

EN 309-90-1 Comas, Catastrophes & Cats in Young Adult Fiction

ONLINE

Fall 2026



Chaminade
University
OF HONOLULU



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Course Description Texts & Required Assignments

Required YA Texts:

Jessica Brody

Save the Cat Writes a YA Novel

Gayle Forman

If I Stay (2009)

Aaron H. Aceves

This is Why They Hate Us (2022)

Suzanne Collins

Sunrise on the Reaping (2025)

Required Films:

R. J. Cutler

If I Stay (2014)

D.J. Caruso

I Am Number Four (2011)

Francis Lawrence

The Hunger Games: Sunrise on the Reaping (Nov 2026)

Class Discussion/Participation

2 Book Reviews (700—800-word max)

1 Group Project: YA Lesson Plan, or Syllabus

1 Critical Analysis paper, or multi-media project (1500-word max)

This upper-level **online** survey course navigates the symbols of Comas, Catastrophes, and Cats in Young Adult Fiction (YA), focusing on close readings of selected texts, and meaningful online discussions. Students will explore a wide-range of YA fiction that focuses on innovative family structures, and learn how to interpret these texts for both individual research and secondary classroom use. You will learn how to build your own library of YA texts, build a syllabus for teaching a YA class at the secondary level, and/or create a lesson plan based on a YA novel selected from our reading list. This course fulfills the General Education Value for “Education in the Family Spirit.”

This three-credit hour **online** course requires a minimum of **135** clock hours of student engagement, per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy. Students enrolled in this course are

expected to spend about **37.5** hours in class taking lecture notes, quizzes, and engaging in class discussion and/or written reflections. You will spend **20** hours writing your book reviews, and another **20** hours working on your group project. The final research paper will take **40** hours of researching (which includes the proposal and mock-up), and writing your final draft. There will be an additional **18** hours of work required beyond what is listed here (includes course readings, and homework assignments). This additional work will average about **1.2** hours per week.

Learning Outcomes

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLOs) By the end of this course, students will:

1. Book reviews will demonstrate student application of symbolism and themes in YA literature. The student must cite specific authors and texts.
2. Analytical literary research paper with a critical approach to family spirit in specific YA texts.
3. A collaborative secondary school-level sample course lesson, or syllabus featuring YA fiction.

Course Objectives (in addition to those goals listed by the English Department):

- To improve critical reading and analytical skills developed in EN 101 and EN 102
- To define various literary critical approaches and apply them to given YA texts
- To develop the skills necessary to produce a collaborative high school-level sample syllabus, or lesson plan
- To demonstrate proficiency in writing through the completion of a traditional research paper, or creative writing option

ENGLISH PROGRAM OUTCOMES (PLOs) Students who complete this course will:

Students who complete this program will demonstrate

1. Identify, define and apply literary critical approaches to analyze texts.
2. Define, analyze and interpret texts and their cultural and historical contexts.
3. Read, research, and write as a dialogic process of inquiry that includes reflection, collaboration and engagement with others.
4. Formulate and construct interpretive and creative applications of texts in workshops, literary performances, and other collaborative events in local communities.
5. Explain and interpret how literature and writing are vehicles for service, justice and peace.

MARIANIST VALUES

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

NATIVE HAWAIIAN VALUES

Education is an integral value in both Marianist and Native Hawaiian culture. Both recognize the transformative effect of a well-rounded, value-centered education on society, particularly in

seeking justice for the marginalized, the forgotten, and the oppressed, always with an eye toward God (Ke Akua). This is reflected in the ‘Olelo No’eau (Hawaiian proverbs) and Marianist core beliefs:

1. Educate for Formation in Faith (Mana) E ola au i ke akua (‘Olelo No’eau 364) May I live by God
2. Provide an Integral, Quality Education (Na’auao) Lawe i ka ma’alea a kū’ono’ono (‘Olelo No’eau 1957) Acquire skill and make it deep
3. Educate in Family Spirit (‘Ohana) ‘Ike aku, ‘ike mai, kōkua aku kōkua mai; pela iho la ka nohana ‘ohana (‘Olelo No’eau 1200) Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped; such is a family relationship
4. Educate for Service, Justice and Peace (Aloha) Ka lama kū o ka no’eau (‘Olelo No’eau 1430) Education is the standing torch of wisdom
5. Educate for Adaptation and Change (Aina) ‘A’ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho’okahi (‘Olelo No’eau 203) All knowledge is not taught in the same school

Alignment of Course Learning Outcomes

English	CLO 1	CLO 2	CLO 3
Marianist Values	3	3	3
PLOs	2, 3	1,2	3,4
Native Hawaiian Values	3	3	3

Participation, Regular & Substantive Interaction (RSI)

Student Participation Expectations

This asynchronous course requires consistent, meaningful engagement with content, peers, and the instructor each week. Logging in without completing activities does not count as participation.

Students are expected to:

- Complete assigned readings, lectures, and activities within designated timeframes.
- Log in regularly to review module instructions, announcements, deadlines, feedback, and grades.
- Contribute substantively to discussions — post original responses and engage thoughtfully with peers within the required window.
- Demonstrate preparation, reflection, and critical thinking in all interactive components.
- Meet established deadlines to support collaborative learning and remain on track with the weekly sequence.

Weekly Discussions: discussions are crucial to your class participation grade, and conducting peer reviews; therefore, online attendance is **MANDATORY**. Canvas monitors your online activity. Students are required to post at least **TWICE** to each discussion (unless directed otherwise). Remember to post most responses before Thursday, to allow for lively discussions on the various topics we will examine.

The deadline for discussion posts will be **11PM on the day assigned**.

If you post responses less than twice a week, your final grade will be lowered.

If you do not post at least two responses to each discussion topic on a weekly basis, your weekly and final scores will be lowered.

Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) — Instructor Commitments:

- **Weekly Communication:** Weekly announcements and/or module overviews clarifying objectives, key concepts, and assignment expectations.
- **Substantive Engagement:** Instructor-facilitated discussion engagement — prompting analysis, clarifying misunderstandings, connecting posts to course concepts, summarizing takeaways.
- **Timely Feedback:** within five days, or less for discussion posts, and two weeks or less, for other assignments
- **Monitoring & Outreach:** Active monitoring of Canvas engagement with proactive outreach and referrals for students who miss deadlines or fall behind.

Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:

- Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students](#)
 - [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
 - Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
 - Watch this [video to get you started](#)
 - [Online tutorials](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade Helpdesk for technical issues: helpdesk@chaminade.edu or call (808)

Book Review & Final Project

You will write well-crafted book reviews of the novels we examine. One of the two book reviews can be AI-assisted using specific criteria that will be outlined in class. Your final critical paper will use the Modern Language Association (MLA), or Chicago Manual Style (CMS) format. **Or**, you may create a multi-media project adhering to specific guidelines that will be outlined during the course. This could include writing the first chapter of your own YA novel, and/or outlining your original story board for a YA novel. Guidelines on how to construct your reviews, research proposal and annotations, also will be available on Canvas.

Papers & Final Project: Your reviews must be created by you alone, not designed, or assisted using AI tools, unless instructed. **All traditional papers must be typed and double-spaced using 12-point font**, and follow MLA or CMS guidelines. **When requested, your papers will be turned in on time via Canvas. Late papers will not be accepted after the due date! Papers turned in a day late will not be graded.**

Cheating and/or plagiarizing discussions and assignments will not be tolerated! You will fail the course for using plagiarized material, or for improperly creating AI-assisted assignments [see Academic Policies & Procedures in the CUH *Student Handbook*].

AI (Artificial Intelligence) Statement

Chaminade University recognizes the increasing role of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in academic and professional environments. AI encompasses, but is not limited to, generative AI platforms, automated writing or content generation software, coding assistants, and similar tools. Students must ensure all submitted work genuinely reflects their knowledge and effort. Using AI to produce or significantly complete graded assignments, exams or other academic tasks – defined as use that substitutes for or substantially replaces a student’s own analysis, reasoning or written expression – without explicit instructor approval is considered academic misconduct and will be dealt with according to the University’s Academic Honesty Policy.

If an instructor has reasonable grounds to question whether submitted work genuinely reflects a student's own knowledge, authorship, or mastery of course material — or whether it meets the course's expectations for AI use — the instructor may require the student to provide additional, or alternative evidence of authorship and content mastery. Such evidence may include drafts, notes, revision history, source materials, process explanations, oral discussion, in class work, or completion of an alternative assessment. A student's refusal or inability to provide such evidence may be considered, along with other available information, in evaluating whether the work meets course requirements and stated learning outcomes. Instructors will not rely solely on AI detection software or other automated tools in making grading or academic integrity determinations. Such determinations will be based on the totality of the available information and handled in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures. See the catalog section *Student Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Work* for further information.

Writing Standards [from General Catalog]

All work submitted by Chaminade University students is expected to meet the following writing standards:

1. Written assignments should use correctly the grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure of Standard Written English.
2. Written assignments should develop ideas, themes, and main points coherently and concisely.
3. Written assignments should adopt modes and styles appropriate to their purpose and audience.
4. Written assignments should be clear, complete, and effective.
5. Written assignments containing material and ideas drawing upon sources should carefully analyze and synthesize that material. In addition, the sources of the borrowed material must be correctly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

Discussions, Quizzes, & YA Group Project

Discussions/Quizzes: This course will employ a “roundtable” approach that emphasizes and credits online class discussions. Therefore, I expect students to post regularly (**twice per discussion**), and to participate actively in our critique of the YA literature we examine. Inadequate and lackluster discussions will increase the number of quizzes and reflections assigned during class time. Missed discussion posts cannot be retroactively scored after the end of any given week.

REMEMBER: ALL DISCUSSION POSTS DEADLINES ARE AT 11PM, NOT MIDNIGHT!

YA Group Project: Everyone will participate in a class project, which requires either building a syllabus based on YA fiction, or a lesson plan. The syllabus or lesson plan, will include a brief summary of selected YA writers and their texts. Students either will work individually, or be placed into small groups. You will present your project to the class via Canvas, using PowerPoint, Keynote, PictoChart, Canva, or another program tool. Your actual presentation should be imaginative and inventive as you critically examine authors, themes and issues relevant to YA fiction.

As with any course you take during your academic career, you are encouraged to keep a journal of questions, thoughts, or impressions you have while examining YA fiction. Making notes as you read will help you form ideas and questions that can be used in our class discussions, your group presentations, and in your papers.

Grading Scale: (*Student Handbook*)

A	90% and above
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	59% and below, or failure to submit all graded work without pre-approved excuse
W	Withdrawal before published deadlines
I	The issuance of an 'I' grade is not automatic. At the discretion of the faculty member, a Grade of "I" may be assigned to a student who has successfully completed [i.e., with at least a passing grade] a majority of the work of the course and who has an unavoidable and compelling reason why the remainder of the work cannot be completed on schedule.

WITHDRAWALS/ INCOMPLETES

Chaminade students have the option of withdrawing from this, or any course, provided they do either before or by the deadline. Your professor is not responsible for providing you with the appropriate forms to apply for a "W," nor are we able to extend the date if you miss the deadline. Please speak to me as soon as possible if you believe you should withdraw from this course. According to Chaminade University's general catalog, an incomplete is only issued if a student "Did not complete a small portion of the work or final examination due to circumstances beyond the student's control... Prior to reporting of grades a contract must be made between the student and the instructor for the completion of the course." Incompletes are neither automatically rendered nor encouraged for minor issues.

ASSESSED WORK FOR EN 309:

Discussion/Participation	15% (of final mark)
1 Book Review (700w)	20% (of final mark)
1 Book Review (700w; AI-assisted)	20% (of final mark)
1 Group Project	20% (of final mark)
1 Critical or Creative paper/Media (1500w)	25% (of final mark)

100%

The passing grade for this class is a "C."

Quality and merit of written work will be prioritized over percentages

****Percentages on Canvas are incomplete projections of final grades****

EN 309.90 Schedule (subject to changes) Dr. Francis

Week	Dr. Francis
Wk 1— Aug 17	ORIENTATION Introductions Examine & Discuss course and individual objectives Review reading list Compile known YA Fiction from class “The Evolution of YA” PBS Voices; TEDxSpokane, “Young Adult Lit Belongs to Everyone”
Wk 2—Aug 24	YA STRUCTURE Read Jessica Brody, <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (1-28) Understanding book structure, character choices, plots Censorship & Banned Books
Wk 3— Aug 31	SYLLABUS STRUCTURE Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (29-51) Review sample teaching syllabi for YA fiction Organize groups for collaborative assignment
Wk 4—Sep 7 Labor Day Holiday Mon 7 Sept (no classes; offices closed)	<i>If I STAY</i> (2009) Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat!</i> (Ch 12, 308-15) Read/Analyze Gayle Forman’s novel
Wk 5—Sep 14 Deadline to Withdraw without Record/WNR: 18 Sept	<i>If I STAY</i> (2009) Complete Forman’s novel Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat!</i> (316-26) View <i>If I STAY</i> film adaptation in class Group Project I on Forman due Friday!
Wk 6—Sep 21	<i>THIS IS WHY THEY HATE US</i> (2022) Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat!</i> (51-79) Read/Analyze Aceves’ novel
Wk 7— Sep 28	<i>THIS IS WHY THEY HATE US</i> (2022) Complete Aceves’ novel Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat!</i> (79-114) Review objectives for YA novels and a YA book list Group Project II on Aceves due Friday!
Wk 8—Oct 5	YA GENRES Read Brody’s <i>Save the Cat!</i> (136-44) View <i>I Am Number Four</i> film adaptation in class Read film reviews of Caruso’s film: Olly Richard’s “I Am Number Four Review” (2010) Roger Ebert, “That’s twice the Number Two” (2011)

Wk 9—Oct 12 Indigenous People's Day Mon, 12 Oct (no classes; offices closed)	FALL WELLNESS WEEK: 13-16 OCTOBER Pizza Lunch TBA: Meet in Sullivan Family Library to peruse Juvenile/YA Fiction stacks Examine book review structures and book covers
Wk 10—Oct 19 Deadline to Withdraw from course: Fri, 23 Oct	BOOK REVIEWS Read Jessica Brody, <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (375-86) Read Sample YA book reviews: Jennifer Szalai, “How to Write Book Reviews” Betsy Reed, “The Fault in Our Stars by John Green Review” Wagenen, “6 YA Novels That Open Conversations About Teen Chronic Illness” Two Short Kirkus Reviews
Wk 11—Oct 26	BOOK REVIEWS II Read Jessica Brody, <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (145-65) Read Sample YA book reviews First Book Review due on Friday! Submit on Canvas!
Wk 12—Nov 2	<i>SUNRISE ON THE REAPING (2025)</i> Read Jessica Brody, <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (166-86) Read/Analyze Collins’ novel
Wk 13—Nov 9 Veteran’s Day: Wed, 11 Nov	<i>SUNRISE ON THE REAPING (2025)</i> Complete Collins’ novel Group Project III on Collins due Friday!
Wk 14—Nov 16	BOOK REVIEW II Read Jessica Brody, <i>Save the Cat writes a YA novel</i> (145-65) Read Sample YA book reviews Second, AI-assisted Book Review due on Friday! Submit on Canvas!
Wk 15—Nov 23 Thanksgiving holiday: 26-27 Nov (no classes, offices closed) Cinema Trip: <i>Sunrise on the</i>	RESEARCH WRITING/MULTI-MEDIA PROJECT Review & Choose research topics Examine research paper/multi-media guidelines Review MLA or CMS guidelines for formatting research paper Create topic proposal and annotated bibliography

<i>Reaping</i>	FILM ATTENDANCE! **Optional Film Viewing 24 Nov: Attend <i>The Hunger Games: Sunrise on the Reaping</i> (Kahala, or Ward Cinema)
Wk 16—Nov 30 Fall Semester last day of instruction: 4 Dec	RESEARCH WRITING/MULTI-MEDIA PROJECT Complete Critical Analysis of YA fiction Research paper, or multi-media presentation due last day of class on Canvas: 4 Dec!

Important Information

Academic Honesty

is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to an University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, plagiarism, **and unauthorized and/or undisclosed AI usage**, in addition to more obvious dishonesty. See catalog section *Student Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Work* for further information.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Director of the Academic College. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor, Director, and the Dean of Academic College and may include an “F” grade for the work in question, an “F” grade for the course, academic notice, or dismissal from the University.

Title IX and Nondiscrimination

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. For pregnant and parenting students, I am also obligated to provide you with similar resources for support and protections available to you. My goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need.

Nondiscrimination and Notice of Nondiscrimination

The university is committed to comply with all State and Federal statutes, rules, and regulations which prohibit discrimination. The university is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, gender identity and expression, age, religion, color, national origin (including shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics), ancestry, citizenship, disability, genetic information, marital status, breastfeeding, arrest and court record (except as permissible under State law), sexual orientation, or status as a covered veteran. Inquiries about Title IX or general Civil Rights concerns may be referred to the University’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office

for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found [HERE](#). *On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).*

The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report form](#). Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates.

The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

Student with Disabilities Statement - Kōkua 'Ike

Accessibility Services recognizes disability as a valued aspect of diversity and ensures equal access to the educational environment in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended; and the principles and professional standards of the Association on Higher Education and Disability. Access is supported through reasonable accommodations and referrals to campus and community resources. Appointments with the Accessibility Services Coordinator are available through Stellic at <https://chaminade.stellic.com> and may be held virtually or in person. Drop-in appointments are also welcome.

Students seeking support must meet with the Accessibility Services Coordinator as early as possible, even if they are unsure whether they have appropriate documentation of their disability or its impacts. The Accessibility Services Coordinator prioritizes listening to students' experiences and will discuss any documentation needs during the initial intake meeting. Students may seek support at any time.

Learn more at <https://chaminade.edu/ada-accommodations>

Campus Resources and Support Services

These resources are available to all Chaminade students. Reach out early; these services support your success.

Resource	Description	Contact / Website
Accessibility Services (Kōkua 'Ike)	Accommodations under Section 504 and ADA. Contact early — appointments via Stellic, virtual or in person.	ada@chaminade.edu chaminade.edu/ada-accommodations
Tutoring & Academic Coaching (Kōkua 'Ike)	Tutoring and Academic Coaching Services support students' progression toward their academic, personal, and professional goals with clarity and intention. Services include individualized support in English, math, nursing, sciences, and social sciences, as well as guidance in developing goals and study strategies.	chaminade.edu/tutoring-academic-coaching-services
Career Services	Career Services supports students throughout their career journeys. Services include individualized job search strategy coaching, resume reviews, job interview coaching, and access to career-related resources and opportunities.	chaminade.edu/career-services

Resource	Description	Contact / Website
Basic Needs Resources	Support for food insecurity, housing instability, and other basic needs.	chaminade.edu/basic-needs/
Title IX / Nondiscrimination	Reporting and support for sex discrimination and gender-based violence. Campus Incident Report Form available online.	chaminade.edu/titleix/resources-and-support/
Hazing Prevention	Confidential support, crisis intervention, and reporting for any type of abuse including hazing.	hazingpreventionnetwork.org/athlete-helpline/
Campus Safety/ SafeSwords	Security escort service for anyone who feels unsafe walking alone on campus at any time of day. Call security and a professional will escort you to your destination.	chaminade.edu/student-life/security/campus-safeswords-program/
CUH Alert Emergency Notification	Emergency text system. Register your cell number via the Chaminade portal and confirm the text to complete enrollment.	chaminade.edu

Sullivan Family Library (*SFL)(www.chaminade.edu/library).

Email: For all correspondence with your professor, please use the Chaminade email address:
Allison.francis@chaminade.edu **Do Not Use Canvas email to contact Dr. Francis.**