Bakhtin's that is important for the present article is the concept of double-voiced discourse. When looking at an utterance, Bakhtin (1981b) maintained that when two or more meanings

may be available in an utterance, then it is double-voiced. He explained that “In such discourse there are two voices, two meanings, and two expressions” (p. 324). In this study, individual utterances, including objectives and goals within a syllabus, can be examined for this double-voiced nature, those in which a goal that states one purpose has a hidden purpose within it. Critical analysis of such utterances can indicate when authoritative discourses are seeking to control the internally persuasive and vice versa.

### **Bakhtin’s Concepts and the YAL Course Syllabus**

Although the use of Bakhtin’s theories is foregrounded in this study, it is important to note how the suitability of sociocultural theories and lenses best informs qualitative research in young adult literature methods courses. Because the course syllabus is created in a social context of a university, within a state and country, and at the hands of a university professor, lecturer, or instructor, the various social ideologies of each of these contexts influence how and why syllabi are created the way they are and why there is no standard form shaping all courses in the country. Because these social ideologies influence course design and are intended to be interpreted in a class by students who have been socialized to the reading of syllabi and interpret them actively, analysis must examine how these various social ideologies interact in a static document.

Bakhtin’s theories are especially valid for studying the YAL course syllabus because of how the syllabus is integral to the educational experience and serves to represent the ideological influences of teacher educators, programs, universities, and national education associations. To the teacher educator, the creation of the syllabus reflects the needs of both the program and the university in the course offering, but also the individual purposes and worldviews that that instructor finds persuasive and important. I chose to

analyze syllabi because “[t]he syllabus is one of the few tools available for documenting the scholarship required for integrating isolated learning activities into a coherent meaningful whole” (Albers, 2003, p. 63). Thus, the “coherent whole” that the syllabus represents provides a more complete picture of what is being done in a course, and analysis can then show which ideological influences are present while describing the specifics of what information is included or excluded.

### **Method**

To understand how secondary English teacher educators were conceptualizing young adult literature within the larger field of English education in the United States, data were sought through course syllabi and related materials from the researchers and teacher educators who were leading the discourse on the national stage. To that end, participants were sought through *The ALAN Review* (The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the National Council of Teachers of English), the organization that devotes their research and practice to the study of literature for adolescents. I next describe my process of identifying participants.

### **Participants**

In 2017 and 2018 (Volume 44, issues 2 & 3, Volume 45, issues 1, 2, & 3, and Volume 46, issue 1), 114 individual researchers and teachers published in *The ALAN Review*. Issues from the last two years were used to try to find researchers and teacher educators currently teaching through young adult literature. These publications spanned a range of topics from editorials, empirical research studies, YA author interviews, and book reviews. Of the 114 individuals published in this two-year span, 48 individuals self-identified as teacher educators working with young adult or adolescent literature. Of the 48 teacher educators, 44 were contacted (4 were removed as

they were not actively teaching or because their co-teacher submitted materials on their behalf) with a request for materials for the young adult literature classes or methods classes that included young adult literature as a major focus.

The materials requested included course syllabi, course calendars, major assessments (prompts, descriptions, rubrics), required or optional reading lists, and anything else that the teacher educators felt best represented the work that students would be doing in these classes. For the purpose of this article, specific goals and objectives sections of the course syllabi were drawn out and examined in more depth to create an understanding of purpose for these courses.

Of the 44 teacher educators contacted, 17 submitted materials for 20 individual courses that focused on young adult literature in whole or in part. As materials were collected, initial readings of these 20 course syllabi allowed me to categorize the classes into three main groupings. These categories included 13 courses that focused entirely on young adult or adolescent literature, four teaching reading and reading methods courses that have young adult literature as a major focus, and, finally, three broad literacy-across-the-curriculum classes of which young adult literature was a part.

**Data Collection**

Data were solicited for analysis in the following ways: Instructors were initially contacted via email to find out if any would be interested in participating and submitting materials with a short description of the study including what materials the researcher was hoping to receive as data. Those who expressed interest were then started on the consent process via email. The IRB approval and consent form were sent to the participants to sign and return. Seventeen

participants submitted their course materials along with their signed consent form.

**Data Analysis**

I received course materials from participants; syllabi and related materials were printed and then anonymized to ensure that both the participant and their university of employment were not identifiable in the data. As the first reading of the course syllabi was conducted, I began to categorize the syllabi by the main focus of the course stated above (in Table 1). As each additional reading was conducted, I examined how my own ideological discourses influenced how data were being read. For example, discourses of standardization would have to be reread and tone reexamined so that my own feelings about how standards influenced course design were not imposed upon the data. After the syllabi were categorized by course focus, a second reading of the syllabi was conducted to begin to unpack the more specific aspects of what these courses were about and what methods were employed for teaching YAL.

Initial codes were created based on researcher expectations from a review of literature on Bakhtin in education and the development of the theory of literary analysis using Bakhtin’s concepts. These initial codes were formed, though differing and sometimes competing discourses were encountered in the data. These initial codes were “discourses on defining YA, adolescence, or the genre,” “discourses of diversity, representation, and social justice,”

**Table 1**  
*Initial Codes Used to Categorize Syllabi for Analysis*

Courses Focusing on Entirely on YAL	Courses on Reading Methods that Use YAL As Major Focus	Literacy Across the Curriculum Classes that Include YAL as a Part
13	4	3



“national and global discourses,” and “authoritative” and “internally persuasive” discourses. The second reading of the course syllabi allowed me to begin to analyze the purposes of these courses more deeply.

In the third reading of the course syllabi, course objectives and goals were separated from the larger documents in order to understand the direct purposes of young adult literature courses in secondary English education. These course objectives and goals under further analysis, where codes were compared constantly against previous occurrences in the data, provide an in-depth look at the theoretical purposes of these courses, and provide answers to the research question.

The corresponding data drawn from these 20 course syllabi provide the basis for this research article. As Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) explain, one purpose in studying syllabi is to be able to describe how things are being done in order to promote a discussion about current methods that can then be researched and discussed further. The findings of this study will allow researchers and practitioners in secondary English education to understand what is being done in the field of YAL now and use that knowledge as a foundation for building a pedagogy of young adult literature in the future.

**Table 2**

*Broad initial codes for data analysis*

Discourses on defining YA, adolescence, or the genre.	Discourses on diversity, representation, and social justice.	National and Global Discourses.	Authoritative and internally persuasive discourses.
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## Limitations

Whereas Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) opened the door for course syllabi to be examined to understand current and future methodology in secondary English teacher education, and Pasternak et al. (2014, 2017) built upon that foundation by studying methods in educational research to further expand upon how English teachers are prepared and trained in the 21st century, this study does not fully examine the actual classrooms of the submitted course syllabi to see how these goals and objectives are actually implemented, how student growth and progress are evaluated, and if students are on board with or resistant to these ideas.

The course syllabus is an inherently flawed document. Teacher educators are required to create these documents, and all are influenced by authoritative discourses of the colleges and universities in which they are taught. Syllabi are political documents sometimes reflecting the individual voice of the teacher educator, and other times reflecting how a monologic conception of authority acts on students. Sometimes courses are taught with departmental or inherited syllabi that individual instructors have no real say in, and at other times instructors may provide a bland syllabus for public record while sharing an individual, personal syllabus with actual students in class.

All of these limitations must be considered when discussing the findings of this study. While seventeen published teacher educators in YAL and their 20 course syllabi are no small number, the courses and teacher educators cannot represent all of the work being done with YAL and secondary English teacher education. This study provides data to make the claims below, with the caveat that that this study accounts for only a part of what YAL in teacher education is and can be. Future research built upon this study can examine how these course syllabi

match what is actually being done in the classroom and provide a fuller picture if the voices of the teacher educators who submitted these syllabi were able to provide commentary on the instructional choices they made as well as provide anecdotal evidence as to their students' acceptance or denial of the stated objectives and goals.

### Findings

Of the 20 course syllabi examined in this study provided by 17 YAL teacher educators, there were 111 separate objectives and goals (see Appendix) included to help teacher candidates understand the purposes of the courses. The heteroglossia of the syllabi identified in the objectives and goals allows for analysis of how these discourses compete within this space. Because one course objective or goal is followed by others that further the same discourse, compete against it, or suggest internally persuasive discourses of instructors and students, an understanding of the contested nature of education may become available through analysis. To many students, these courses will be their first interaction with young adult literature as a field of study, and not only as a literary genre.

Subsequent readings of the course syllabi further developed thematic codes beyond the original codes used to categorize syllabi and organize the data. Four main codes were developed while analyzing the course objectives and goals: "discourses about traditional English Education methods," "discourses of critical education/social justice/diversity," "discourses on defining YAL and/or adolescence(ts)," and "discourses on reflection/reflective practice" using YAL. Examples for each code within specific objectives and goals are highlighted and represented in Table 3 and illustrated in the Appendix.

As each syllabus, and subsequently each goals and objectives section, was analyzed for sites of tension in

the heteroglossia of the text, both authoritative and internally persuasive discourses were found competing to be heard, and individual utterances (an objective or goal) at times served both types of discourses, making them double-voiced. Bakhtin's concepts created a lens through which this competition could be seen and provided a way to see how language used on the syllabus represented both centripetal and centrifugal forces of language seeking control.

### Traditional English Education Methods

YAL scholars are beginning to define what a pedagogy of YAL might look like (see Buehler, 2016). The syllabi suggest that the traditional strategies of teaching English are a vital part of using YAL with teacher candidates. Traditional English education strategies for teaching literature can be "characterized by whole-class assigned readings and teacher-directed instruction" (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 257) and teaching preservice teachers how to incorporate reading and writing strategies into their instruction. This focus on traditional English education strategies is not surprising, as YAL courses are more often included in teacher education programs within colleges and schools of education (15 of 20 syllabi) as opposed to Departments of English (5 out of 20 syllabi) in this study. The courses' housing also shows that YAL has become an ingrained method for teaching traditional strategies even as adjacent reading methods are created to better teach YAL in secondary teacher education. Those educators still harboring a deficit perspective on YAL might be surprised to see that the focus of these courses is on the traditional English education strategies that they would expect in a reading or teaching methods course.

English/Language arts curriculum jargon and discourse were represented throughout the

**Table 3**

*Codes and examples from data*

Discourses About Traditional English Education methods	Discourses of Critical Education/social justice/diversity	Discourses on Defining YAL and/or Adolescence(ts)	Discourses on Reflection/Reflective Practice Using YAL
Evaluate and experiment with multiple strategies and a range of content materials and texts, both traditional and alternative, and both explicitly and in the context of literature instruction, in order to move toward the goal of reaching all students. (#59)	Demonstrate a social justice orientation toward teaching and young adult literature, including consideration of how race, class, gender, and sexual orientation relate to the school and classroom context. (#30)	Examine research and theories of adolescence through a range of scholarly sources and (re)consider our own assumptions. (#11)	How do we develop a reflective stance that serves to guide and support our continued growth as professional educators? (#4)

objectives and goals from these 20 course syllabi. One teacher educator highlighted the essential question, “What are the purposes of the English curriculum in the areas of literature, language, writing, speaking, and thinking?” These courses reflected the discourse of the need to have students experience and then be able to plan with a number of reading strategies in mind when preparing to work with secondary readers. These traditionally-focused courses most often were geared toward teaching instructional strategies, theoretical and developmental foundations of teaching, and creating positive learning environments for secondary students. I first review the findings on instructional strategies.

***Instructional Strategies***

The largest focus of these courses (50 out of 111 total objectives/goals) was on teaching traditional English

teacher methods, in particular, teaching teacher candidates reading and writing strategies that they could use with young adult literature in secondary classrooms placements. The five language arts (historically conceived as reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) were often in focus when looking at these objectives and goals, as shown through the focus on planning strategies for using young adult literature and meeting the diverse needs of secondary students. These objectives and goals show that these courses are centered on the reading of young adult literature, but that it is rare that classes are formatted like a traditional literature course in a Department of English where literary analysis of reading is the valued goal. They are more often focused on how the reading of YAL can be expertly paired with reading and writing strategies to allow teacher candidates to build classrooms that focus on the needs of secondary readers. This emphasis suggests a competition in the heteroglossia of these sections where the pedagogy for English

courses seeks to control how literature is expertly read and analyzed, in contrast to the Department of English training that students receive in literary analysis classes prior to certification.

A number of objectives and goals for these young adult literature courses focused on how “Students will be able to discuss strategies for implementing reading and writing activities within the context of young adult literature” using research-based practices. Such objectives often speak to the need for teacher candidates “To begin the practice of designing curriculum conceptually integrating Common Core Standards, differentiation, and text diversity” (see the Appendix for the presentation of all illustrative statements provided in the Findings). This second objective is a great example of double-voiced objectives or goals directly reflecting the social and authoritative discourse of standardization while also calling on traditional methods and standards.

Another objective calls on teacher candidates to “Identify and explain the National Council of Teachers of English Standards for the English/Language Arts and the [State] Academic Standards for English language arts for grades 5-9,” (see Appendix) reflecting the authoritative influence of national and state bodies on curriculum for young adults. The authoritative discourses of education are present in such goals where the implication is that preservice teachers must learn how to operate within the hierarchical context of public education.

The courses reflected in these 20 syllabi made room for the foundational need in the curriculum of teacher education to teach new teachers how to plan and instruct students while using young adult

literature. The heteroglossic nature of these syllabi showed goals such as “We will uncover practical elements of lesson plans and unit creation, and you will be challenged to consider the theoretical aspects of the teaching of reading and literature”; students will “Develop a rationale for including the study of young adult literature as part of the school curriculum”; “Implement and analyze a variety of developmentally appropriate tools for assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative) appropriate for middle level English / language arts”; and “Explain and demonstrate effective writing instructional practices (including ethical response to student writing) related to varied text types and purposes (e.g., argumentative, informational, and narrative), production and distribution of writing, and research to build and present knowledge.” These objectives show that planning, rationalizing instructional choices, assessing student work, and writing are all parts of a curriculum and pedagogy of young adult literature and serve authoritative discourses on the

“right” way for preservice teachers to be trained.

What is important to notice, however, is how the goals above are also double-voiced in that they serve the authoritative demands of teacher education while simultaneously reflecting the authoritative needs of the instructor. Within one objective, both the demanding aspect of learning for certification exists in the same utterance where instructors explain how open they are to student interest and learning, showing how a contradiction can be found within stated goals. Such goals are reflective of the internally persuasive discourses of students to “challenge” and “rationalize” these established practices.

**“The dialogic nature of these syllabi shows how a seemingly static document actually contains living multitudes as these discourses animate and reanimate each other.”**

These YAL courses are also indicative of the larger discourse in the study of YAL in teacher education to prepare students to be able to defend their use of YAL with their students to meet their individual needs. This internally persuasive discourse is shown through goals such as “How can we best construct activities, assignments, assessments, and units to ensure that we are meeting our objectives and the differentiated needs of our students given their diverse identities, lives, interests, and needs?” This example shows how the interests and needs of secondary students are also a part of the heteroglossia of these course syllabi and serve to help preservice teachers centrifugally resist authoritative structures. The dialogic nature of these syllabi shows how a seemingly static document actually contains living multitudes as these discourses animate and reanimate each other.

### *Theoretical and Developmental Foundations*

Another focus of the objectives and goals of these 20 courses was to develop an understanding of the theoretical and conceptual foundations of teaching secondary students reading with both canonical literature and young adult literature. Goals like “[students will] understand and describe theoretical foundations as related to the development, processes and components of reading instruction,” “use theories and research to design and implement an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced reading program,” and “generate theoretically based rationales for including young adult literature texts in secondary curriculum” could be vague to students just starting a course. The message is that there is much more to teaching reading using young adult literature than just reading fun books. Though the internally persuasive goal of students developing themselves as independent

readers of YAL is present, other goals in this section suggest a dry curriculum infused with authoritative standards showing their double-voiced nature.

In contrast, teacher educators in these courses centrifugally pushed their students from the outset to think more deeply about what it means to be readers or to teach reading. This value is highlighted in goals where instructors start with a “hope that we can probe issues of literacy, seek understanding in the act of reading, and talk about the ways in which texts work in the classroom all with our students’ learning at the center.” They also push teacher candidates to go beyond the surface level of books to “address theory and practice of literature study in secondary schools, and appraisal of multicultural Young Adult

literature appropriate to the needs, interests, and abilities of adolescents.” They also push students to “Present text-based interpretations and arguments in small group and whole-class discussions” and become producers of content revolving around young adult literature in which their internally persuasive discourses are given more space.

These objectives and goals focusing on foundational English/Language Arts methods situate YAL as a companion to traditional methods in English education, not as a worthy genre in its own right. Preservice teachers in these classes are expected to engage with theoretical understandings on what it means to teach reading while also pursuing their own interests as independent readers.

### *Learning Environment*

Objectives and goals focusing on instruction asked teacher candidates to consider how the learning environment of a reading classroom can have huge implications for student success. These goals focused

**“These objectives and goals focusing on foundational English/Language arts methods situate YAL as a companion to traditional methods in English education, not as a radical coup.”**



on growth for secondary and teacher education students, so that teacher candidates learn to “Develop a learning environment that is conducive to the development of literacy and optimizes students’ opportunities for development.” These courses also ask students to go beyond the four walls of their classrooms while “Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning.” The instructors asked overarching questions, such as “What do we hope to achieve with our students in their academic, social, and personal development as a result of their experiences in the English Classroom?” Reflection on their internally persuasive discourses while in these classes is a key part of creating learning environments using young adult literature, as they give both student and teacher an avenue for grappling with issues and themes that are personally relevant.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms**

These courses also often call on technology to be used alongside learning with young adult literature to enhance the learning environments of English classes in the secondary classroom. These educational discourses strive to influence students by having them argue that students can “Use technology tools appropriately for discussing, exploring, and representing young adult literature,” and emphasize “how student learning can be enhanced through collaboration with other teachers, professionals and parents.” Technology, to these instructors, allows teacher candidates to value collaboration, which “Communicates professional information, knowledge and resources for effective English language arts instruction with peers” and even takes it a step further by having students “Communicate effectively with [their] classmates and a global twitter audience,” showing the dialogism sought in these classroom spaces. The development of global learning environments through YAL creates an understanding for preservice teachers that reading can connect to

authentic and real-world contexts, and not just the authoritative discourses of historical and political contexts of the literary canon.

Lastly, young adult literature allows teacher candidates in these classes to understand how literacy is so much more than an individual reader’s experience with a book. Rather, community literacy programs can be an extension of the English/Language Arts classroom. One goal states that students will “Produce a community based literacy plan that incorporates student and community needs and interests, while implementing content-based literacy strategies.” The key focus here is on students’ centrifugal interest in literacy and the community, which implies that teacher candidates have the opportunity to address the needs and interests of their students to affect their local communities as partners and not as saviors coming to fix their youth. This goal provides another example of a double-voiced discourse in which the aim is to focus on community literacy needs while simultaneously focusing on the discourses of learning traditional English education teaching reading methods.

### **Critical Education, Social Justice, and Diversity**

One focus (22 out of 111 objectives/goals) for the use of YAL with preservice teachers reflects the social discourses of how using this genre teaches students to be critical interpreters of the world around them, promotes social justice in educational spaces, and prepares preservice teachers to teach diverse students in diverse contexts. While these three sub-focuses of the goals and objectives of these 20 course syllabi are rooted in the foundational need to prepare teachers for working in diverse classrooms, each has its own varying needs addressed in the syllabi to allow students to note how much potential there is so that they can be prepared to work in a diverse field. In the

next section, I will examine objectives and goals that establish a need for critical education.

### ***Critical Education***

Teacher educators highlighted in this study showed through the heteroglossia of their course syllabi that they placed a large emphasis on preparing teacher candidates to critically evaluate a wide assortment of texts in order to prepare them to incorporate diverse materials into their instruction. Many of these course syllabi start with the premise that students must “Explore the ways in which adolescents’ literature can be highly political in nature.” Using YAL in the secondary classroom is not always an easy sell, and teacher educators show the value in teaching preservice teachers that they will need to be prepared to defend the use of these oftentimes political texts against authoritative structures in public education in order to meet the individual needs and interests of their secondary students. This goal is most often handled through discussions on text selection in which:

Class participants will scrutinize the criteria used in book selection for adolescents to reflect diversity in backgrounds, learning styles, and curriculum demands. Additionally, participants will develop techniques for promoting critical reading and informed interpretation of print, non-print and multi-modal texts, and how to choose texts to meet the needs of diverse groups of students.

This multifaceted goal shows the competing, heteroglossic nature of the back-and-forth of multiple double-voiced discourses within one goal. Critical examination of young adult texts, much as would be expected in traditional literary analysis English classes, teaches these preservice teachers how to use individual lenses to analyze representation in YAL texts. When there are course

goals such as “Students will read young adult literature critically to evaluate how constructs such as gender, class, race, and sexual orientation are taken up and represented in individual texts,” teacher candidates are given the opportunity to use their backgrounds in English literary methods to make pedagogical decisions expressed through planning and instruction. The double-voiced nature of these goals to serve both the authoritative discourses of the tradition of accepted English methods and the internally persuasive goal of having students be critical consumers of texts to come to their own understandings about them allows for an interesting site of tension within these syllabi.

Teaching preservice teachers to be critical evaluators of texts before they are put into the hands of secondary students allows these preservice teachers to be cultivators and curators of knowledge rather than simply authoritative owners of it. This idea is effectively teaching new teachers how to foster dialogism and heteroglossia in their classrooms, a tenet of dialogic pedagogy. Conceptually, this critical stance helps students to “Implement techniques for differentiating instruction that address student needs, interests, and learning styles, as well as academic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, through the selection of materials, lesson plans, grouping styles (heterogeneous and homogeneous), and instructional approaches.” This goal parallels the focus of traditional English teacher methods. These parallels between traditional methods and methods for a pedagogy of YAL suggest a shift toward an understanding that there is a place for YAL in the future of English teacher methods, and these goals allow for the internally persuasive discourses of students’ reading needs and interests to be given more space within the heteroglossia of the texts.

## *Social Justice*

Although preservice teachers in these courses do not have their preparation to use YAL divorced from traditional methods, the majority of these YAL courses adopt a perspective that students can learn how to use YAL to effect social change. When students “apply critical literary theory to print and non-print texts, develop interpretations of literature using these critical lenses, and explore ways to use these texts and approaches in effective instruction,” they are afforded a chance to be a part of the larger social discourses of change in education. YAL, with such a focus, can provide much needed perspective and identity exposure to preservice teachers, and this expansion of their vision could allow them to be better prepared to work in diverse schools with diverse student populations.

This charge to be a part of social change is most often noted through objectives in which students join the national heteroglossia of discourse on social justice in education as active participants. In order to meet goals like the ability to “Demonstrate a social justice orientation toward teaching and young adult literature, including consideration of how race, class, gender, and sexual orientation relate to the school and classroom context,” students engage with YA authors, publishers, educators, and students in communities all over the country to learn how to be a part of the conversation. Some courses explicitly state how students will do this, such as when “Students will also be required to follow a YA blog and use the conversations in that blog as a lens for understanding young adult literature, the needs of adolescents and issues of equity and social justice.” Heteroglossic

goals like these are practical and have easy application in secondary spaces.

Other goals promote engagement by having students “Explore the current trends and relationships between young adult literature and media and marketing and use that knowledge to become critical consumers of media texts.” This goal effectively relates teaching preservice teachers with how to be critical consumers of text, which, in turn, will give them the experience to teach their own middle and high school students to be able to do the same. By engaging in the heteroglossia of YAL in education beyond these courses, preservice teachers are given

the opportunity to learn how to raise up the marginalized voice in their school contexts and value the internally persuasive discourses of their students.

Ultimately, many of these courses express hope that students will become active members of a critical community instead of just passive consumers of story. These teacher educators want their students “To do inquiry into the social, political, and economic environment of

schools and their surrounding community and consider the impact on students’ lives” so that they can join the great work already being done in their school communities and become partners in building a better world. This goal, like others focusing on areas of social justice, speaks to the potential ability of YAL to be a vehicle for social change and a starting point for action.

## *Diversity and Equity*

Teacher educators using YAL with preservice teachers often critically engage their students in

**“Teaching preservice teachers to be critical evaluators of texts before they are put into the hands of secondary students allows these preservice teachers to be cultivators and curators of knowledge rather than simply authoritative owners of it.”**

ideological and social discourses of education as critical educators. This social justice work requires having discussions about the dialogic and foundational ideas of diversity and equity, as evidenced in one double-voiced goal in which the course “Promotes instructional strategies that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensures that individual student learning needs remain the central focus of instruction.” These two focuses of addressing diversity and individual student needs are both competing to be heard while simultaneously supporting one another. If teacher education programs are training white, middle class, female teacher candidates (Sulzer & Thein, 2016) to be able to enact change in their communities, then they must first “explore instructional, philosophical, and student diversity in the middle and secondary English classroom” with students. To critically study classrooms and communities, preservice teachers have to examine where authoritative discourses on students are in power and also how their internally persuasive discourses are in tension with them.

Bakhtin’s concept of heteroglossia is particularly valuable when speaking of goals such as when a course “Strives to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges.” First, goals like this promote inclusiveness, which values the voice of the student and teaches preservice teachers how to give up some of their voice in order to hear from students. Second, they allow for a flattening of the hierarchy (Fecho et al., 2010) within teacher education programs: the preservice teacher is a colleague who works toward goals with classmates and professors, and, in turn, this allows preservice teachers to learn that secondary students also want to be heard and feel like their experiences and perspectives are valued.

When foundations for inclusiveness are created through objectives and goals like these, preservice teachers learn how to plan and instruct students with

that foundation always in mind. Similarly, when diversity goals are “the central focus of instruction,” preservice teachers have the opportunity to use YAL to better understand diversity in their own lives. If individual student needs are the main focus of such goals, then preservice teachers learn to promote diversity and equity even within standardized spaces where curriculum is controlled by authoritative powers.

Finally, objectives and goals that promote diversity and equity in education allow students to be a greater part of their school communities. This participation is highlighted through goals where students use “knowledge and understanding of the different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages in the school community to promote effective interactions among colleagues, families, and the larger community.” This involvement teaches preservice teachers that when one “Collaborates with families, communities, and colleagues to develop comprehensive strategies to address the diverse educational needs of families and the community,” major change can occur. Collaboration with communities is apparent in these course syllabi as is the knowledge that partnership is key in promoting equity.

### **Defining YAL and/or Adolescence(ts)**

Although I fully expected to come across many definitions and conceptualizations of YAL based on my review of the literature, especially in comparison and contrast to the traditional literary canon, only 11 out of 111 objectives and goals directly addressed defining or conceptualizing young adult literature or the adolescent reader, and most of these objectives, when comparing them to the corresponding course calendars and pacing guides, were only addressed by courses in the first day or week of coursework. Perhaps these social discourses are not so loud because these teacher educators feel that YAL as a

field of study is now a permanent fixture in popular culture or in English teacher education; or perhaps YAL is covered in foundational education classes on which these courses are later built and could be examined in follow up research. However, the study of adolescent readers and their specific needs is reflected as a focus of this work as found in the heteroglossia of these syllabi.

### *Defining YAL*

As stated above, the heteroglossia of these course syllabi did make room for a defining of the genre of YAL, especially in the first week(s) of class. Such goals ask students to “Evaluate the purpose of literature that is written explicitly for adolescents and the value of using this literature for classroom instruction” in order to “Gain an understanding of the natures of reading, writing, and related language skills, and the processes involved in adolescent literacy development.” Such goals are familiar in traditional English education pedagogies, here just applied to the study of YAL instead of the broader field of traditional literature. However, the need to have preservice teachers engage in an analysis of what YAL is and who it is for remains among the discourses in YAL in teacher education.

Some course syllabi in this study allude to a need for preservice teachers to understand the greater authoritative discourses of publishing and marketing strategies associated with the genre of YAL. One teacher educator provides a double-voiced goal for understanding the genre: “Students will investigate the peritext of young adult literature and explain what it suggests about how publishers conceptualize the audience for these books.” Such goals ask teacher candidates to question “the cultural values underlying the marketing of literature for children and young adults” in order to examine what “assumptions about what young adult literature should be or do.” By having students address

assumptions in the discourses surrounding YAL from a societal standpoint, teacher educators can then have students prepare to use YAL with individual readers. Looking beyond the texts to see how adolescents talk about YAL is an important addition to note in these courses.

### *Adolescence(ts)*

A number of course objectives and goals addressed the social discourses of the individual adolescent reader and the specific needs that they have. More importantly, by having students engage with adolescence as a socially constructed concept, teacher educators in this study have preservice teachers “Examine [both] research and theories of adolescence through a range of scholarly sources and (re)consider our own assumptions.” Having students engage with authoritative discourses through research shows preservice teachers where these powers seek to centripetally control understandings of the concept and how to centrifugally resist subsequent assumptions about adolescence(ts). Teacher educators address power dynamics so that students are able to engage with YAL in these courses not only as readers themselves, but also as teachers who are preparing to work with secondary students with individual needs and concerns that must be addressed before handing them books. Thus, teacher candidates experience YAL in these courses as readers while also potentially struggling with the heteroglossia surrounding adolescents and YAL.

By preparing preservice teachers to work with adolescent readers and not just with YAL as a genre, teacher educators are providing teacher candidates with a broader foundation upon which to build their understanding of English methods by having students “Examine and articulate historical and popular conceptions of adolescents as well as how they are positioned in society and in texts” in order to understand how they personally view their secondary



students as people. This attention also allows preservice teachers to centrifugally leave behind deficit discourses about adolescence(ts) that have been socially ingrained in them.

These goals that focus on deconstructing false stereotypes about adolescence(ts) infuse such discussions within greater focuses of the courses. When preservice teachers know that they “will define the concept of adolescence, discuss characteristics of young adult literature and literary criticism, and use that criticism to analyze texts for adolescents,” they can “Recognize and support the unique needs and skills of the adolescent reader.” Such double-voiced goals meet the needs of the traditional reading methods coursework and prepare students to work with standardized curriculum under pressure from authoritative discourses in education all while engaging as individual readers of YAL. YAL methods allow teacher educators to meet the prescribed reading methods needs in English education while also showing that more can be done using YAL than what has been previously thought.

### Reflection/Reflective Practice

Infused within all of the thematic focuses of these 20 course syllabi was the hope that preservice teachers would be active and reflective teachers who read stories that are internally persuasive to them, and that this foundation of personal reading will serve them as secondary English educators. These course objectives and goals show that “Students will be able to read and reflect on a varied selection of young adult literature and discuss it as a class through a variety of discussion and literacy techniques and activities.” The key aspect to reflective practice when using YAL in these courses is to show preservice teachers not that YAL is the only answer, but that

reflective pedagogues have their students study a wide variety of literature in many genres in order to develop their reading habits in a diversified way.

However, reflective teachers of YAL “Exhibit the abilities to select texts for middle/high school readers with regard to student interests and textual features including literary merit and text complexity.” Within the heteroglossic and double-voiced nature of one objective, student interest and literary merit and text complexity are not mutually exclusive but can exist together in many YA texts. Their complementarity allows preservice teachers to have an expanded view of school-appropriate texts when facing text selection in their future role as classroom teachers.

### Discussion

As analysis began, I expected that these 20 course syllabi would serve as a celebration of all things YAL, complete with a parade and banners showcasing the greatness and value of using YAL in secondary English teacher education. Furthermore, I expected that these courses

would focus entirely on reading as much YAL as possible to give preservice teachers a foundation of the genre by forcing them to read as much as they could within a semester. What I found instead was a focused, rational, and evidence-based guide to using YAL within the greater methods coursework for secondary English/Language Arts and a determined goal of having students engage with the various social and ideological discourses that affect secondary and higher education.

Although there were whispers in the data of the canon versus YAL debate, and other familiar discourses on text complexity, etc. with YAL, what was more obvious was the larger purpose that these

**“It is through education and educators that social change can take place when students engage with perspectives different than their own through reading YAL.”**

teacher educators provided for their preservice teachers to do great and important things with their students and for themselves as readers. The overwhelming evidence of these YAL courses providing the traditional reading methods curriculum negate any of the old arguments that YAL does not have a valued place in English education. These teacher educators showed through their objectives and goals for these courses that teaching preservice teachers to prepare, plan, and instruct students using reading strategies is as approachable with YAL as it is with traditional literature. These discourses swirl together in the heteroglossia of the texts, and this study has shown how the centripetal and centrifugal pulls of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses meet at sites of tension within the syllabus.

These classes also take a political and unapologetic stance that teaching is a profession on the front lines of social justice, and it is through education and educators that social change can take place when students engage with perspectives different from their own through reading YAL. YAL provides preservice teachers and secondary students with a safe space to grapple with difficult discussions, to learn from the experiences of others, and to listen to the voices of those who are different from themselves. These focuses of YAL show preservice teachers that one does not have to travel far to meet those who are different from themselves and their students, and that YAL might be a better vehicle to provide this bridge than the Eurocentric literature that is traditionally taught. The discourses of diversity and social justice found in these syllabi are evidence that YAL has the potential to impact much more than the individual in its study.

Lastly, teaching preservice teachers to be reflective practitioners who grapple with social constructs of who their students are allows new teachers to come alongside the individual reader, see past

assumptions, and overcome deficit views on students' abilities as readers. By looking at the larger genre of YAL, how it is marketed, and how adolescent readers come to books, preservice teachers can better be prepared to support the needs and interests of their secondary students.

### Conclusion

The findings of this study show how effectively YAL pedagogy can be brought alongside traditional English teacher pedagogies to diversify and evolve preservice teacher education within methods courses. Teacher educators participating in this study had a range of methods and focuses of their courses, but ultimately built upon a foundation of student interest in reading materials and of the direct benefits to students in both teacher education and secondary schools.

The hidden reality behind the design of these courses is that preservice teachers do not have years of classroom teaching experience to gauge how students read, how much students read, and what they read. It was apparent that these teacher educators felt that preservice teachers must examine themselves as readers in order to be able to support the reading needs of secondary students. The answer to this lack of experience in classrooms full of readers is to have preservice teachers read frequently themselves.

It says much about YAL in education that teacher educators have a varied yet focused view of the work that can be done with YAL and preservice teachers. The presentation of the range of data in this article only begins to hint at how the included goals and objectives are reached with specific YAL titles and how those titles reflect the needs of both the teacher certification program and secondary readers. Follow up research should examine how the YAL included on these syllabi match the goals and objectives and the purposes of YAL courses described in this article.

As teacher educators begin to conceptualize what a pedagogy of YAL looks like, and as we move toward accepted methods for working with YAL in teacher education, more work can be built on the foundation of these results to dream of the future. Pope and Kaywell's (2001) conclusions from their reading of *Preparing Teachers to Teach Young Adult Literature*, for which NCTE commission members submitted course syllabi of their ideal YAL course, benefit from updating. YAL has become a fixture of English teacher education and has come a long way. Even after listing focuses like defining YAL, genre studies,

suitability, etc., Pope and Kaywell asserted that “it is impossible to place a rigid box around the study and teaching of young adult literature, although we are continuing our dialogue and searching for a way to support our constituents” (p. 326). The results of the present study corroborate the impossibility of saying that YAL is taught in just one way but does show the diverse potential of YAL in teacher education. As teacher educators and preservice teachers study YAL methods, there is a potential of doing more in the field of education that impacts how people see students, the world, and diverse perspectives.

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## Appendix

### Objectives and Goals as Listed on YAL Syllabi

1. What are the purposes of the English curriculum in the areas of literature, language, writing, speaking, and thinking? What do we hope to achieve with our students in their academic, social, and personal development as a result of their experiences in the English Classroom?
2. What instructional strategies can be utilized to optimize student learning, interest, and motivation in the teaching of literature, language, writing, speaking, and thinking in the English classroom?
3. How can we best construct activities, assignments, assessments, and units to ensure that we are meeting our objectives and the differentiated needs of our students given their diverse identities, lives, interests, and needs?
4. How do we develop a reflective stance that serves to guide and support our continued growth as professional educators?
5. Understand and describe theoretical foundations as related to the development, processes and components of reading instruction.
6. Use theories and research to design and implement an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced reading program.
7. Understand, develop, differentiate, and implement various instructional approaches, routines, and assessment techniques in response to students' needs.
8. Develop a learning environment that is conducive to the development of literacy and optimizes students' opportunities for development.
9. Display positive reading behaviors to serve as models of the value of reading.
10. Analyze and critique a wide range of adolescents' literature across genre and form.
11. Examine research and theories of adolescence through a range of scholarly sources and (re)consider our own assumptions.
12. Evaluate the purpose of literature that is written explicitly for adolescents and the value of using this literature for classroom instruction.
13. Explore the ways in which adolescents' literature can be highly political in nature.
14. Evaluate, select and use young adult literature in the classroom.
15. Help adolescent students develop critical-thinking and literacy skills, especially through deep discussion of literature.
16. Encourage adolescent students to become lifelong readers by offering much choice around genre and content.
17. Become more creative writers as a response to literature.
18. Understand and imitate the stylistic features that young adult fiction writers employ.

19. Reflective Practitioner: Class participants will scrutinize the criteria used in book selection for adolescents to reflect diversity in backgrounds, learning styles, and curriculum demands. Additionally, participants will develop techniques for promoting critical reading and informed interpretation of print, non-print and multi-modal texts, and how to choose texts to meet the needs of diverse groups of students.
20. Scholar: Besides reading 9 YA books in focused study and selected readings in the course textbook class participants will also read and respond to journal and newspaper articles by those prominent in the field, and to participate in our own classroom forum on Canvas. Additionally, students will apply critical literary theory to print and non-print texts, develop interpretations of literature using these critical lenses, and explore ways to use these texts and approaches in effective instruction. Students will also be required to follow a YA blog and use the conversations in that blog as a lens for understanding young adult literature, the needs of adolescents and issues of equity and social justice.
21. Problem Solver: While research shows a direct correlation between reading and achievement, many teens choose not to read. Therefore, participants will explore ways to entice young people to read—acknowledging their wide range of abilities, funds of knowledge and broad interests...including interest in non-traditional and multi-modal texts. Additionally, participants will explore ways to become knowledgeable about the latest books and media appropriate to their subject matter, and encourage incorporation of the contemporary books into their teaching and their own reading life.
22. Students will be able to read and reflect on a varied selection of young adult literature and discuss it as a class through a variety of discussion and literacy techniques and activities.
23. Students will be able to discuss strategies for implementing reading and writing activities within the context of young adult literature.
24. Students will be able to build a database of young adult literature through Goodreads.
25. Students will be able to investigate the ways in which research-based adolescent literacy strategies can be implemented in the secondary classroom.
26. Thoughtfully and critically engage with young adult literature of various genres.
27. Generate theoretically based rationales for including young adult literature texts in secondary curriculum.
28. Investigate issues in the field of young adult literature such as the canon debate, censorship, and literary quality.
29. Examine and articulate historical and popular conceptions of adolescents as well as how they are positioned in society and in texts.
30. Demonstrate a social justice orientation toward teaching and young adult literature, including consideration of how race, class, gender, and sexual orientation relate to the school and classroom context.
31. Model a classroom community of critical colleagues.
32. Collaboratively and individually plan, lead, and reflect a class discussion and task.

33. Exhibit the abilities to select texts for middle/high school readers with regard to student interests and textual features including literary merit and text complexity.
34. Design engaging learning experiences with young adult literature.
35. Explore the current trends and relationships between young adult literature and media and marketing and use that knowledge to become critical consumers of media texts.
36. In this class we will define the concept of adolescence, discuss characteristics of young adult literature and literary criticism, and use that criticism to analyze texts for adolescents.
37. To explore instructional, philosophical, and student diversity in the middle and secondary English classroom.
38. To do inquiry into the social, political, and economic environment of schools and their surrounding community and consider the impact on students' lives.
39. To begin the practice of designing curriculum conceptually integrating Common Core Standards, differentiation, and text diversity.
40. To practice co-teaching by designing and delivering instruction on an assigned text.
41. To integrate course topics with classroom observations.
42. To develop the practice of professional reflection.
43. We will examine our own reading histories and consider how it affects the way we approach curriculum and students.
44. I hope that we can probe issues of literacy, seek understanding in the act of reading, and talk about the ways in which texts work in the classroom with our students' learning at the center.
45. We will consider how to create, configure and implement a curriculum that facilitates active learning with diverse learners.
46. We will uncover practical elements of lesson plans and unit creation, and you will be challenged to consider the theoretical aspects of the teaching of reading and literature.
47. Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning
  - a. Utilizes group processes to help colleagues<sup>1</sup> work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change.
  - b. Strives to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges.
48. Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning.
  - a. Engages in reflective dialog with colleagues based on observation of instruction, student work, and assessment data and helps make connections to research-based effective practices.
  - b. Promotes instructional strategies that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensures that individual student learning needs remain the central focus of instruction.

49. Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community.

- a. Uses knowledge and understanding of the different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages in the school community to promote effective interactions among colleagues, families, and the larger community.
- b. Models and teaches effective communication and collaboration skills with families and other stakeholders focused on attaining equitable achievement for students of all backgrounds and circumstances.
- c. Facilitates colleagues' self-examination of their own understandings of community culture and diversity and how they can develop culturally responsive strategies to enrich the educational experiences of students and achieve high levels of learning for all students.
- d. Develops a shared understanding among colleagues of the diverse educational needs of families and the community.
- e. Collaborates with families, communities, and colleagues to develop comprehensive strategies to address the diverse educational needs of families and the community.

50. Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession.

- a. Collaborates with colleagues to select appropriate opportunities to advocate for the rights and/or needs of students, to secure additional resources within the building or district that support student learning, and to communicate effectively with targeted audiences such as parents and community members.
- b. Represents and advocates for the profession in contexts outside of the classroom.

51. Research and evaluate effective content-based literacy strategies and adapt them to their individual classroom needs.

52. Gain an understanding of the natures of reading, writing, and related language skills, and the processes involved in adolescent literacy development.

53. Provide systematic and explicit differentiated instruction in the content area to meet the needs of the full range of learners in the classroom (struggling and underperforming learners, ELLs, GATE, Special Education students).

54. Assess the literacy development of adolescents using structured, qualitative tools.

55. Produce a community-based literacy plan that incorporates student and community needs and interests, while implementing content-based literacy strategies.

56. Implement literacy strategies discussed in class in order to facilitate adolescents' literacy development.

57. Read extensively from a list of representative YA and middle grades novels.

58. Evaluate, review and share responses to YA and middle grades texts.

59. Evaluate and experiment with multiple strategies and a range of content materials and texts, both traditional and alternative, and both explicitly and in the context of literature instruction, in order to move toward the goal of reaching all students.
60. Recognize and support the unique needs and skills of the adolescent reader.
61. Use multimodal composition and communication technologies to facilitate reflection and instruction.
62. Develop and verbalize a philosophy in the teaching of literature in order to reflect on and defend their practice.
63. Students will read young adult literature critically to evaluate how constructs such as gender, class, race, and sexual orientation are taken up and represented in individual texts.
64. Students will become familiar with topics and issues that are of concern to scholars and educators who work with young adult literature.
65. Students will investigate the peritext of young adult literature and explain what it suggests about how publishers conceptualize the audience for these books.
66. Students will read a range of young adult novels across an array of genres.
67. Read widely in the field of young adult literature--including multiple genres as well as diverse cultures, settings, authors, and topics.
68. Study the historical perspective and background of literature read by young adults and written for and/or about young adults including current problems, issues, and trends.
69. Develop skill in reflecting, close reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing individually and within groups about literature for young adults.
70. Develop a rationale for including the study of young adult literature as part of the school curriculum.
71. Develop an understanding of pertinent ways to guide young adults in their literature choice and to integrate this literature into the curriculum.
72. Demonstrate an ability to create and use varied teaching applications/strategies with young adult literature with students.
73. Use technology tools appropriately for discussing, exploring, and representing young adult literature.
74. Develop an understanding of the teacher's role in developing a love of reading in school and out of school contexts.
75. Develop a middle grades literature-based English / language arts unit plan and develop and implement at least one lesson in a middle grades classroom and reflect on the lesson.
76. Describe the interrelatedness of the six areas of middle level language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing).
77. Identify and explain the National Council of Teachers of English Standards for the English/Language Arts and the Kentucky Academic Standards for English language arts for grades 5-9.



78. Implement and analyze a variety of developmentally appropriate tools for assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative) appropriate for middle level English / language arts.
79. Explain and demonstrate effective and developmentally appropriate reading instructional practices related to varied text types and purposes (e.g., fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama).
80. Identify instructional strategies and/or approaches for all components of English/language arts in the middle grades classroom.
81. Explain and demonstrate effective writing instructional practices (including ethical response to student writing) related to varied text types and purposes (e.g., argumentative, informational, and narrative), production and distribution of writing, and research to build and present knowledge.
82. Analyze and apply the processes for lesson planning and instructional design.
83. Implement techniques for differentiating instruction that address student needs, interests, and learning styles, as well as academic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, through the selection of materials, lesson plans, grouping styles (heterogeneous and homogeneous), and instructional approaches.
84. Utilize a variety of technology and media for the planning and presentation of instruction of middle level language arts.
85. Use critical thinking to explore and evaluate instructional practices and materials for teaching the language arts.
86. Identifies and explains how student learning can be enhanced through collaboration with other teachers, professionals and parents.
87. Analyze and evaluate teaching through reflective practice and pursue continued professional growth and collaboration with colleagues.
88. Demonstrate effective instructional communication skills and a broad knowledge of classical and contemporary fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction appropriate for middle school students.
89. Demonstrate the writing process and to produce effective documents appropriate to the teaching profession and course level.
90. Use critical thinking to expand, express, explore, and evaluate course content through written communication.
91. Communicates professional information, knowledge and resources for effective English language arts instruction with peers
92. This course will address theory and practice of literature study in secondary schools, and appraisal of multicultural Young Adult literature appropriate to the needs, interests, and abilities of adolescents.
93. QUESTION the cultural values underlying the marketing of literature for children and young adults.
94. ANALYZE literary theories that attempt to explain how readers approach texts they encounter.
95. PRESENT text-based interpretations and arguments in small group and whole-class discussions.

96. PRODUCE an informational digital book talk of a contemporary young adult novel that addresses course themes.
97. REFLECT on the ways in which at least two literary theories color the meaning readers make of any given text.
98. Critically engage with young adult literature.
99. Question assumptions about what young adult literature should be or do.
100. Confront questions about diversity and representation in literature for young audiences.
101. Engage in individual research on young adult literature and scholarship.
102. Communicate effectively with your classmates and a global twitter audience.
103. To demonstrate knowledge of literature for youth/adolescents and works by diverse authors.
104. To respond freely to literature themselves and to invite and extend the honest responses of their students to their reading.
105. To select appropriate reading materials for students based on interests, abilities, and grade level and encourage student interest in reading for knowledge and pleasure.
106. To assess the potential appeal and usefulness of reading materials.
107. To recommend appropriate and appealing fiction and nonfiction to individuals and groups of students with diverse backgrounds and reading skills.
108. To use current annotated book lists and review columns in selecting reading materials for classroom libraries and for recommending books to groups and to individuals.
109. To use young adult literature as the basis for teaching skills and strategies necessary for reading texts.
110. To offer alternatives to traditional book report formats, alternatives that encourage thoughtful response and self expression.
111. To deal wisely and ethically with potential and real problems of censorship related to assigned and voluntary reading of adolescents.