

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



Promoting Learning & Development Across the Lifespan

Summer 2012, Session C
EDUC 597
Using Digital and Popular-Culture Media
With Grades 6-12

Instructor: Kathleen Reilly
Day and Time: MWF 7:20-10:00 pm
Class Location: Thompson Hall, 1017
Email: kreilly4@gmu.edu
Office hours: Email to set appt.

Catalog Description and Prerequisites

Exposes students to recent knowledge on how middle and high school teachers can use digital media and popular culture texts to engage students in subject area learning or literacy development. The focus is on grades 4-12.

Prerequisites: Admission to a GSE licensure, Master's, or doctoral program and at least one year of PK-12 teaching experience, completion of EDCI 569, EDCI 567, EDCI 572, EDCI 573, or EDCI 544, or permission of instructor.

Learner Outcomes

The purpose of this course will be to expose educators—or those interested in the field of education more generally—to the growing body of books and practitioner articles on the role of popular digital media texts in school curricula. The course will take a cultural studies stance on media, meaning that the readings and assignments will focus on people as creative consumers and producers of popular media texts. As such, the students in the class will not only create content-specific curricula (language arts, science, social studies, etc) that incorporate popular media texts and digital media literacy activities, they will also examine their own popular media practices by producing related media texts (such as magazine mock ups, television commercials, on-line news reports, and manga samples), all with the help of Web 2.0 platforms. They will then go through *critical framing*, wherein they will analyze their own productions from a critical theory standpoint in order to help them understand how middle and high school students can engage in media practices in academic settings. The focus will be on *critical media literacy*, so that the members of the class can learn ways to help middle and high school students critique ideas created and represented through multimedia.

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Design instruction meant to enhance students' content-area knowledge through the use of popular digital media texts and other forms of pop culture. **RESEARCH BASED PRACTICE, INNOVATION**
- Participate in critical framing. **RESEARCH BASED PRACTICE, COLLABORATION**
- Discuss relevant theory and research regarding the use of pop culture and popular digital media in school curricula, grades 6-12, as well as challenges to the use of pop culture. **RESEARCH BASED PRACTICE, EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The key questions that will guide the course are as follows:

- What is the definition of *media literacy*?
- What are *digital multimedia*?
- What are some ways to define *popular culture*?
- What is meant by a *literacy practice*? (Note that the term *literacy*, for the purposes of this course, will be broadly defined as *set of language practices that mediate learning in a variety of settings and subject areas*. Literacy, then, will not be limited to a study of reading and writing in the English Language Arts, but will instead be portrayed as a tool for learning and critical thinking across the curriculum).
- How have secondary teachers successfully used digital multimedia (popular culture) to engage students in school curricula and to build students' conceptual knowledge?
- What do teachers' own uses of multimedia and popular media texts mean for incorporating such texts into school curricula?

Professional Standards

This course focuses on the following INTASC Standards:

Standard 2 (Student Learning)

Standard 3 (Diverse Learners)

Standard 4 (Instruction)

Standard 6 (Communication)

The following is a sample of Professional Organization standards that the course addresses:

NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English) Standard 7: Candidates will help students compose and respond to film, video, graphic, photographic, audio, and multimedia texts and use current technology to enhance their own learning and reflection on their learning.

NSTA (National Science Teachers Association) Standard 2 (in part): [Students of science education] should be required to analyze, discuss and debate topics and reports in the media related to the nature of science and scientific knowledge in courses and seminars throughout the program, not just in an educational context.

NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Math) Standard 4: Knowledge of Mathematical Connections

Candidates recognize, use, and make connections between and among mathematical ideas and in contexts outside mathematics to build mathematical understanding.

Relevant Indicators in bold:

4.1 Recognize and use connections among mathematical ideas.

4.2 Recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.

4.3 Demonstrate how mathematical ideas interconnect and build on one another to produce a coherent whole.

Course Readings

Common Textbooks:

Hagood, M.C., Alvermann, D.E., & Heron-Hruby, A. (2010). *Bring it to class: Unpacking popular culture in literacy learning*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2011). *New Literacies: Everyday Practices and Social Learning* (2nd ed.). Open University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2009). *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century*. Boston, MA: MIT Press.

http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/full_pdfs/confronting_the_challenges.pdf

Additionally, one “choice” (with limitations) book for each student will be assigned, as well as several chapter-length readings posted on Blackboard.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Student Expectations

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.

Campus Resources

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/>].

GSE Secondary Education Program Resources:

For additional information about the Secondary Education Program in the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website, <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/gsemasters/>

Nature of Course Delivery

In addition to classroom attendance and participation in student-led discussions, students are expected to complete readings, group and individual projects, internet research, development of multi-genre texts, and reflections on practice. GMU's Blackboard course framework will be used regularly throughout the course (familiarity with Blackboard is expected). The course can be accessed at <http://mymason.gmu.edu>

Course Assignments

Reading, Participation, Leadership of Discussion(s), and Attendance (20%)

Participation in discussions is integral to the theory/practice connections that will be made in this course, and so your investment in reading and class discussions forms an important component of the course as a whole. It is expected that students are prepared to discuss and/or write about all assigned readings for each class meeting. Quality of contributions regarding readings will significantly affect the participation grade.

Self-Representation as Consumer and Producer of Digital Media and Pop Culture (30%):

During the first two weeks of the course, you will be exploring your identity as a consumer of pop culture and digital media. The objective of this assignment will be to have you consider why uses of pop culture and digital media are deceptively passive or simple. You will be adopting up to four subjectivities for this project, including teacher (or teacher candidate), parent, teenager, and adult. You will represent, through at least four artifacts, how your chosen subjectivities influence the ways you perceive pop culture and digital media platforms. In turn, you will consider how your perceptions affect your role as a teacher or teacher candidate. You will present your self-representation using a museum exhibition format during class.

Critical Framing (30 points towards course grade): You will complete one critical framing project. This means that you will produce a pop culture multimedia text and then critique/discuss that text with your classmates. The critical framing projects will be assessed using a rubric (see Appendix A). *You will present your critical framing project on either Monday, July 26 or Wednesday, July 28.*

Abstract of “Choice” Book on Pop Culture and Media Literacy (20 points towards course grade): You will select from a provided list of books, or reach agreement with the instructor on a title not listed, and develop an abstract of the book, to be shared with the class.

Tentative Schedule of Class Topics and Readings

Week	Inquiry Question	Readings and Major Assignments Due
July 2	What does it mean to be a consumer of pop culture?	Street, Intro and Ch 6 (both on Blackboard) Lankshear and Knobel, Part 1 Choice book – online discussion (Friday)
July 9, 11, 13	What does an ideological model of literacy look like and what does it have to do with media studies?	Jenkins, pp. 1-34 Lankshear and Knobel, Part 2 Choice book – online discussion (Friday) <i>Self-representation project due</i>
July 16, 18, 20	What is a participatory media culture?	Jenkins pp. 35-104 Lankshear and Knobel, Part 3 Hagood, Intro and chapters 1-4 Choice book – online discussion (Friday)
July 23, 25	What does it mean to teach media studies in middle and high school?	Hagood, chapters 5-6 <i>Critical Framing Projects with presentations due</i>
July 30, Aug 2	What are some of the challenges to teaching media studies?	<i>Book abstracts with presentations due</i>

GRADING SCALE

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	D	60-69
A	93-96	B	80-86	F	below 60
A-	90-92	C	70-79		

Appendix A
Rubric for Critical Framing Project

Standard	Score of 0	Score of 1	Score of 2	Score of 3
Project is presented using multimedia (10 points)	Standard not addressed	Media is poorly executed/sloppy	Media is well-executed; a variety of media are used and they convey ideas effectively.	Media is well executed. It is obvious that the student can use a variety of media to communicate ideas and prompt discussion.
Project is fully developed. (10 points)	Standard not addressed	Project does not have a clear audience; the concept is not discernible or is not well-developed.	Project has a clear audience and a concept that leads the audience from a starting point to a culminating idea or conclusion.	The concept is complex and rich; the audience can draw several perspectives from the presentation.
Student presents critical frame for project (10 points)	Standard not addressed	The critical frame is present but is incomplete.	The student can articulate the concept and the intended audience and can hold a comprehensive discussion about the how and why of the project.	The student can hold a comprehensive discussion of the “how and why” of the presentation; during the discussion, the student makes accurate and conversation-inducing references to the course readings.