**TLAC Conference Grant Program**

***Application for Grant: November 1, 2013***

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Workshop: National Council of Teachers of English Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN): *Celebrating Great Books for Young Adults: ALAN turns 40*

*November 25-26, 2013; Boston, MA.*

*Dozens of authors and educators will present sessions and panels on the incredible variety and diversity of YA literature. From the opening keynote by Newbery winner, Jack Gantos to Chris Crutcher's second day keynote, to the final panel on nonfiction, ALAN workshop attendees will discover the rich history and the bright future of YA literature.*

**Introduction**

Preparing secondary English teachers for middle and high school classrooms requires a depth and breadth of knowledge of both classic and Young Adult literature. The ALAN Workshop is important to update my knowledge of current critical and pedagogical trends in Young Adult literature, the role of YA literature in Common Core aligned curricula, and the latest publications in the genre to include in my English methods course and in my work with teachers and student teachers in the field.

Currently, I teach EN 350: “Methods and Materials for Teaching Secondary English” and, as part of the course expectations, I teach pre-service teachers to incorporate YA literature in their pedagogical plans. I have extensive professional and academic knowledge of classic literature, but administrators, teachers, curriculum specialists, parent and students all expect teachers to integrate literacy instruction and YA literature to best meet the needs of students at all levels of literacy education; attending this workshop will *immediately improve my teaching* in EN 350.

Advocates have long argued that an increased role for young adult literature in the classroom encourages and supports students' reading development. YA literature can (a) help improve students’ reading skills; (b) encour­age young adults to read more books, thereby improving their abilities to read; (c) facilitate teachers’ abilities to incorporate more books of interest to adoles­cents into the curriculum, and (d) support the development of an inclusive, diverse curriculum.

I seek to integrate the best of contemporary YA literature into my EN 350 class this winter to better prepare secondary teachers for their student teaching and first years in the classroom as secondary English teachers.

The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents is an independent assembly of the [National Council of Teachers of English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Council_of_Teachers_of_English) (NCTE). Founded in November 1973, ALAN is made up of researchers, teachers, authors, librarians, publishers, teacher-educators and their students, and others who are particularly interested in the area of young adult literature. An important part of the mission of ALAN is to help combat censorship. ALAN's Anti-censorship Committee plays an important role in this mission. The purposes of this assembly are to promote communication and cooperation among all individuals who have a special interest in adolescent literature; to present programs and conferences on this subject; to promote and increase the number of articles and publications devoted to it; and to integrate the efforts of all those with an interest in this literature.

**Funding Request**

I am eager to collaborate with other teacher educators and secondary English teachers who are experts in YA literature and pedagogy to share ideas for effectively including YA literature in my pedagogy classes. My students will benefit immediately, as the ALAN workshop fee includes multiple copies of new YA titles to incorporate into my teaching of pedagogical methods. By attending the workshop, I am particularly interested in learning about: 1) critical trends in contemporary YA literature, 2) new titles that bring diverse cultures into English Language Arts instruction, a crucial issue for pre-service teachers, 3) current and developing research projects on the inclusion of YA literature in classes aligned to Common Core Standards.

I am requesting $1000 to supplement my Departmental Professional Development funds to attend the ALAN workshop.

**Eligibility**

I am a tenure-track, assistant professor teaching in the Department of English. I teach English education and literature classes.

**Interest in Teaching and Pedagogy**

I specialize in pedagogical research and teaching, and am responsible for the preparation of secondary English teachers; it is my responsibility to prepare them for teaching literature and reading. My students graduate and take positions as middle and high school English teachers. Because I am a literacy professor specializing in teacher education and literature pedagogies primarily centered on classic works, I seek to expand my repertoire of literary knowledge to better include contemporary Young Adult literature and, consequently, better prepare pre-service teachers for the contemporary English classroom. My publication record centers on literacy pedagogies and teacher professional development. Notable publications include:

Eckert, L.S. and Alsup, J. (2010) “Continuing Education and the English Teacher: How Graduate Programs Transform Secondary Classrooms.” In *Teaching Teachers: Approaches in Improving Quality of Education* Eds. Issa M. Saleh, I.M. and Khine M.S. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 215-226.

Eckert, L.S. (2010) “Beyond the Comics Page: Pedagogical Opportunities and

Challenges in Teaching Graphic Novels and Multimodal Text.” in *Young Adult Literature and Adolescent Identity: Re-examining the Literary Lives of Teens*. Ed. Alsup, J. New York: Routledge.

Eckert L.S. (2008). “Bridging the Pedagogical Gap: Intersections Between Literary and Reading Theories in Secondary and Postsecondary Literacy Instruction.” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. 52:2. pp. 110-18.

Eckert, L.S. (2006). *How Does It Mean? Engaging Reluctant Readers Through Literary Theory.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Publishing.

**Sharing Information**

I will share the knowledge I gain with colleagues in the English and Education Departments, in particular those who also work with pre-service middle and high school teachers, as well as with area secondary English teachers who serve as cooperating teachers for our student teachers.

**Budget**

Registration Fee - $190

Lodging - $250 /night X 2) $500

Meals – (32 X 2) 64

Airfare - $500

TOTAL - $1254

(Note: The English Department will cover the balance for my attendance.)