

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Secondary Education Program

College of  
EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



Promoting Learning & Development Across the Lifespan

**EDCI 669**

**Advanced Methods of Teaching Secondary English**

**Spring Semester, 2012**

Instructor: Dr. Leslie Lipovski

Date and Time: Tuesdays 4:30 – 7:10 Jan. 26th – May 8th

Class Location: Thompson Hall 2020

Email: [llipovsk@gmu.edu](mailto:llipovsk@gmu.edu)

Office: Thompson Hall 1803

Office Hours: After class and by appointment

Course Materials Online

The Blackboard site can be found at <http://courses.gmu.edu>

Use the same login as your GMU email

### Blackboard

Blackboard 9.1 will be used for the course. Access Blackboard 9.1 by following these steps:

1. Go to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>.
2. Login using your NETID and password,
3. Click on the 'Courses' tab.
4. Double-click on our course number under the "Blackboard 9.1 Course" heading.

### Course Description

Prerequisite: EDCI 569. This is the second course in a two-part sequence of courses for preservice English teachers. This course guides students in working effectively with national and local standards for teaching secondary English.

### Goals:

A strong focus on literature and the role of essay writing in teaching literature  
Innovation, Collaboration, SPA standards 3.0, 3.2.3

Examination of literary interpretations and essay rhetoric  
Innovation, SPA standards 3.2.3, 3.3.3

Consideration of English language arts instruction with a broad focus on literacy and literacy skills  
Research-Based Practice, SPA standards 3.4, 3.5

Inquiry based research and discussions using multiple literacies and multi-modal lenses  
Research-Based Practice. SPAA standards 3.5, 3.7

Examination of questions for inquiry such as:

What does it mean to interpret a literary text in middle or high school?  
How can English teachers invite and work with a variety of perspectives when shaping literary interpretation?

What is an essay? What role does essay writing play in helping students interpret literature texts?

What other modes of writing can foster and shape literary interpretation?

How can English teachers differentiate reading and writing for students with various aptitudes for reading and in various stages of English language acquisition?

## **Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

EDCI 669 is designed to encompass a critical exploration and analysis of current developments in the teaching of secondary English with an emphasis on student-centered methods that encourage integrated study of the language arts. Areas of study include reading and writing development, the writing process, the processes involved in reading literary texts, reader-response theories and research, oral language and listening skill development, as well as formative and summative techniques for assessing pupil progress. EDCI 669 also focuses on the use of technology in the classroom and the needs of diverse learners as called for by the *Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* and *National English Education Standards* and as outlined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA).

## **College Expectations and University Honor Code**

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

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions.

### *Commitment to the profession*

- Promoting exemplary practice
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Advancing the profession
- Engagement in partnerships

### *Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards*

- Fairness
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Confidentiality
- Respect for colleagues and students

### *Commitment to key elements of professional practice*

- Belief that all individuals have the potential for growth and learning
- Persistence in helping individuals succeed
- High standards
- Safe and supportive learning environments
- Systematic planning
- Intrinsic motivation
- Reciprocal, active learning
- Continuous, integrated assessment
- Critical thinking
- Thoughtful, responsive listening
- Active, supportive interactions
- Technology-supported learning

- Research-based practice
- Respect for diverse talents, abilities, and perspectives
- Authentic and relevant learning
- Commitment to being a member of a learning community*
  - Professional dialogue
  - Self-improvement
  - Collective improvement
  - Reflective practice
  - Responsibility
  - Flexibility
  - Collaboration
  - Continuous, lifelong learning
- Commitment to democratic values and social justice*
  - Understanding systemic issues that prevent full participation
  - Awareness of practices that sustain unequal treatment or unequal voice
  - Advocate for practices that promote equity and access
  - Respects the opinion and dignity of others
  - Sensitive to community and cultural norms
  - Appreciates and integrates multiple perspectives

## **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:**

All students must abide by the following:

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Please note that:

- o “Plagiarism encompasses the following:
  1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.”

(from Mason Honor Code online at

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>)

- o Paraphrasing involves taking someone else’s ideas and putting them in your own words. When you paraphrase, you need to cite the source.
- o When material is copied word for word from a source, it is a direct quotation. You must use quotation marks (or block indent the text) and cite the source.
- o Electronic tools (e.g., SafeAssign) may be used to detect plagiarism if necessary.
- o Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary actions.

- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See

<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>.

Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy at the bottom of the screen.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the

GMU Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See <http://www2.gmu.edu/dpt/unilife/ods/> or call 703-993-2474 to

access the ODS.

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].**

## Required Texts

Appleman, D. (2009). *Critical encounters in high school English: Teaching literary theory to adolescents* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Herrington, A.; Hodgson, K. & Moran, C. (2009). *Teaching the new writing: Technology, change, and assessment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Herrell, A. & Jordan, M. (2007). *Fifty strategies for training English language learners*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Holden, J. & Schmidt, J. (2002). *Inquiry and the literary text: Constructing discussions in the English classroom*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Two young adult literature selections of your choice

## RESOURCES

George Mason University Library: <http://library.gmu.edu/>

What Kids Can Do: [www.whatkidscando.org](http://www.whatkidscando.org)

Greater Washington Reading Council: [www.gwrc.net](http://www.gwrc.net)

Virginia State Reading Association: [www.vsra.org](http://www.vsra.org)

International Reading Association (IRA): [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

National Reading Conference (NRC): [www.nrconline.org](http://www.nrconline.org)

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE): [www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org)

TED website: <http://www.ted.com/talks>

## Course Requirements

**Attendance and Participation.** Attendance at each class session and field experience is critical. Your attendance, thoughtfulness, clarity, and active sharing of responsibility for our classroom community will affect your grade. You are expected to read and keep notes on class material, complete all assignments, and contribute as both a listener and speaker in class discussions. Absences and tardies, both in class and fieldwork will impact your grade. Two tardies are equal to one absence. Each student is allowed one absence, no explanation required. For each session you are absent beyond this one session, points will be deducted from your attendance and class participation points. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions despite attendance. **Please turn off all cell phones, computers, and pagers when you enter class or your fieldwork setting.**

### **Exploratory Essay and Lesson Plan**

Given our focus on teaching and writing, we are going to discuss the question, “What is an essay?” You will bring an essay to class that you think could serve as an exemplar piece for your students. This essay may be found in any source – newspaper, magazine, an anthology, or online source. It is up to you to use your judgment to decide if the piece qualifies as an essay. Based on your chosen essay, you will design a lesson plan that introduces students to writing an exploratory essay. The lesson plan (again, use the format in the Secondary Program Handbook) must include objectives, standards, instructional plan, and assessment. The lesson plan must address at least two NCTE standards and the INTASC standards addressed in a rubric I will provide to you. Include all written materials that would be given to students as part of the lesson. Include all assessments and accompanying rubrics to be used for the lesson. The assessment of this lesson plan and its implementation must include self, peer, mentor teacher, student, and instructor evaluations and feedback. The lesson must include differentiation of instruction for students of varying levels. When presenting points for discussion, include your expected responses to teacher-student interaction and alternative discussion plans depending on student responses. Include a narrative that outlines your justification for the instructional decisions you make through the lesson. **DUE: Draft 2/21, Final 3/06**

### **“Best Of...” Strategy Presentation**

Each of several weeks across our semester two members of our class will be responsible for sharing a “best of...” teaching strategy with our class. This should be a writing instruction-focused strategy that we might use with middle/high school students. Find a teacher-friendly article related to the subject of your group’s presentation and provide electronic copies for the entire class. Please treat each workshop as if you are planning for a 60-minute lesson in a middle/high school setting. (again, use the format in the Secondary Program Handbook) Provide materials that you would use in your classroom and facilitate us in testing out the activities and tools you have developed. Also, be sure to describe how you might modify these strategies for serving reluctant learners, struggling students, and diverse students. Please note that you can draw this strategy from our readings, your fieldwork mentor’s practices, or other resources. **DUE: Beginning 2/07 and running through 5/01 (one group per week, see sign-up sheet)**

### **Young Adult Novels**

You will read two young adult novels or other examples of literature of your own choice for this course. These books should meet three criteria: 1) each must provide you and the rest of the members of our class with some insight into who the young adults with whom we will be working are; 2) each must be a book that you would consider using as a piece of literature in the classes you will teach; 3) each book must be a book that young adults might choose on their own. Caveat: If you have taken my YAL course, please choose a new book and not one that we studied for that course. The point here is to expand your knowledge base. There is not a formal assignment for these; however, we will be discussing content in groups and the discussion is a part of your grade. **DUE: YA novel one completed by 3/06 YA novel two by 4/24**

### **Interview of English Language Arts Teacher**

Students will conduct a minimum 10-question interview with an English teacher in a school setting. Ideally this will occur in your fieldwork setting for the semester. Based on your interview, write a summary report of the interview and be ready to share your findings with the class. The purpose of this interview is to begin to learn from a professional educator whom you trust and respect. In a maximum three-page document, the report must include the name of the person interviewed, their position in the school, the grade/grades with whom this individual works, the questions asked, and a summary of their transcribed responses. Possible questions to ask during the interview include the following:

- What are the primary literacy challenges your students are facing?
- Describe the English curricula utilized in your classroom/the school
- Describe an English lesson you have used to serve the needs of your students
- Describe other literary activities that you utilize in your classroom to serve students' needs
- What do you believe are the assets of your school or classroom English curricula/programs?
- What do you believe are the limitations of your school or classroom English curricula/program?
- How do you and your school colleagues support parents and families to promote students' engagement and achievement within school or out of school literary activities?
- What do you consider a successful English lesson?
- What approaches to classroom management do you prefer?
- How do you measure your effectiveness at reaching your objectives as an English teacher?

**OR**

### **Teacher Scavenger Hunt**

For this assignment, you will locate various items that new teachers need to have access to during the internship and beyond. The purpose of this assignment is to become familiar with terms and items that you will be expected to know upon entering the profession. For this scavenger hunt you will locate in your field experience school the following items:

- VGLA  
Pacing Guide
- POS
- WIDA Scores
- Lexile Framework
- IEP/504 forms
- CLT/PLC philosophy



In addition, you will write a brief paper explaining how you went about discovering both what the items were and where they were located/used in your school. Discuss challenges, discoveries, and surprises.

For both assignments, be prepared to share your journey with the class.

**DUE: 3/20 – both written and work and presentation.**

### **Story of Injustice Persuasive Narrative**

One of the primary ways we develop as citizens is to participate in activities in our classes where we consider issues of justice. We will combine separate activities that teacher and author Jessica Singer (in her book *Stirring Up Justice*) describes to create these narratives in class. You are urged to use this assignment in your own class as well.

**DUE: Draft 3/27, and Final, 4/03**

**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, oral language, and language study; and provides for authentic assessment. The unit can revolve around a particular literary work, a theme, a writer, a period or genre, as long as the unit builds on the strengths and meets the 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 all support materials, should be included for any five block-length lessons or ten period-length lessons from the unit; each lesson plan should make clear connections between stated objectives and planned assessment. The unit’s organization and methodological approaches should reflect current research and practice in the teaching of English/language arts.

To evaluate how well these unit plans meet the NCTE standards for effective planning, the EDCI 479/669 instructors score the unit plans using an evaluation rubric based on the standards; a rubric follows the description of this unit plan. The unit plan assignment is aimed at helping English education candidates consider how their students’ varied uses of language and non-print media can be related to the study of literature and visual and written composition. As such, the English evaluation rubric focuses on NCTE Standards 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.5, and 4.7. The unit plan must also include a rationale in which the candidates use theory and research to argue for an approach to instruction that focuses on students’ varied uses of language (oral and written). Therefore, the English evaluation rubric also includes attention to NCTE Standard 3.7.

(incomplete units will earn a failing grade). **DUE: 4/17**

## **Field Experience Critical Incidents Reflections and Images/Pilot Teaching Project**

This course has a required field experience component. You are required to have **15 contact hours** in a classroom. This opportunity is an invaluable way to connect course content to what is going on in actual high school and middle school classrooms as well as promoting critical self-reflection about the practice of teaching and the culture of schools. You cannot earn a passing grade for the course if you do not complete your field experience. When you participate in your field experience, be sure to take general notes and notes on anything that relates to what we are discussing in class. Handouts with further details are forthcoming. **The fieldwork assignment, along with a signed copy of documentation of hours, should be turned in no later than DUE: 5/08**

## **Course Evaluation**

The grading system for graduate courses at GMU is as follows:

A+= 97-100	B+ = 87-89	C = 70=79
A = 94-96	B= 84-86	F = 70 and below
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.

Attendance and Participation	10 pts
Exploratory Essay and Lesson Plan	15 pts
“Best Of...” Strategy Presentation	10 pts
Young Adult Novels	10 pts
Interview of English Language Arts Teacher	10 pts
OR	
Teacher Scavenger Hunt	10 pts
Story of Injustice Persuasive Narrative	15 pts
Unit Plan	20 pts
Field Experience Critical Incidents Reflections and Images /Pilot Teaching Project	10 pts

