LIS 519: Introduction to Children's Literature

Course Outline

Winter 2015

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Calendar Description

An introduction to literature for children from infancy through the elementary school years. Principles of evaluation and selection will be developed and current issues and trends will be examined.

Course Objectives

- to develop an appreciation of children’s literature
- to develop a critical approach to children’s literature, taking into consideration the current trends and issues in the field
- to develop familiarity with the body of literature available to children
- to discover and apply principles for the selection of materials for children
- to become familiar with the relevant professional literature and the bibliographic aids in the field

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- Drawing on exposure to a broad set of titles and support materials, and made aware of the importance for children to have access to a wide variety of texts, students will develop a capacity to evaluate books and other materials produced for children, taking account of aesthetic qualities of language, images, any extra effects, and the interactions among them all.
  - measures:
    - fairy tale assignment
    - critical blueprint assignment
    - final assignment
- Understanding that no response to a work of art is neutral, and knowing that adult mediation between children and their reading materials is never entirely impartial either, students will work to clarify and articulate their own personal responses to texts, and will explore how such responses may affect their role as mediators.
  - measures
    - critical blueprint assignment
    - class discussion
● Working from an understanding of the importance (and limits) of adult mediation in children’s literacy experiences, students will demonstrate skills in present and analyzing children’s texts for different contexts and audiences.
  ○ measures
    ■ final assignment
    ■ class discussion

Content
● general introduction to the field
● reading needs and interests of children
● criteria for evaluating children’s literature and their application in selection; bibliographic aids for selection
● the historic development of the field
● the literature: picturebooks, traditional literature, poetry, realistic fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, and (to a limited extent) materials in media other than print
● current issues, trends, and problems

Methods
Lectures, class discussions, films. Extensive reading and examination of works of children’s literature and related background reading is necessary.

Course Relationships
The only pre-requisite is a 4-year undergraduate degree.

Required Texts
See attached list of book titles. Every week there will also be one or two academic/professional articles, as listed on the course schedule.

Assignments and Weighting
● Critical blueprint assignment 25%
● Fairy tale picturebook assignment 30%
● Professional evaluation assignment 25%
● Class contribution 20%

School of Library and Information Studies Grading Statement
Grades reflect professional judgements of student achievement made by instructors. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in class. The instructor should mark in terms of raw scores, rank the assignments in order of merit, and with due attention to the verbal descriptions of the various grades, assign an appropriate final letter grade.

Grades are calculated in accordance with the SLIS Grading Procedure.
**Academic Integrity:**

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Students should also be mindful of the [SLIS Copyright Policy](#).

**Inclusive Language and Equity:**

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people within the university community and to educating faculty, staff, and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. The Faculty recommends that students and staff use inclusive language to create a classroom atmosphere in which students’ experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation and ethnic background. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services.

**Recording of Lectures:**

Recording of lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Policy about course outlines can be found in [Section 23.4(2)](#) of the University Calendar.