

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development

EDRD 619/419

LITERACY IN THE CONTENT AREAS (3 CREDITS)

Spring 2010, Section 002/001, Robinson A 349

Thursday 4:30-7:10 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Debby Deal

E-Mail: ideal@gmu.edu (best way to reach me)

Office Hours: By appointment

Note: This course is designed to be taken concurrently with EDCI 790 Student Teaching Internship. Only students enrolled in Student Teaching Internship are allowed to register for EDRD 619/419.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

EDRD 419 - Literacy in the Content Areas

Assists students in understanding the language and literacy process as it applies to teaching in middle and high schools. Focuses on instructional strategies to support literacy development, including adaptations for culturally diverse and exceptional learners.

Prerequisites

EDCI 473 and EDCI 483.

Corequisite

EDCI 490.

EDRD 619 - Literacy in Content Area

Offers understanding of language and literacy process as it applies to teaching in secondary schools. Emphasizes reading and writing in content areas, and instructional strategies to support students' literacy development. Focuses on ways reading, writing, speaking, and listening are developed and used in learning discipline-specific curriculum, including adaptations for culturally diverse and exceptional learners.

Prerequisites

Methods I (EDCI 567, 569, 572, or 573) and Methods II (EDCI 667, 669, 672, or 673).

Corequisite

EDCI 790 Internship

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of how content area learning can be enhanced through reading, writing, and language-based strategies.

2. Students will plan and demonstrate a lesson that integrates literacy with instruction in their own teaching specialty or content area.
3. Students will survey adolescent literature, media, and other print, visual, or technological resources that can be used to connect reading, writing and other language arts to their teaching specialty or content area. From these resources a book talk will be presented.

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 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 or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance is extremely important due to the interactive nature of the course. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must contact the instructor **before class begins** and leave a message. More than one absence will likely result in a lowered grade because essential class work will be missed.
2. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to literacy assessments and interventions, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings, participate in class, and complete all electronic discussions.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, please contact me in a prior to the due date. If you do not let me know prior

to the due date, points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. Make sure you back up all your work. Papers may be sent through Blackboard **only** with the permission of the instructor.

5. For all assignments except Electronic Discussions: Please
 - Double-space
 - Use a 12-pt. font
 - 1" margins
 - Include your name, course number, e-mail address, and the title of the assignment on the first page (Save a tree, do not include a title page!)
 - **Staple** multiple pages together
1. Be sure that your work demonstrates proper capitalization, usage, punctuation, and spelling (CUPS). **PROOFREAD** your work--remember using a spell check is only part of the proofreading process.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK/READINGS

Vacca, R. & Vacca, J. (2008). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum (9th ed.)*. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, Inc.

Other course readings assigned and made available through Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignment	Points possible	My Grade	Due date
Literacy autobiography	10		Sept. 9
Electronic discussions (6)	5 per ED		Sept. 16, Sept. 30, Oct. 7, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 2
Resource teacher interview	10		Sept.23
Strategy lesson and critical reflection	15		Oct. 14
Unit plan and critical reflection (final project)	30		Dec. 16
Participation and attendance	5		
TOTAL	100		

*****Rubrics will be posted on BB. Please download and attach a rubric to each assignment.**

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

94%	A	85%	B+	74%	C+	64%	D+
90%	A-	80%	B	70%	C	60%	D
		77%	B-	67%	C-	< 60%	F

CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICY

Students are expected to attend class and complete all readings and assignments before class to facilitate active participation during each class session. Attendance and participation is required

to earn the full 7 points for class participation. One point will be deducted from your class participation grade *each time* you:

- Miss an on-campus class
- Arrive late or leave early (unless prior arrangements are made with me)
- Do not participate during in-class activities

It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet each week. The only exclusions are class cancellations by the University or me.

ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS (ED)

The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate critical reading and reflection of the readings as well as discussion among classmates. You will be assigned to a reading/discussion group and during the first class your group will set a schedule to determine which group member will begin and synthesize each ED. For each article, you will make two posts. If you are the “initiator,” you will begin and synthesize the discussion. If you are a “contributor,” you will participate on your own group discussion as well as another group discussion of your choice. This will help broaden perspectives. All posts should be ~ 100-150 words. You are required to:

1. Read each article.
2. If you are assigned to initiate and synthesize the discussion:

Initiating: Think deeply about what you have read and write a critical response to the reading (see Vacca & Vacca, p. 23-25). You may choose to respond to a specific aspect of the reading, particular section, or all of it. Write about questions/comments the reading generated, connections to your own professional experiences or learning experiences, related class discussions and readings. *This should not be a summary (i.e. write in the first person).* You may want to begin with one of the following prompts:

- The reading made me realize
- I used to think but now
- A question I have from the reading is
- The reading relates to
- I agree with the author(s) that
- I disagree with the author(s) that
- The most interesting part of the text is
- My feelings and/or attitudes toward the reading are

Synthesizing: Carefully read the entire discussion and identify the salient points. For example, think about...What did your classmates learn from the article? What connections did they make? What aspects did they question? What ideas did they have for applying concepts or strategies? How can the ideas be improved? What further research needs to be done?

3. If you are contributing to the discussion, read all posts from your group and one of the other groups, then write a response that will continue each of the threads. Remember that this is a discussion so you will be commenting on each other's ideas (agreeing and disagreeing) and encouraging multiple perspectives related to the article. As you are forming your comments, draw on your own life experience and experience as a student and a teacher.
4. *All ED must be completed by Wednesday at 8 am.*

LITERACY AUTOBIOGRAPHY: (3-4 pages)

The purpose of this assignment is to explore past experiences and life histories as important factors that shaped your perceptions and beliefs related to literacy and people we label “adolescents,” “youth,” “teenagers,” etc. Travel back in your memory and consider your own experiences as an “adolescent,” particularly in school contexts. Write a literacy autobiography that clearly examines the following questions:

- What was the role of literacy in your *in school* and *out of school* life? (Remember literacy extends beyond the written page to include multiple forms of communication such as multi-media texts).
- What people and events related to literacy stand out in your memory? Why?
- How do you think these people and events influenced your beliefs and feelings about school and literacy?
- How do you think these people and events influenced your decision to become a teacher?

BDA STRATEGY LESSON AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

The purpose of this assignment is to give you practice designing, teaching, and reflecting on a Before, During, and After (BDA) strategy lesson in your content area. Craft and teach a motivating *text-based* lesson that **uses content literacy strategies described in Vacca and Vacca**. You must include a comprehension strategy. Use the BDA lesson structure on p. 346-357 in your text in conjunction with the lesson plan format at your school. You must include at least one *before* reading, one *during* reading, and one *after* reading strategy from the text and cite the page number and name of each strategy. After you teach the lesson, write a critical reflection (~ 2 pages), which clearly describes the following:

- Clear rationale for each of the content literacy strategies selected
- Why this was/was not an effective lesson to teach (i.e. what learning took place/what you learned from the assessment data/were the strategies appropriate)
- Successes of the lesson
- Modifications you would make to improve the lesson
- What you learned from this experience.

Attach your lesson plan and samples of student work (black out all student names). Be sure to indicate the grade level and course title.

RESOURCE TEACHER INTERVIEW

The purpose of this assignment is to learn how ESOL teachers, special education teachers, and reading specialists/literacy coaches support struggling students in content area courses. For this assignment, you will need to interview an ESOL teacher, special education teacher, or reading specialist/literacy coach who works with students in your content area (preferably with students you are teaching). Be sure to ask:

- What are your teaching responsibilities?
- How are students assessed for services (diagnostic, formative, and summative)? How do they exit your program?
- How do you provide academic support? (e.g. co-teach, push-in, pull-out, combination)?
- How do you communicate/plan with content area teachers?
- How do you interact with parents?
- How do you interact with other resource specialists?

- What is the biggest challenge to working with struggling adolescents?
- What advice do you have for content area teachers working with struggling adolescents?

Analyze the data from your interview and write a 2-3 page report, which includes:

- a.) Clear description of what you learned
- b.) How it will influence your practice

Attach the name and title of the resource teacher you interviewed.

UNIT PLAN STRATEGY LESSONS AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS (final project)

The purpose of this assignment is to help you synthesize what you have learned about supporting adolescent content learners through the use of strategy lessons. During your internship, you will be planning and teaching a unit of study. This is an ideal opportunity to teach strategy lessons (using content literacy strategies from Vacca & Vacca), which assist struggling readers/writers to learn content. For this task, you must plan, teach, and reflect on three strategy lessons as part of the unit you plan and teach. You **must include** one strategy for *vocabulary development* and one strategy for *comprehension monitoring*. The other strategy must be selected from the following:

- Activating prior knowledge
- Writing to learn
- Talking to learn
- Summarizing
- Note-taking
- Study guide

Your strategy lessons can be taught to the whole class, a small group, or an individual. They can be the main lesson or a mini-lesson.

After each lesson, write a reflection addressing the components listed under reflection for the BDA lesson. Attach the following to your reflections:

- A one page outline/graphic organizer of your unit
- A one page lesson plan for each lesson
- Samples of student work from each strategy lesson (black out all student names)

EDRD 619/419 CLASS SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
Class 1 Sept. 2	Overview of course; Texts; BB; On-line discussions	
Class 2 Sept. 9	Adolescent literacy	VV ch. 1 BB: Literacy instruction in the content area; Alvermann DUE: Literacy Autobiography
Class 3 Sept. 16	Struggling readers	VV ch. 2 BB: Palmer et al (On-line discussion)
Class 4 Sept. 23	Culturally & linguistically diverse learners	VV: ch. 3 DUE: Resource Teacher Interview
Class 5 Sept. 30	Vocabulary Text-centered lessons	VV ch. 5; p. 341-361 BB: Reading Next (On-line discussion)
Class 6 Oct. 7	Prior knowledge Assessment	VV ch. 6 BB: Snow & Biancarosa (On-line discussion)
Class 7 Oct. 14	Assessment	VV ch. 4 DUE: BDA Strategy Lesson
Class 8 Oct. 21	Writing in the content areas	VV ch. 8 BB: Writing Next (On-line discussion)
Class 9 Oct. 28	Engagement/ motivation	VV ch. 7
Class 10 & 11 Nov. 4 & 11	Learning with E-texts Unit planning	VV ch. 12, p. 336-340, 361-375 WORK ON UNIT PLAN/STRATEGY LESSONS
Class 12 Nov. 18	Out of school literacies	BB: Weinstein (On-line discussion)
Nov. 25	THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS
Class 13 Dec. 2	Learning with trade books	VV ch. 11 BB: Zambo (On-line discussion)
Class 14 Dec. 9	Study guides & strategies	VV ch. 9 BRING A PICTURE BOOK & A GRAPHIC NOVEL OR CHAPTER BOOK TO CLASS
Class 15 Dec. 16	Share unit plans Review of adolescent & content-area literacy learning	DUE: Unit Plan Strategy Lessons

Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 1, & 15 will be held on campus. Classes 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13 will be on-line. SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER.