

**George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education**

\*\*\*\*\*

**EDRD 631 (3 credits)**  
***Advanced Literacy Foundations and Instruction,  
Adolescence through Adulthood***  
**Prince William 10, Cohort, Spring 2010**  
**Thursday, 4:30 – 7:20, Off Campus Location**  
**January 21 through May 5, 2010**

**Courtney Gaskins, Ph.D.**

Office: Classroom

Phone: (571) 248-0093

Email: cgaskins@gmu.edu

Hours: by appointment

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

This course provides advanced study of literacy theory research, and practice as it relates to adolescents and adults. It addresses sociocultural, cognitive, linguistic, psychological, and developmental influences on literacy. Reading, writing, and oral communication are included. Prerequisite: EDRD 630 or permission of the program coordinator.

**RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION**

This course addresses new and required state and national competencies for K-12 Reading Specialists. This course also provides an advanced, research-based study of literacy for teachers seeking master's degrees. The program is a *State Approved Program* and follows both the Virginia Department of Education requirements for reading specialist licensure and the International Reading Association's Standards for Reading Professionals (2003 Revision).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

The following course requirements will be explained in detail during class meetings:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Class Participation		20
Chapter Discussion Leadership (CDL)	TBD	20
Adolescent Interview	March 18	20
Summary/Reflection	April 8	20
Book Talk	TBD	20
Motivational Strategy Activity	TBD	20
Final Paper	April 29	30
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>

Final grades are calculated as a percent of total points earned:

A	= 93% - 100%	150 – 145 pts.
A-	= 90% - 92%	145 - 135
B+	= 87% - 89%	134 - 129
B	= 80% - 86%	128 - 120
C	= 79% and lower	119 -

## **CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Attendance is all that is required to earn the full 20 points for class participation. For each session you are absent, 3 points will be deducted from your class participation grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning class.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS**

Hinchman, K. A. & Sheridan-Thomas, H. K. (2008). *Best practices in adolescent literacy instruction*. Guilfore Press: New York.

Brozo, W. G. (2002). *To be a boy, to be a reader*. International Reading Association

Sprague, M. M. & Keeling, K. K. (2007). *Discovering their voices: engaging adolescent girls with young adult literature*. International Reading Association  
The National Literacy Institutes' What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy: <http://www.nifl.gov/adolescence/adolpubs.html>

## **Course Outcomes**

**The following Program Outcomes based o the International Reading Association “Elements” are taught and assessed in EDRD 631. (Elements 1.1-1.4 have been modified from the original to reflect course emphasis on older learners).**

IRA #

- 1.1 Knowledge of psychological, sociological, linguistic, and anthropological foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.
- 1.2 Knowledge of reading research and histories of reading.
- 1.3 Knowledge of language development variations related to culture and linguistic diversity.
- 1.4 Knowledge of the major components of reading (vocabulary and background knowledge, fluency, comprehension strategies, and motivation) and how they are integrated in fluent reading
- 1.5 Use a large supply of books, technology-based information, and non-print materials representing multiple levels, broad interests, cultures and linguistic backgrounds.

**The following additional GMU outcomes are taught in EDRD 631. These outcomes are assessed in a formative manner and serve to provide a foundation for knowledge related to IRA Elements that have performance assessments in future coursework.**

1. Students will observe and describe adolescent learners' uses of literacy in school and non-school contexts.
2. Students will understand and explain strategies for teaching reading, writing, and oral communication in school settings for older learners.
3. Students will develop professional skills through participation in professional organizations, self-selection of professional materials, and participation in professional dialogue with colleagues.

## **General Information**

### **Email Access**

Students must have access to email and the Internet, either at home, work, or on the GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts that must be accessed for information sent from the university or the Graduate School of Education. Go to <http://mason.gmu.edu/> for information on accessing email.

### **GSE Statements of Expectations**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. Professional dispositions are expected of all members of the GSE community. Please go to <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

## **TENTATIVE AGENDA**

<b>Session 1, January 21</b>	<b>Course Introduction</b> Assignment Explanations Adolescent Literacy & Youth Culture Book Talk Motivational Strategy
<b>Session 2, January 29</b>	<b>Principled-Based Practices of Adolescent Literacy</b> <i>Read: Chapter 19 and What Content-Area Teachers Should Know About Adolescent Literacy</i>
<b>Session 3, February 4</b>	<b>Student Motivation</b> <i>Read Chapters 1 and 5</i> Motivational Strategy(s) Book Talk(s)
<b>Session 4, February 11</b>	<b>Language Development</b> <i>Read Chapter 3</i> CDL Chapter 2 Motivational Strategy(s) Book Talk(s)
<b>Session 5, February 18</b>	<b>Word Knowledge</b> <i>Read Chapter 13</i> CDL Chapter 6 Motivational Strategy(s) Book Talk(s)
<b>Session 6, February 25</b>	<b>Comprehension</b> <i>Read Chapter 7</i> CDL Chapter 11 Motivational Strategy(s) Book Talk(s)
<b>Session 7, March 4</b>	<b>Multiple Text</b> <i>Read Chapter 9</i> CDL Chapter 8 Motivational Strategy(s) Book Talk(s)
<b>Session 8, March 11</b>	<i>Spring Break</i>
<b>Session 9, March 18</b>	<b>Assessment</b> <i>Read Chapter 17</i> <b>Share Interviews/Collections</b>

	<p><b>Due:</b> Student Interviews  Motivational Strategy(s)  Book Talk(s)</p>
<b>Session 10, March 25</b>	<p><b>Using Technology</b>  <b>Share Interviews/Collections</b>  CDL Chapter 4  Motivational Strategy(s)  Book Talk (s)</p>
<b>Session 11, April 1</b>	<p><b>To Be Determined</b></p>
<b>Session 12, April 8</b>	<p><b>Working with Diverse Adolescents</b>  <i>Read: Chapter 14</i>  <i>CLD Chapter 15</i>  <b>Due:</b> Summary Reflections on Gender  Motivational Strategy(s)  Book Talk (s)</p>
<b>Session 13, April 15</b>	<p><b>Adolescent Boys</b>  <b>Read:</b> Brozo Book</p>
<b>Session 14, April 22</b>	<p><b>Adolescent Girls</b>  <b>Read:</b> Sprague and Keeling Book</p>
<b>Session 15, April 29</b>	<p><b>Individual Conferences/Make-Up Work</b>  <b>Due:</b> Final Project Papers Due</p>
<b>Session 16, May 6</b>	<p><b>Class Review</b>  <b>Evaluations</b></p>

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **CHAPTER DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP**

#### **Assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you the opportunity to read, analyze, and interpret the research and readings in the course pack for your peers.

#### **Completion Procedures**

1. Find a classmate to work as a team on the CDL assignment.
2. Identify a chapter in the text to lead discussion. There will be no overlap.
3. Read, analyze, and format its presentation around the following aspects of the Chapter:
  - purpose
  - main points
  - type of research and methodology, if relevant
  - conclusions
  - implications for research and practice
  - personal responses and reactions
4. Discussants should also devise ways of engaging the class in critical conversation and reflection on the article. Demonstrations, simulations, role-plays, and debates are recommended.
5. PowerPoint slides, overheads, and/or handouts should accompany the article presentations and discussions.
6. Article discussion leaders should plan 30 minutes for their article discussions.

#### **Evaluation**

Chapter discussants will be given a grade based on (a) how well they planned and coordinated the presentation and discussion of the article; (b) how succinctly and understandably key information from the article was presented; and (c) the extent to which the discussants used engaging techniques for bringing all students into critical conversation about the article.

## **ADOLESCENT INTERVIEW AND TEXT COLLECTION**

### **Adolescent Interview Procedures**

1. Identify an adolescent or pre-adolescent to interview. Preferably, this would be a youth-of-color and/or an English language learner. The youth may be a student from your own middle or secondary class or school, or someone from your neighborhood, a relation, etc. (Be sure to gain parental permission, if necessary.)
2. Conduct an interview of the youth using the following guidelines and protocol:
  - \* Psychological/Motivational  
Outside-of-school interests; reading and writing interests; skills and strategies; literate identity
  - \* Sociological  
Preferred instructional context; funds of knowledge; culture
  - \* Linguistic  
Language development issues

### ***Required Interview Questions***

- What kind of reading do you do outside of school? (name books, magazines, favorite authors, etc.)
- What kinds of things do you do outside of school? What do you like to do the most? (specific activities as glimpses into out-of-school literacies and/or print experiences)
- How would you characterize yourself as a reader? (self-description of ability and attitude and literate identity)
- What skills and strategies do you use when you read? (particularly relevant for school-based reading)
- What kinds of opportunities have you had or do you have at home for reading? (gets at home and cultural values of reading and literacy)
- Do your parents like to read? (Describe)
- Do you go to the library and bookstores? (Describe)
- What do you like the most and/or least about reading in school? (instructional/social context of school)
- How could school reading be made more enjoyable to you? (instructional/social context of school)
- What opportunities and experiences have you had and do you have for learning English? (relevant to English language learners)
- How do you think your ability with English influences your ability to read English? (gets at identity and metalinguistic awareness)
- (Other relevant questions at your discretion)

3. Collect the following reading pieces that will likely be of high interest to your student. Listed are the minimums and categories may overlap. If you find other pieces you would like to include you are welcome to do so; however, your collection must have 7 of the following:

- At least one reading from the perspective of a person of non-white-European Background
- At least one reading from the perspective of an English language learner or Nonstandard English speaker
- At least one reading from the perspective of a woman
- Two magazine articles (from popular magazines for adults or teens)
- Two newspaper articles
- Two Web sites
- One nonfiction book
- One young adult novel
- One comic book or graphic novel

4. Write a brief report (double-spaced pages) to be organized around the following subheadings and to include the following content:

**Interview Subject and Context** (1/2 page)

Provide the first name or a pseudonym of the youth. Explain why the youth was chosen for your interview. Include the date and time of the interview and where it took place.

**Interview Findings** (2 - 3 pages)

Summarize the youth's responses to the interview questions by clustering them around the three constructs of concern: psychological/motivational, sociological, and linguistic.

**Connections to the Literature** (2-4 pages)

Provide a full bibliographic citation for each source collected using APA format; briefly describe each source and why you think it will appeal to not only the adolescent you interviewed, but adopt adolescents. *Sources should not be older than ten years.* Accurately cite each reference to the professional literature using APA format.

**Evaluation**

The interview report will be evaluated based on (a) evidence of a thorough interview; (b) succinct and intelligent summary of interview responses; (c) appropriate discussion of and references to the professional literature; and (d) overall clarity and editing.

## **BOOK TALK**

This assignment requires you to select the young adult book you find for your Alternative Content Area Texts Collection, read it, and present it to the class in a brief, exciting book talk. It is also meant to give you experience providing a demonstration activity for your colleagues. *The professor will provide models of book talks in class.*

1. Read the book and prepare a 5-7 minute book talk based on the features of quality book talks observed and discussed in class:

- An attention-grabbing introduction
- Broad stroke information about the book
- Contextual information about a scene to be excerpted
- An exciting excerpt read aloud
- A conclusion that leaves listeners eager to learn more

### **Requirements and Cautions**

- Do not say too much about the book (A book talk is not a book report)
- Do not provide a synopsis of the book!
- Do not base your talk around the climax of the story!
- Rehearse by timing yourself to keep the talk within the 5-7 minute timeframe. You may be asked to immediately conclude your talk at the 7 minute mark
- Repeat author and title as often as possible
- Show enthusiasm
- Use an effective oral reading voice
- Use appropriate simple gestures
- Make frequent eye-contact throughout the room
- Take your talk to your listeners by moving around the room
- Do not use notes or scripts. Your talk must be rehearsed and planned, so that it appears natural and spontaneous.

### **Evaluation**

The book talk will be evaluated based on how well it conforms to the guidelines above.

## **MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you the opportunity to design a reading and learning strategy that would be motivating for the youth you interviewed. It is also meant to give you experience providing lesson demonstrations for your colleagues. The assignment requires you to (a) take the class through a short demonstration of the strategy activity, and (b) hand in a written narrative with supporting material.

### **Completion Procedures**

1. Identify a content area topic from a typical middle/high school classroom (e.g., science – photosynthesis; history – the Holocaust; etc.) that the youth you interviewed is likely to encounter.

2. Reflecting on the youth, craft a readiness to learn strategy for the topic that you think would be motivating to her/him. Motivation strategies allow a tremendous variety of creative options because they're activities that do not necessarily assume a great deal of prior knowledge for the topic.
3. Prepare a 10 – 12 minute strategy activity for the class. Be sure your classmates are actually “doing” the strategy. You are not simply describing it. Allow the class to simulate the experience of engaging in the strategy. Make necessary handouts and/or other appropriate material.
4. Write a brief (2 page, double spaced) description of the strategy and how it would be taught in a content classroom that included the youth you interviewed. Use first-person narrative. Begin by describing where and with whom the strategy would be used and why it would be motivating to the youth. Next, describe sequentially how the strategy would be taught from start to finish.
5. At the end of your strategy demonstration, be prepared to take questions from your peers
6. Hand in to me a complete set of materials including the two page description of the strategy and all supporting documents (e.g., visual examples, “sample” student work, any other materials used in the share)

### **Evaluation**

The Strategy Activity will be evaluated based on how well you followed the above directions. Critical in the evaluation will be (a) how engaging and interesting you made your strategy demonstration; (b) how clearly you describe the teaching of the motivational readiness strategy; (c) the soundness of your rationale for using the strategy with the youth you interviewed; (d) overall clarity and editing.

### **SUMMARY/REFLECTION ON GENDER**

Write a 2-4 page reflection on Brozo/Sprague & Keeling books which focus on the literacy development of male and female adolescents. Reflections should begin with a very brief description of each book, followed by how the books are similar, how they differ, and your reflection on each book, how the information provided can be used in your teaching practice, and your overall impressions of the books and their content. Plan to discuss in class.

## FINAL PROJECT

### **Keeping A Research/ Reflection Report**

The research/reflection log might be viewed as a journal kept during the class. From the very beginning of the class it should contain running prose of your thoughts, machinations, feelings, doubts, concerns, attempts, and reflections on each class. Like a journal, the log should have dated entries. The research log should be handed in as your final project

### **Format For Writing A Reflection On Course Readings**

For each course reading, class lecture and presentations, use the following format and subheadings to type a one page reflection:

#### **1. Class Most Significant Points**

1 paragraph summary of the points you found to be most significant

#### **2. Self Connections**

1-2 paragraphs about how the content contributes to your own professionalism

#### **3. Questions and Criticisms**

1 paragraph of doubts, challenges, and lingering questions

#### **4. References**

Using APA format include references of materials presented in class.

### **Length**

Your research/reflection logs will vary in length, so it is impossible to fix an exact page limit. If you are using the log appropriately—as a sounding board and a reflection on the research process—it should have many regular entries.

Your research/reflection log should be no more than 15 double-spaced pages in length, excluding references and appendices. Eleven classes this term should be reflected in your final project. If class is cancelled or you are absent, research/reflection logs should contain readings for that night's class. Research/reflections logs should include Sessions 2-7, 9-10, and 12-14.