

Syllabus

Department: Division of Library and Information Science

Course Number and Title: LIS 213 Popular Culture and Young Adults

Bulletin Description

This course examines popular culture in society. The connection between mass media and cultural consumption is explored with focus on how teens respond to commercialism.

Credit:

3 semester hours

Course Description

This course examines and provides an understanding of the role of popular culture in society and in the lives of teenagers. The connection between mass media and cultural consumption is explored with specific focus on the ways in which teens respond to everyday commercialism. Emphasis is placed on utilizing elements of pop culture, to which teens are already attracted, in order to capture and retain this historically elusive library user group.

Prerequisite(s): Either LIS 205 OR LIS 204 – unless exception is granted.

Co-requisite(s): None

Course Objectives

This course aims to provide:

- An understanding of popular culture within a broad social context
- An understanding of the relationship between popular culture and the social world of teens
- An understanding of the value of popular culture as a tool in attracting teens to libraries
- An overview of the history of library services to teens

Program Goals and Outcomes

4A) Acquire, apply, analyze and assess information, communication, assistive, and other technological skills related to resources, service delivery, professionalism, efficacy, and cost-efficiency of current technologies and relevant technological improvements.

Units of Instruction

Unit	Title
1	Preliminaries, Introductions, etc.

	-Pop Culture: A Starting Point -Teens and Libraries and Pop Culture -Libraries and Librarians in Pop Culture
2	-Teens, Social Media, and Pop Culture -Teens and Social Media -Trends and Trendspotting (aka trend watching)
3	-Media & Technology -YA Literature, Graphic Novels, Comics, and Fanfiction -Movies, TV, Music, Gaming, and the Internet/Social Media
4	-Library Programming and Services -Programs and Ideas -Marketing/Public Relations
5	-Diversity and Multiculturalism in Pop Culture -Professional Development -Materials & Collection Development

Learning Activities

Participation: weekly discussion board posts and activities

This class is designed to be highly interactive; therefore, students are expected to actively participate in weekly discussions and activities. In addition to the readings assigned each week, students will listen to and/or view all other assigned content (i.e., presentations, videos, and/or podcasts). Students will respond to other students as instructed. These responses should also be thoughtful and contribute to the development of robust and respectful discussion.

Position Paper

Students select two articles that present conflicting views of any aspect of popular culture as it relates to teens. In a 750 - 1000 word paper, they are required to introduce the issue/topic, include brief background if necessary, and to provide a summary of both arguments. Finally, they are required to indicate which scholar makes the most convincing argument, and justify their decision/thinking.

Final Project

Students are required to will write a proposal for a library program that they created for teens – the program must incorporate some aspect of pop culture. The program can be educational, informational, entertainment based – or any combination of these. To promote/advertise their program, students are also required to create a video (1 min. or less) using the social media platform (e.g., Tik Tok, YouTube, etc.) that they believe the target audience (i.e., teens) uses.

Assessment

1. Course-Level Assessment

- a) The assigned weekly readings and activities are designed to reinforce course objectives through discussion board posts/responses (i.e., active discussion); students are expected to consistently contribute to this shared pool of knowledge. Discussion board posts/responses are assessed based on demonstrated knowledge and/or understanding of the topics, identification of key points, and ability to present these coherently.
- b) The position paper provides an opportunity for the students to explore, in depth, conflicting views of a pop culture issue that would impact how they work with teens as well as how they approach the creation of teen programs in the library. Through synthesis of the piece and review of the course content provided, students are then challenged to think through the complex issues from opposing perspectives - and to then apply thoughtful analysis as they defend the argument they think most cogent in 750 – 1000 words. The length of the paper further challenges students to be succinct, but thoughtful, in how they construct their papers.
- c) The final project supports the course goals in 2 specific ways. The first: it provides an opportunity for students to apply the theoretical knowledge gained as they think through the creation of an actual teen program – the proposal connects theory to practice. The second: it allows the students to think beyond the creation of the program to how they would market the program to teens. To that end, students are required to engage with technologies and social media platforms that teens use to create a video for this elusive audience (i.e., tik tok). Students are challenged to apply the knowledge gained regarding teens, social media, pop culture, and marketing to this group in a real life scenario.

2. Program-Level Assessment.

The MS LIS program is reviewed every seven years for continued accreditation by the American Library Association's (ALA) Committee on Accreditation. The program's most recent accreditation was in the Fall 2018 term. As part of this accreditation process, all students, faculty, alumni, and employers participate in periodic assessments, providing feedback for improving the MS LIS program. The two assessments below apply to every course in the program.

a) Faculty-Selected Assessment.

Over a four-year period, each course in the MS LIS program is assessed by the instructor to determine how well students are learning in relation to the program goal/s associated to their course. For each course, faculty select one or more artifacts (e.g. assignment, exam, or semester project) as a representative measure of student learning of the related program goal/s. At

the end of the course, the faculty member completes a course artifact assessment form describing the class' performance on the artifact, and any course revisions prescribed as a result. Sample artifacts with their respective reviews are included as well.

In LIS 213, the Final Project (Program Proposal and Video) is used as a representative measure of student learning of the related program goal/s.

b) Student-Selected Assessment.

The end-of-program assessment is an e-portfolio consisting of student-selected artifacts (assignments, discussion posts, projects, etc.) from their courses as evidence of satisfying each of the eight program goals. For each program goal, students write a reflection, which describes the relationship of the artifact to the respective goal and their learning from the artifact.

In LIS 213, the Final Project is the suggested course artifact, should students decide to use their work in this course as evidence of satisfying the related program goal/s. This is because of the complexity of the assignment, which demands a firm understanding of history of teens and libraries, the history of pop culture, current pop culture trends as it relates to teens and teen culture today, and the ability to apply this knowledge to a practical scenario.

Grading Scheme

The course grade will be determined based on the following activities. The percentage in parenthesis is that of the overall course grade.

Discussion Posts/Activities (60 %)

Position Paper (15%)

Final Project - Video (25%)

Bibliography

Allah-Mensah, J., & Allred, N. (2021, February 23). The dawn is ours: Gen-Z & the fight for social justice. *Omidyar Network*.

Alessio, A.J., LaMantia, K., Vinci, E. (2018). Pop Culture-Inspired Programs for Tweens, Teens, and Adults. ALA Editions.

American Psychiatric Association. (2017, September 26). Young people, suicide and popular entertainment.

Cornwall, G., Fagell, P., & Plummer, L.R. (2021, January 5). During Covid lockdowns, teens aren't acting up. They're growing up while we ignore them. *NBC News*.

Hoekstra, J. (2015). Pop culture makes you smarter. *St. Edward's University*.

Holmes, L. (2020, March). How the Coronavirus is affecting the landscape of pop culture. NPR's All Things Considered.

Knorr, C. (2018). Why Media Role Models Matter.

Kolbert, E. (1995, August 20). Americans despair of pop culture. *New York Times*.

Jenson, K. (2019, May 15). Teen services 101: What do teens want from public libraries. *School Library Journal*.

Laughlin, N. (2020). How 2020 is impacting Gen Z's worldview. *Morning Consult*. <https://morningconsult.com/form/gen-z-worldview-tracker/>

Lee, S.A. (2014, May 5). Beyond books, nooks, and dirty looks: The history and evolution of library services to teens in the United States. *The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*.

Osgerby, B. (2021). Youth Culture and the Media: Global Perspectives (2nd Ed.). Routledge.

Savage, J. (2015, November 15). 1966: The year youth culture exploded. *The Guardian*.

Waddle, J. (2021, May 11). 10 most common problems teens face in 2021. *Parentology*.

Wilkins-Jordan, M. and Hussey, L. (2014). Looking at the Socialization of LIS Students Through a Pop Culture Lens. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.

Instructional Time Requirements: 150 hours for 3 credits (10 hours per week for our 15 week semester)

Asynchronous or synchronous Lecture

Assigned weekly reading

Weekly assignments (individual and group)

Active participation in online discussions

Research for semester-long projects (term papers, projects)

Presentations (online or face to face)

Academic Service-Learning projects (where appropriate)