

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Division of Elementary, Literacy and Secondary Educations**  
**Literacy Program Outreach: Mason Interactive Literacy Institute**

EDPD 502.601: Early Literacy Professional Development  
2 Credits, 2014-15

Syphax Center 237, Arlington Public Schools

8:30-4:00 on August 28, October 1, October 13 (Mason Arlington campus), and Feb 11  
(Education Center 101 A/B)

**Instructor**

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**Course Description**

This professional development course is designed to expand participants' knowledge of early literacy development and encourage application of strategies, theories, and research-based practices to diverse student populations and to professional development work with teachers at their own sites.

**Learner Outcomes and Objectives**

This course is designed to enable and encourage classroom teacher, specialist, and administrator participants to:

- Expand their knowledge of literacy and apply it to the needs of diverse student populations
- Analyze and interpret student learning data to make data-guided decisions regarding literacy instruction
- Design and implement specific literacy activities based on identified student needs and current research
- Work collaboratively in a variety of contexts to create, implement, and evaluate a variety of literacy instructional techniques and activities
- Select and implement specific active learning strategies to engage and involve diverse learners in literacy and other academic content

### Required and Provided Texts

Scanlon, D.M., Anderson, K.L., & Sweeney, J.M. (2010). *Early intervention for reading difficulties: The interactive strategies approach*. New York, NY: Guilford.

**Choose one** during the first session for interactive bookclub:

Helman, L. (2012). *Literacy instruction in multicultural classrooms: Engaging English language learners in elementary school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Johnston, P. H. (2012). *Opening minds: Using language to change lives*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Johnston, P. H. (2004). *Choice words: How our language affects children's learning*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Additional readings will be made available via APS, in paper format and also electronically via Blackboard. See schedule for required readings. Because the professional development sessions will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to early literacy activities, it is critical for you to keep up with readings and to participate in sessions. Please bring your articles and texts to each session for reference.

### Course Expectations and Assignments

A. Session Attendance and Participation (30%) - Attendance and consistent, thoughtful participation will earn the full points for class participation. Attendance will be taken beginning on the first PD session. Unexcused absence from one or more of our class sessions will result in loss of course credit. Active participation is expected and will be evaluated each class session using the following rubric:

<b>Excellent (9-10)</b>	<b>Competent (6-8)</b>	<b>Minimal (0- 5)</b>
Regularly attends class and asks thoughtful questions and makes observations that indicate reflections and analysis appropriate to the topic. Participates actively in small group activities and class discussions. Clearly well prepared for class.	Regularly attends class and occasionally asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflections and analysis appropriate to the topic. Participates in small group activities and class discussions. Adequately prepared for class.	Misses more than one class and rarely asks questions or makes comments that indicate familiarity with the topic. Minimal participation in small group activities and class discussions.

B. Book Clubs (10%)- Teachers will actively participate in small groups in the third and fourth sessions to discuss their selected text (Helman or Johnston choices) as well as other course readings and topics. Teachers will alternate and share leadership roles each session. The purpose of the circle is to work in a small group to synthesize the readings with prior readings and experiences (text connections), share alternate viewpoints, and create consensus regarding class

topics. In addition to participation, each member will write a one-page summary reflection on the process of using the book club as an inquiry circle, linking the experience to relevant topics, theories, and practices from course readings. Each group will share their main findings with their cohort group at the fourth session. Being prepared for discussion, actively listening, developing questions, and supporting responses with specific book statements will be the criteria for evaluation. Evaluation for participation and one-page reflective paper is as follows:

<b>Excellent (9-10)</b>	<b>Competent (6-8)</b>	<b>Minimal (0-5)</b>
<p>Consistently prepared for discussion; actively listens to peers and regularly provides insightful feedback.</p> <p>Provides critical reflection that includes links to class discussions, reading and theoretical perspectives, roots of practices, views, and values.</p> <p>Written in a clear, succinct manner. Well organized with strong support for ideas; nearly error-free.</p>	<p>Mostly prepared for discussion; listens to peers and often provides feedback.</p> <p>Provides reflection that includes some links to class discussions, reading and theoretical perspectives, roots of practices, views, and values.</p> <p>Written in a mostly clear manner. Organization has minor flaws, but support for ideas is evident. Several errors.</p>	<p>Inconsistently prepared for discussion; listens to peers but does not offer consistent or insightful feedback.</p> <p>Provides more of a summary than a reflection; does not make strong connections to class discussions, reading and theoretical perspectives, roots of practices, views, and values.</p> <p>Written in an unclear manner. Organization is weak and ideas do not have sufficient support. Many errors.</p>

**C. *Professional Development Mentoring Project (40% over two submissions).***

In this two-part project, on designated dates you will submit a lesson plan and reflection along with a videotaped sample of your teaching for instructor feedback. The lesson plan should describe the lesson's elements, standards, materials, and instructional techniques (the *APS Guide to Key Elements of a Lesson Plan* is a strong plan format for this assignment). Videotape a short segment of the lesson (10-15 minutes). Review your videotape and reflect on the lesson: What did students learn as a result of this lesson? What went well? What would you do differently next time? How can you improve your instruction? Submit your plan, video, and reflection to your instructor for feedback. This will be done twice, once at the beginning and again at the end of the institute. Evaluation will follow the rubric provided at the end of the syllabus.

**D. *Reflection Journals (20%)*** Due monthly, this informal journal provides an opportunity for you to communicate with your instructor, sharing insights and questions. The journals should include specific application of strategies and techniques gained during PD sessions and readings, specific feedback from your Community of Practice, and questions you have regarding PD content and application to your students.

### ***Assignments Summary and Weighting***

Class Participation	30 percent
Book Club Reflection	10 percent
*Professional Development Project	40 percent
<i>Part One</i>	<i>(20 percent)</i>
<i>Part Two</i>	<i>(20 percent)</i>
<u>Reflection Journals (six)</u>	<u>20 percent</u>

Total 100 percent (S/U grading)

### **Assignments and Grading Policies**

Assignments are due as noted on the schedule. All assignments should be electronically submitted. *Please save your work with your last name and assignment title as part of the electronic filename (ex: Smith\_reflectionjournal3.docx)*

Successful completion of this professional development course will result in two continuing education credits. This course has Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading. If work is unsatisfactory, in addition to no earned credit, a grade of U will appear on your Mason transcript. Late assignments will result in point deduction, so please make every effort to submit assignments on time. Please keep in good contact with your instructor regarding assignment concerns.

Note that the course extends into March 2015. Credits will be submitted on April 1, 2015 and may be applied towards certificate renewal.

### **Session attendance**

Attendance is both important and required. If, due to an emergency, you will not attend a session, you must contact the instructor via phone or email. You are expected to email assignments regardless of class attendance on the day that the assignment is due. Participants are responsible for obtaining information given during session discussions despite attendance, and arrangements to make up the time and content must be made.

### **General**

Please contact your instructor with questions and concerns about assignments, expectations, or class activities. Given a reasonable time frame, your instructor will clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments. Your instructor will be available before and after class, by appointment, and by e-mail. We look forward to collaborating with each of you as you work towards your goals.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

- a) Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b) Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

- c) 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.
- d) 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/>].
- e) 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/>].
- f) Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g) 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/>].

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

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

## **PROPOSED SCHEDULE**

This schedule may be changed at the discretion of the instructor or as needs of the participants or the Literacy Program dictate.

### **Session One: August 28**

Essential Question: Who are your students and how do you determine their literacy needs?

#### **Key Topics:**

Course registration & syllabus overview

Introductions & Community Building activity

Synchrony of development & review of developmental literacy stages

Characteristics of learners in each stage & supporting data

Oral language development & comprehension

### **Refining Practice: Intersession**

1. Read these articles and chapters after the session:

Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney text: read Part I, paying special attention to Table 2.2; also read Part II: Learning the Alphabetic Code, with emphasis on understanding which strategies and activities can be useful with your emergent and beginner readers.

Choose one article:

Flanigan, K. (2006). Daddy, where did the words go? How teachers can help emergent readers develop a concept of word in text. *Reading Improvement*, pp. 37-49.

Helman, L. & Burns, M. (2008). What does oral language have to do with it? Helping young English-language learners acquire a sight word vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 62, 14-19. Doi: 10.1598/RT.62.1.2

2. Meet with Community of Practice (CoP)

- Decide norms and expectations as a group; send to instructor with first reflection journal entry
  - Choose (guided by back-to-school student data), plan, & implement at least one strategy from Session 1 and Scanlon text Part II. Share results with CoP and determine next steps.
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### **Session Two: October 1**

Essential Question: How do you match students with appropriate literacy instruction?

#### **Key Topics:**

Discussions of readings and activities tried during intersession; share insights and reinforcements  
Fluency and Word Knowledge skills and strategies  
Comprehension and Vocabulary skills and strategies  
Motivation and Engagement  
Ongoing data collection, analysis, and application to instructional grouping and planning

### **Refining Practice: Intersession**

1. Read these articles and chapters after the session:

Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney text: read Part III, Word Knowledge, with emphasis on understanding which strategies and activities can be useful with your students across developmental stages.

Choose 1 article:

Amendum, Amendum, & Almond (2013). One day I kud not red a book bot naw I can: One English learner's progress. *The Reading Teacher*, 67, 59-69. Doi:10.1002/TRTR.1183

Avalos, M. A., Plasencia, A., Chavez, C., & Rason, J. (2007). Modified guided reading: Gateway to English as a second language and literacy. *The Reading Teacher*, 61, 318-329.

2. Meet with Community of Practice and submit reflection journal 2 to instructor

3. Assignment: *Professional Development Mentoring Project- Part One* (also described on p. 3): Select at least one activity and craft a specific plan to implement it with your students (small group or whole class). Include your processes and justifications. Videotape your instruction (the camera should be focused on you, not your students). View your video and reflect on the lesson, your instruction, and student outcomes. Share your lesson with your Community of Practice (CoP) for their feedback before the next PD session. Submit a 10-15 minute video clip of the lesson, your plans, and reflections to your instructor for coaching and feedback. Please use the Coaching Rubric at the end of the syllabus to guide your assignment. DUE: by Oct 13

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### **Session Three: October 13 (Conference setting planned for George Mason Arlington campus)**

Essential Question: How can you hone and refine your literacy instruction?

A detailed schedule will be provided. Participants will move between breakout sessions as a cohort. General schedule:

8:30-9:00 Brief opening session to introduce guest instructors and format, logistics of building

9:00- 4:00 Breakout sessions on a variety of topics (led by guest instructors)

4:00-4:30 Panel discussion/whole group

#### **Refining Practice: Intersession**

1. Read these articles and chapters after the session:

Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney text: read Part IV, Meaning Construction, with emphasis on understanding which strategies and activities can be useful with your students across developmental stages

*Choose one:*

Bear, D. R., Negrete, S., & Cathey, S. (2012). Developmental literacy instruction with struggling readers across three stages. *New England Reading Association Journal*, 48, 1-9.

Laman, T. T., & Van Sluys, K. (2008). Being and becoming: Multilingual writers' practices. *Language Arts*, 85(4), 265-275.

*Also read:* Book club selection (complete the book and prepare 1-page reflection)

2. Ongoing meetings with Community of Practice; submit reflection journals by Oct 31, Nov 30, Jan 31

## **Session Four: February 11**

Essential Question: How can I balance and integrate literacy instruction to meet all students' needs?

### Key Topics:

- Bookclub discussion
  - Connect with other readings and experiences since previous session
- Reading disabilities: Dyslexia, specific reading disability, and comprehension issues
- Skill progression and Scope & Sequence (second semester goals and requirements, matching strategies and activities with curric and students)
- Midyear data updates and analysis
- Dual-identified students: ESOL and Special Education
- Planning for ongoing support within and between schools

### **Refining Practice: Intersession**

1. Read these chapters after the session:

Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney text: read Part V: Implementing Intensified Instruction, with emphasis on understanding how to balance skills and strategies with assessment and grouping techniques.

2. Meet with Community of Practice and submit final reflection journal by Mar 20

3. Assignment: *Professional Development Mentoring Project- Part Two* (also described on p. 3): Select at least one activity and craft a specific plan to implement it with your students (small group or whole class). Include your processes and justifications. Videotape your instruction (the camera should be focused on you, not your students). View your video and reflect on the lesson, your instruction, and student outcomes. Share your lesson with your Community of Practice (CoP) for their feedback before the next PD session. Submit a 10-15 minute video clip of the lesson, your plans, and reflections to your instructor for coaching and feedback. Please use the blank Coaching Rubric at the end of the syllabus, as well as the coaching feedback you received for Part One to guide your assignment. DUE: by March 20

4. Assignment: Complete Teacher Beliefs survey (online) DUE: by March 20



## Coaching and Feedback Rubric (for Professional Development Mentoring Project)

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Element	To Little Extent	To Great Extent	Comments
<b>Introduction/Rationale (written)</b>			
Instructional objective and all strategies are clearly defined and justified	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Student group clearly described and justified through data	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
There is a clear match between data and students, materials, and strategy	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
<b>Lesson Plan (written)</b>			
Instructional steps clearly described, including activation of prior knowledge, key vocabulary, guided release and assessment	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Instructional materials clearly described and justified	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Differentiation is clearly described and justified for diverse learners within target student group (e.g., ELLs and Special Education students)	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
<b>Implementation (video)</b>			
The lesson follows major plan elements of preparation, delivery, and assessment, with adaptations noted in reflection	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Teacher's delivery is clear and articulate, with positive tone and affect	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Teacher's word choices are matched to students' understanding. Key vocabulary is contextualized and defined.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Teacher's gestures are helpful/meaningful for conveying content	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
<b>Reflection (written)</b>			
Reflection summarizes how chosen activities, resources and/or technologies guided students to use and apply lesson concepts	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Reflection summarizes adaptations made during the lesson	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Reflection summarizes students' progress towards skill mastery	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Reflection includes clearly described next steps for instruction and changes needed for future lessons	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
<b>Overall coaching comments and feedback:</b> (field expands)			

