

## **EDCI 569: Teaching English in Secondary School**

Spring 2010: Tuesdays 7:20 – 10:00

Thompson 112

Dr. Laura Horvath

(703)599-5098

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Office Hours: before class and by appointment

Graduate School of Education

George Mason University

4400 University Dr.

Fairfax, VA 22030

### **Course Description**

The EDCI 569: Teaching English in Secondary School and EDCI 669 Advanced Methods of Teaching English course sequence is designed to support the development of reflective, professional, collaborative and research-based practitioners in the field of English/language arts instruction. EDCI 569 introduces preservice English teachers in the fundamentals of theory and practice for teaching English/language arts in middle and high schools. Class sessions, reading and writing assignments and required fieldwork in both courses emphasize current issues and recent developments in curriculum and methodology in the teaching of secondary school English/language arts.

### **Course Goals**

The purpose of EDCI 569 is to prepare teacher of English/language arts who will understand, respect and effectively facilitate the language development and learning of diverse adolescents with whom they work. The course is designed to support English/language arts teachers as they:

- Develop a personal theory of language arts education which is supported by theory and research on the teaching and learning of language arts,
- Plan and implement lessons and units of instruction which are consistent with a theoretically-strong personal theory of language arts education, and
- Make connections between theory and practice in reflective, critical analyses of curriculum and instruction in language arts.

More specifically, during the course, students will:

- Read research and theory representative of current thinking in the teaching of English/language arts,
- Explore and report on one specific area of interest in the teaching of English/language arts,
- Practice planning and implementing process-based writing experiences which facilitate students' understanding of and reflections on their readings, their lives and their communities,
- Practice planning and implementing lessons on English language instruction that are taught *within the context of language arts*,
- Practice planning and implementing activities and discussions which involve students in active, reflective responses to literature within a diverse community of learners,
- Observe and analyze teaching practices in light of course readings and discussions and
- Write a beginning personal theory of English education.

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### Performance Standards for EDCI 569

By the completion of the EDCI 569, students will be able to:

- Describe national, state and local standards for English/language arts and use them as the underlying basis of classroom curriculum and instruction,
- Design a coherent unit of instruction and effective daily lessons which reflect current research, theory and practice in English/language arts,
- Utilize knowledge of adolescence, language, learning, teaching, and diversity to plan and adapt instruction which maximizes learning for all students in today's diverse schools,
- Develop assessments appropriate for identified curricular objectives and related to national, state and local standards,
- Incorporate media/technology into the curriculum to enhance the teaching and learning of English/language arts,
- Reflect upon and critically analyze one's own and observed teaching practices in light of related theory and research in English education, and
- Articulate a developing personal theory of English education.

### Course Readings

Atwell, N. (1998). *In the Middle: New Understandings About Writing, Reading and Learning with Adolescents*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Burke, J. (2008). *The English Teacher's Companion: A Complete Guide to Classroom, Curriculum and the Profession*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cisneros, S. (1984). *The House on Mango Street*. New York: Vintage Books.

O'Brien, P, ed. (1993). *Shakespeare Set Free: Teaching Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, and A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Washington, DC: Washington Square Press.

Smagorinsky, P. (2007). *Teaching English By Design: How to Create and Carry Out Instructional Units*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

*Additional readings will be assigned in class.*

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Students are also required to obtain a student membership in either the National Council of Teachers of English or the International Reading Association and to subscribe to one of the following journals:

- *English Journal*
- *Voices from the Middle*
- *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*

### Course Requirements

**Attendance and Participation.** Attendance is *critical*; class time will provide opportunities for (1) participation in hands-on activities, (2) demonstration of effective teaching strategies, and (3) reflection on course readings, class activities and assignments, and observations from the field experience. (If *unavoidable* circumstances prevent attendance at a class, please call the instructor *in advance*; contact a classmate to discuss missed assignments). Students are expected to be on time and consistently well prepared to participate in class as active, thoughtful discussants. Good teachers are lifelong learners, open to new developments in both theory and practice. **Weekly.**

**Writer's Notebook.** Learning reflections and assignments, some completed in class and others as homework, will enable students to explore and/or practice the ideas presented in class sessions and in the required readings; these assignments should reflect a careful consideration of the course content. The format of assignments will be varied and designed to reflect the range of possibilities recommended for use in today's secondary classrooms. Writer's Notebook assignments should be brought to all class sessions; they will be used as the basis of class discussions and activities will be shared periodically with classmates and the instructor. **Due weekly at the discretion of the instructor, and then in full on 3/30.**

**Multi-genre Research Project and Presentation .** This paper is an exploration of some aspect of English instruction you want to learn during this course. Modeled after the multi-genre research paper designed by Tom Romano, the paper consists of at least five different genres such as autobiography, personal vignette, narrative, research essay, poetry, fiction, drama, summary, informal letter, news story, essay, etc; one of which must be technology based (tri-fold brochure, PowerPoint presentation, Inspiration-generated concept map, etc.) Course texts can be used as sources, but a minimum of 7 additional readings from NCTE/IRA publications or relevant texts/journals must also be cited in the paper. Additional information will be provided in class. **Paper and presentation due on 2/16.**

**Field Experiences Report.** Each student enrolled in EDCI 569 is expected to complete a minimum of 15 hours of fieldwork in a middle or high school English/language arts classroom. Students are responsible for arranging their fieldwork experiences to include the following: (1) a study of the school's and the cooperating teacher's approach to the teaching of writing, (2) a chance to read, diagnose and assess

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student writing samples, (3) a study of the school's and the cooperating teacher's approach to the teaching of literature/reading, (4) an opportunity to peruse the school/district's English/language arts program of studies as well as the suggested and required works of literature; and (5) an interview with the cooperating teacher or department chair about issues facing today's English teachers. Additional information about the fieldwork activities and assignment will be made available. The entire fieldwork report including a signed copy of the summary documentation of hours, should be turned in **no later than 4/27**.

**Unit Plan.** As a culminating project for this course, each student will use the "backwards design" process to develop a plan for teaching a literature-based unit which actively involves students in meaningful learning; carefully individualizes to accommodate the diverse strengths and needs of students; effectively integrates reading, writing and oral language; and provides authentic assessment. The unit must include a literary work(s), and center around a theme, as well as build on the strengths and needs of a diverse student population. Long-range plans will include: a narrative overview of the unit, its overall goals and objectives, the basic time frame, general procedures, a description of the intended learners, planned assessment techniques, the backwards planning chart, and a unit calendar. Specific daily lesson plans, including support materials should be included for any five lessons from the unit (which shall include at least one lesson emphasizing writing, one emphasizing language study, and one emphasizing oral language); each of the five daily lesson plans should make clear connections between stated objectives and planned assessment. The unit's organization and methodological approaches should reflect current research and best practice in the teaching of English/language arts. **Due in full on 3/30 (incomplete units will earn a failing grade).**

**Paper: A Developing Theory on the Teaching of English/Language Arts.** This concise (1-2 page) paper should clearly articulate your developing theory on the teaching of English/language arts in today's secondary schools, and should reflect the research and theory upon which it is founded. **Due on 4/27.**

**Oral Exams: Fishbowl Midterm and "Department Meeting" Final.** Students will be called upon to demonstrate their knowledge and developing philosophies regarding research in the field of English/language arts instruction. Both exams will be conducted orally. The midterm will be conducted "fishbowl" style, and the final will be conducted as a Socratic Seminar. More information about each teaching technique will be presented in class. **Exams will take place on 3/16 (fishbowl midterm) and 4/27 (Socratic Seminar final).**

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

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions. The Virginia Department of Education and the National Council of Accreditation of

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Teacher Education promote standards of professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues and all members of the learning community. The GSE expects students, faculty and staff to exhibit professional dispositions through:

- Commitment to the profession
- Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards
- Commitment to key elements of professional practice
- Commitment to being a member of the learning community
- Commitment to democratic values and social justice

Students must also follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code which states in part; “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust and fairness among all of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members have set forth this Honor Code: *Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*”

### Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignments due by NEXT Class
1/19	<b>Introductions/Course Overview Process Approaches to Teaching Writing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Smagorinsky chapters 1 and 2. Be prepared to write an in-class Writer’s Notebook entry on this reading.</li><li>2. In your WNB, write a draft of a vignette that tells the story of a personal event in your development as a writer; use your personal experience graph for ideas.</li><li>3. Read the articles by Romano and Flowers handed out in class. Using the principles, processes and terminology from these reading, write a reflective analysis of your own writing process/of yourself as a writer. (Hint: consider the process you followed when you wrote your vignettes). Post this writing self-analysis on the course Blackboard site by 5 pm Sunday.</li></ol> <p>Reminders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Join NCTE or IRA; subscribe to one of their journals</li><li>• Activate your GMU e-mail account; arrange for forwarding if you want</li><li>• Check out the Blackboard site</li></ul>

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Date	Topic	Assignments due by NEXT Class
1/26	<b>Process Approaches to Teaching Writing (continued); Launching the Writer's Notebook</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read Smagorinsky chapters 5 and 6.</li><li>2. Read the Romano article on Multi-genre</li><li>3. Select a topic for your Multi-genre Research paper; post your paper proposal on Blackboard by Sunday night at 5 pm. First come, first served!</li><li>4. Read chapters 5 and 8 from Albert Somers' book <i>Teaching Poetry in High School</i> handed out in class. Be prepared to write an in-class WNB entry on these readings.</li></ol>
2/2	<b>Poetry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Revise and edit your vignette of your development as a writer and/or a poem you began in class.</li><li>2. Read the Watson article and write a Dear Sam-style letter to your peers about your piece.</li><li>3. Bring four copies of your vignette/poem and your Dear Sam letter to class to share.</li><li>4. Read the Graves and Sommers articles on responding to writing; be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on them.</li><li>5. In two columns in your WNB, make a list of (a) some of the most helpful and (b) least helpful feedback you've gotten on your writing as a student.</li></ol>
2/9	<b>Response and Revision; The Writing Workshop; Peer Response Groups</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Based on the feedback you received in class, do another round of revision/editing on your poem/vignette. Post your revised piece on Blackboard by Saturday at noon for online responses from your peer response group.</li><li>2. Respond by Sunday at 5 pm, to the revised pieces posted on Blackboard by your peer response group members.</li><li>3. Finish your Multi-genre research assignment:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete paper with APA –style reference list</li><li>• Poster Presentation; and</li><li>• Handout for your classmates (front: key information about topic; back: annotated bibliography of five best sources)</li></ul></li></ol>

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments due by NEXT Class</b>
2/16	<b>Multi-Genre Poster Presentation Multi-Genre Paper due</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Burke, introduction and chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7; be prepared to write an in-class WNB entry on this reading.</li> <li>2. Read Smagorinsky chapters 4 and 8 .</li> <li>3. Read the articles by Weaver and Keitzer. Write a reflection on how grammar was taught when you were a student of secondary English in your WNB.</li> <li>4. If possible, complete #3 and #4 in your Fieldwork packet.</li> <li>5. Read Burke chapter 10 on planning a unit of study.</li> <li>6. Come to class with your unit plan idea and any raw materials (resources, teaching ideas, related readings or activities) you may have collected at this point.</li> </ol>
2/23	<b>Editing, Grammar and Correctness; Unit planning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the article by Mondock about portfolios, and prepare a list of questions you have about implementation of portfolios in the classroom in your WNB. Be prepared to share this list in class.</li> <li>2. Do one final revision on your poem/vignette and post it on Blackboard by 5 pm on Sunday .</li> <li>3. Read Smagorinsky chapter 7.</li> <li>4. Read Atwell chapters 1, 3, and 4. Be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on them.</li> </ol>
3/2	<b>Assessment and Publication</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the rest of Atwell. Write a WNB entry reflecting on how you might apply Atwell's principles in your own classroom.</li> <li>2. Read Smagorinsky chapters 9, 10 and 11.</li> <li>3. If possible, complete Fieldwork assignment #1 and #2</li> <li>4. Prepare for the Fishbowl Midterm</li> </ol>
3/9	<b>NO CLASS: GMU SPRING BREAK</b>	
3/16	<b>NO CLASS: Dr. Horvath in Africa</b>	
3/23	<b>Fishbowl Exam</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Berger's article on Reader Response journals</li> <li>2. Read Smagorinsky chapters 12 – 14.</li> <li>3. In your WNB, reflect on the strategies described in the readings, compared with your own secondary experiences.</li> <li>4. Continue work on your Unit Plan – bring a draft to class for peer response.</li> <li>5. Read <i>The House on Mango Street</i> .</li> </ol>

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Date	Topic	Assignments due by NEXT Class
3/30	<b>Reader Response Unit Plan Response Groups</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the articles handed out in class on film in the English class.</li> <li>2. Read Smagorinsky chapter 3.</li> <li>3. Complete the assignment handed out in class in preparation for class .</li> <li>4. Complete your Unit Plan.</li> <li>5. Read <i>The House on Mango Street</i>.</li> </ol>
4/6	<b>Film as Text ; Complete Unit Plan due</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Burke, chapters 8 and 9 on teaching speaking, listening and thinking.</li> <li>2. Read Harvey Daniels piece on Literature Circles and complete your role sheet on the Burke reading.</li> <li>3. Following the SRI guidelines handed out in class, complete an SRI project on <i>The House on Mango Street</i>.</li> </ol>
4/13	<b>Literature Circles</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read <i>Shakespeare Set Free</i>. Write a WNB entry comparing the strategies laid out in the reading with your own experiences as a student of Shakespeare. Include a list of questions you have about implementing performance strategies in the English classroom.</li> <li>2. Read chapter 7 from Somers' book <i>Teaching Poetry in High School</i> given out in class.</li> </ol>
4/20	<b>Performance Techniques: Shakespeare and Slam</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the Tredway article on Socratic Seminars</li> <li>2. Read</li> <li>3. Be prepared to engage in a Socratic Seminar next week in class.</li> <li>4. Complete your Field Experiences Report.</li> </ol>
4/27	<b>Socratic Seminar; Developing a Theory of Teaching English</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Burke chapter 22, on becoming an English teacher.</li> <li>2. Complete your Theory of Teaching English paper. Be prepared to talk from it in the oral final.</li> </ol>
5/4	<b>Oral Final Exam Theory of Teaching English paper due</b>	

### Course Evaluation

All assignments will be graded using a system developed by Lisa Green, English department chair at Robinson Senior Secondary School. Eligible, *complete* assignments (with the exception of oral exams, the "Theory of Teaching English" paper, and the Field Experiences Report) may be revised and/or edited and resubmitted for a "higher grade" up until the final deadline of . Each *complete* assignment handed in will receive either (1) R/E (needs to be revised, edited and resubmitted), (2) R (needs to be revised and resubmitted), (3) E (needs editing before resubmission), or (4) A (accepted – no revision required). ***Incomplete assignments handed in on the initial***



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**due date or late will not be eligible for revision and resubmission.** Eligible assignments may be revised and resubmitted as many times as you wish until the final deadline. At that point of “final deadline” ( ), codes become letter grades (A = A, E = B, R = C, and R/E = D) and no more resubmissions will be considered.

The grading system for graduate courses at GMU is as follows: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, F. In this course, the following system will be used:

A+ = 97 – 100

B+ = 87 – 89

C = 70 – 79

F = -70

A = 94 -96

B = 84 – 86

A- = 90 – 93

B- = 80 – 83

All assignments must be turned in on time. **Late and/or incomplete assignments will not be given full credit;** in the case of extenuating circumstances, approval must be granted **in advance** by the instructor.

Grades of “A” in the course are earned by students who do exemplary, distinguished work. The A+, A, A- student participates actively and thoughtfully in class; completes all required reading assignments and related assignments in a timely and professional way; shows coherence and thoroughness in lesson and unit planning; completes well-organized, well-written papers; and consistently demonstrates the ability to make connections between theory and practice.

EDCI 569 assignments are weighted as follows:

Writer’s Notebook (at-home, online and in-class writings)	10
Multi-Genre Research Project (paper and presentation)	20
Unit Plan	20
Developing Theory of Teaching English	15
Field Experiences Report	15
Fishbowl Midterm	10
Final (oral) Exam	10

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### College of Education and Human Development Expectations

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See the website for the full text of the honor code. Additionally, students agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. 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. Call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

### **Bibliography**

The list of references at the end of this syllabus consists of respected texts in English Education; these works would make a good start for your personal library as an English teacher.

Allen, J. (1995). *It's never too late: Leading adolescents into lifelong literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Andrasick, K. (1990). *Opening texts: Using writing to teach literature*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Applebee, A. (1996). *Curriculum as conversation: Transforming traditions of teaching and learning*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

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Beach, R. & Marshall, J. (1991). *Teaching literature in the secondary school*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace.

Bomer, R. (1995). *Time for meaning: Crafting literate lives in middle and high school*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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Gere, A., Fairbanks, C., Howes, Al., Roop., L., Schaafsma, D. (1992). *Language and reflection: An integrated approach to teaching English*. New York, NY: Macmillan.

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Milner, J., Milner, L. (1999). *Bridging English, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* New York, NY: Prentice Hall.

Moffett, J., Wagner, B.J. (1992). *Student-centered language arts, K-12 4<sup>th</sup> ed.* Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook & Heinemann.

Murray, D. (1968). *A writer teaches writing*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

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Myers, M. (1996). *Changing our minds: negotiating English and literacy*. Urbana, IL: NCTE

Nelms, B. (Ed.) (1988). *Literature in the classroom: readers, texts and contexts*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Newkirk, T. (Ed.) (1990). *To compose: teaching writing in high school and college 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Probst, R. (1988). *Response and analysis: teaching literature in junior and senior high school*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Purves, A. Rogers, T., Soter, A. (1995). *How porcupines make love III: readers, texts, cultures in the response-centered classroom*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

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*Standards for the English Language Arts*. (1996). Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Stock, P.L. (1995). *The dialogic curriculum: teaching and learning in a multicultural society*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Wilhelm, J. (1996). *Standards in practice: Grades 6 – 8*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.