GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Literacy

EDRD 635.A01: School Based Inquiry in Literacy
3 Credits, Summer 2015
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 4:30-7:10
Krug Hall 242

PROFESSOR:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A. Prerequisites

EDRD 630 Advanced Literacy Foundations and Instruction, Birth to Middle Childhood, admission to the literacy emphasis, or permission from the program coordinator.

EDRD 631 Advanced study of literacy theory, research, and practice as it relates to adolescents and adults. Addresses sociocultural, cognitive, linguistic, psychological, and developmental influences on literacy. Includes reading, writing, and oral communication

EDRD 632 Literacy Assessments and Interventions for Groups. Provides literacy assessments and interventions for groups of learners. Includes exploration of assessment tools for classrooms and large populations. Class members conduct related practice in their own classrooms or specified field settings.

EDRD 633 Literacy Assessments and Interventions for Individuals. Provides literacy assessments and interventions for individuals. Includes diagnosis and remediation for learners who find reading and writing difficult. Requires assigned practicum experience.

EDRD 634 School Based Leadership Prepares reading specialist as a school leader. Expands knowledge of literacy gained in prerequisite courses, and applies it to professional development work with teachers at their own site.

EDRD 637 Supervised Literacy Practicum. Supervised literacy practicum that requires students to conduct assessments of and provide instruction to struggling readers.

B. University Catalog Course Description

Capstone course in literacy emphasis focusing on research-based inquiry related to literacy in school settings. Includes review of literature and teacher inquiry project.

This is a required course for teachers seeking a Virginia Reading Specialist License, K-12.

C. Expanded Course Description

This course will be conducted in a Hybrid context and taught through a combination of lecture, discussion, online settings both asynchronous and synchronous, and supervised practical experience working with adolescents.

LEARNER OUTCOMES or OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to enable students to:
1. Identify specific areas of literacy interest; plan research steps for gaining information about their interest; and begin to carry out those plans and articulate the answers derived. (Literature Review; Article Review)
2. Read and analyze literacy studies related to their research interest and write an intelligent and coherent literature review. (Literature review)
3. Write an opinion article advocating for an approach or issue based on their research interest in literacy. (OpEd)
4. Write a grant proposal to fund a project or materials to enhance her/his role as a literacy leader. (Grant Proposal)
5. Make a formal presentation to their peers on a research plan and preliminary findings. (Presentation)

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS (International Reading Association):
 IRA STANDARDS (2010 Standards for Reading Professionals): 1.1, 1.2,1.3, 2.1, 6.2, 6.4

1.1 Understand major theories and empirical research that describe the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and sociocultural foundations of reading and writing development, processes, and components, including word recognition, language comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading-writing connections.

1.2 Interpret and summarize historically shared knowledge (e.g., instructional strategies and theories) that addresses the needs of all readers.
 Inform educators and others about the historically shared knowledge base in reading and writing and its role in reading education.

1.3 Model fair-mindedness, empathy, and ethical behavior when teaching students and working with other professionals.

2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum and instruction for all pre-K–12 students.

6.2 Display positive dispositions related to their own reading and writing and the teaching of reading and writing, and pursue the development of individual professional knowledge and behaviors.

6.4 Demonstrate an understanding of local, state, and national policies that affect reading and writing instruction.

Virginia State Standards addressed in this course.
6i.Demonstrate effective communication skills in working with a variety of groups, including parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, etc.
6j. Demonstrate knowledge of current research and exemplary practices in English/reading.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

APA Manual, 6th edition

Zinsser, W. (2006). *On writing well, 30th anniversary edition: The classic guide to writing nonfiction.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Various articles listed on syllabus or choice that can be accessed from the library.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:

1. Assignment Descriptions:

A. Class Participation: (10%) Class attendance is expected. Class participation is a required component of your grade. It is expected that you fully participate in both online and face-to-face settings. Participation involves several aspects: being fully prepared for class, completing work in a timely manner, offering critical insights to discussions, asking in-depth, thoughtful questions, and providing thoughtful, responsive feedback to your peers. *It is <u>critical</u> to keep up with the readings*. It is your responsibility to come to class with insights, questions, comments, and concerns from the readings. In general, we will engage in three types of activities:

1. Mini-lectures, activities, and discussions related to literacy leadership activities
2. Discussion of the week's readings via discussion boards and small groups.
3. Pair and small group meetings in which you will provide feedback and support for each others' literacy leadership activities
4. Presentations and leadership of article discussions.

The following rubric will be used for assessment:

	Exemplary (3) (10 points)	Proficient (2) (8 points)	Developing (1) (6 points)	Not met (0) (0 points)
Attendance	The candidate attended all classes and was always on time for class.	The candidate missed class more than once and the procedures outlined in the syllabus were followed. The candidate was occasionally late for class/left early (2-3 times)	The candidate missed three or more classes and the procedures outlined in the syllabus were NOT followed. The candidate was often late to class/left early. (4-5 times)	The candidate missed four or more classes and the procedures outlined in the syllabus were NOT followed. The candidate was often late to class./left early (more than 5 times)
Participation	1. The candidate actively participates in small and/or whole group class meetings by meaningfully contributing to each class session. The candidate critically considers class content and poses questions to push their thinking and address misunderstandings. 2. The candidate always demonstrates professionalism in all communications with professor and peers.	1. The candidate makes active contributions to the learning group and class. The candidate may usually, but not always, critically consider content and/or pose questions. 2. The candidate demonstrates professionalism in all communications with professor and peers.	1. The candidate participates at least peripherally in group and class discussions. The candidate is somewhat engaged in all classes and sometimes or rarely pushes their own and their peers' thinking. 2. The candidate may occasionally demonstrate unprofessionalism in communications with professor and peers.	1. Candidate does not actively participate in discussions. 2. The candidate's communication with professor and peers is usually unprofessional.

2. Assignment and examination weighting

Assignment	Points/Value	Due Dates
Class Attendance & Participation	**TBA/10%**	ongoing
Discussion Boards		
Critical Friends Meetings		
Online Collaborations (i.e. Wikis, Blogs, etc.)		
Literature Review	**40 points/ 40%**	**June 2**
paper	30 points	
presentation	10 points	
Op Ed	**42 points/ 20%**	**June 10**

Grant Proposal	40 points/30%	June 19

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3. Grading Policies

Please note that Literacy students must re-take any course in which they receive a grade of C or lower, in order to be eligible for licensure (Please note that the grade of B- is not given). **Incompletes must be cleared before moving to any course for which the course is a prerequisite.**

Grading Scale
A=   94%-100%
A- = 90%-93%
B+= 87%-89%
B=   80%-86%
C=   75%-79%

4. Other expectations/information:

Class attendance
Class attendance is both important and required. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, **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. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions despite attendance. Attendance will influence your grade.

Assignments
All assignments should be turned in on the due date in the schedule below via paper copy OR email attachment (by 4:30pm, whether or not you are in class that evening). Save all electronic files with your last name and assignment titles (ex: **SMITH_ProfDevProposal.docx**). All assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, and double-spaced with one—inch margins. **Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment**, so please proofread carefully. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances.

General

Email response:

I will respond to all emails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on weekends/holidays. If you do not get a reply within 24/48 hours PLEASE resend email.

Students are expected to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week.

Please **consult the syllabus FIRST** for all questions.

Please see me with questions and concerns about assignments, expectations, or class activities. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please come to me within a reasonable time frame. I will be available for the 15 minutes before class, by appointment, and by-email. I look forward to collaborating with each of you as you work towards your goals.

Our course website (mymasonportal.gmu.edu) will include information and resources important to your successful completion of the course. These will include the course syllabus, an announcement page, notes and class

presentations, assignment descriptions and rubrics, and a bibliography of course readings and web resources. We will also hold discussions via Blackboard.

Electronic Requirements

Students **must have access to email** and the Internet, either at home, work or 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 mail.

After introductory training, students will also be expected to access Blackboard prior to every class session to download agendas and other pertinent course documents. **Blackboard can be accessed by going to** http://mymasonportal.gmu.**edu**

Due to the Hybrid nature of this course**, it is imperative that you maintain downloads and java updates.** Please contact Blackboard support services for technology assistance.

TASKSTREAM REQUIREMENTS

Every student registered for any Literacy course <u>with a required performance-based assessment</u> is required to submit this assessment, Adolescent Literacy Term Project to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See **http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/**).

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See **http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/**).

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 http://gse.gmu.edu/.

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE:

Instructor may adjust as necessary

Class /Date	Class Format	Topics	Assignments DUE	Readings
#1 May 18	F2F	Literacy Leaders: roles in policy and advocacy: Course Overview Lit Review Analysis		Flanigan 2007
#2 May 20	F2F	Literature Review Process	Identify a topic for research Complete Orientation Quiz	Hall 2005
#3 May 22	Asynchronous	Literature Review: finding and evaluating research.	Read and analyze at least 3 peer reviewed research articles that support your topic and share with your critical friend.	
May 25	NO CLASS	Evaluating Literature for relevance and validity/reliability.	Compete reading and annotation of AT LEAST 10 articles & begin to construct logic chain/outline. R/V checklist or flowchart with 1 paragraph summary for each of the 5 articles. Paragraph "BIG PICTURE" synthesis of 5 summarized articles. What does the research say about your topic?	
#4 May 27	F2F	Literature Review: Drafting and Writing Literature reviews	Outline of literature review Bring all articles to class (elec. or hard copies)	TBA
#5	Asynchronous	Critical Friend Feedback:	Lit Review Draft	

May 29		Streamlining, revising, editing		
#6 June 1	F2F	Op Ed: Craft Writing Choosing an outlet Choosing a position	Share at least 2 op-eds & brief reactions via Twitter hashtag: #EDRD635 **Literature Review due by noon on Tuesday June 2nd.**	Pence, 2000 Read 6-8 editorials and op-ed pieces in newspapers and magazines; analyze the craft
#7 June 3	Synchronous	Op Ed:	Share at least 2 op-eds & brief reactions via Twitter hashtag: #EDRD635 Op-Ed outline/draft due for critical friends	
#8 June 5	Asynchronous	Grant Writing: Craft Analysis	Grant craft wiki week 1 (whole group)	
#9 June 8	F2F	Grant Writing: Researching and analyzing grant announcements	Presentations of Lit Reviews Grant craft wiki week 2 (small group, needs assessment)	Maxwell, 2005 Bring 2-3 grant announcements to class for discussion/possible use
#10 June 10	Synchronous	Matching school needs Grant writing: Needs assessment	Grant craft wiki week 3 **Op-Ed paper due by noon.**	
#11 June 12	Asynchronous	Grant writing: Project narrative & and budget		Nutt. 2003 Stinson, 2007
#12 June 15	F2F	Grant writing: Streamlining the logic chain & revising for clarity	Proposal draft due to critical friends	
#13 June 17	F2F	Course Evaluations Project Debriefs	Final Peer Review/Feedback	
#14 June 19	Asynchronous		**Final grant proposal due** All PBA assignments must be posted to Taskstream by midnight	

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC(S) for PBA's:

This Performance Based Assessment (PBA) is intended to instill a culture of outreach in coaching to support teachers in schools. Competent and effective reading specialists and literacy coaches should be prepared to investigate and understand the needs of the teachers they serve, as well

as to advocate and secure resources and services for teachers and students in their schools. Therefore, the PBA for this course is comprised of three integrated parts:

   (1) Literature review
   (2) Op-ed piece, and
   (3) Grant proposal.

 A detailed description of each of these three assignments is provided below with a rubric for evaluating each part. **Please follow all APA guidelines to complete this assignment**. The PBA is not considered to be complete unless all three parts are submitted.

Part I: *Literature Review*

Literacy specialists need to be knowledgeable of the current research in literacy. Choose a topic in the field of literacy that you think that needs to be developed in your school. Review the current (past 10 – 15 years), relevant (focused on your topic), peer-reviewed research on the topic. Also, review any seminal work and theoretical bases that would ground your topic in the research literature. Write a well-organized synthesis and critique of the research on the topic that captures what has been done and what needs to be done. Your review should conclude with a clear and insightful analysis of how your topic contributes to literacy success as well as how this knowledge can be used to address the needs of all learners.

Literature Review Rubric

IRA Standards/ Elements	Exemplary (3)	Proficient (2)	Developing (1)	Not Met (0)
1.1c Critical stance toward the scholarship of the profession	The review offers an effective synthesis and critique of the body of	The review provides only a synthesis of research on the topic.	The review provides a summary of the research on the topic.	The review is not well organized; research is not clearly summarized.
1.1d Read and understand the literature and research about factors that contribute to literacy success	The review draws original and insightful conclusions about the factors that contribute to literacy success.	The review concludes with a synthesis of factors that contribute to literacy success.	The review includes a summary of factors that contribute to literacy success.	The review does not address how factors contribute to literacy success.
1.2a Interpret and summarize historically shared knowledge that addresses the needs of all learners	The review draws original and insightful conclusions about knowledge from the field that can be used to address the needs of all learners.	The review provides a synthesis of knowledge from the field that can be used to address the needs of all learners.	The review provides a summary of knowledge from the field that can be used to address the needs of all learners.	The review does not provide a view that addresses the needs of all learners.

Part II: *Op-Ed Piece*

Literacy specialists are well-educated professionals. Accordingly, they are in a position to advocate for the education profession. For this assignment, you are to write an opinion piece or a letter to policy makers based on the information that was developed in the literature review (Part I). The piece should include ideas for organizational change, professional development, or other recommendations to those who are in a position to effect change.

The opinion piece should be about 500 – 750 words and should include the following characteristics: (a) is tightly focused on one issue; (b) the topic is presented clearly in the first paragraph; (c) the information is credible and well researched – based on the literature reviewed; (d) the issue is timely, can be controversial, but is not offensive; (e) the piece has a clear point of view; (f) the piece makes reference to other points of view, where applicable; (g) the piece concludes with a 'next steps' or a 'call to action' that suggest what can be done.

The letter should be sent to the District Office, the School Board, or a local newspaper or journal. Evidence that the piece has been submitted is required for successful completion of Part II.

Op-Ed Rubric

IRA Standards/ Elements	Exemplary (3)	Proficient (2)	Developing (1)	Not Met (0)
1.2b Inform educators and others about the historically shared knowledge base in literacy and its role in literacy education	Provides accurate and credible (indicates source of facts) information based on research and professional knowledge	Provides accurate information on the topic based on research and professional knowledge but does not indicate source of facts	Provides information on the topic based on professional knowledge and opinion	Does not provide information on the topic or bases information on opinion only
1.3 b Communicates the importance of fair-mindedness, empathy, and ethical behavior in literacy instruction and professional behavior	The piece provides a strong yet positive message and very strongly models fair mindedness and ethical principles	The piece provides a strong yet positive message and strongly models fair mindedness and ethical principles	The piece provides a generally positive message but does not model fair mindedness and ethical principles	The piece does not provide a positive message nor does it model ethical principles
6.4a Demonstrate an understanding of local, state, and national policies that affect literacy instruction	Provides an accurate and well-connected tie between the topic relevant policies that affect literacy instruction	Provides accurate information about relevant policies that affect literacy instruction	Provides information about relevant policies, but the information is not completely accurate	Does not address policy issues
6.4c Promote effective communication and	The piece provides a well-reasoned next	The piece provides a next steps or call	The piece provides a next	The piece does not provide a

collaboration among stakeholders	steps or call to action that is within the purview of readers to do	to action that is well-reasoned but not within the purview of most readers	steps or call to action that is not well reasoned	next steps or call to action
6.4d Advocate with various groups for needed organizational and instructional changes to promote effective literacy instruction	The piece provides clear and purposeful direction for members of various groups regarding changes that would promote effective literacy instruction	The piece provides clear direction for members of various groups regarding changes that would promote	The piece indicates that various groups should promote effective literacy instruction but does not provide direction	The piece does not address changes that could be implemented by various groups to promote effective literacy instruction

Evidence that letter was submitted? Yes/No

Part III. *Grant Proposal*

Literacy specialists are in a position to procure funding to create, support, or develop literacy programs or instruction within the school. Based on the topic of the literature review conducted in Part I and the opinion piece in Part II, locate a small grant opportunity that addresses your school's needs and interests. You will write the proposal based upon the instructions for that particular grant and submit the grant within the grantor's deadline for submission. Your proposal should follow all of the guidelines suggested by the funding agency and include all of the necessary permissions and attachments required to submit the grant application. Therefore, you must submit the grant proposal guidelines with your proposal. Evidence that the piece has been submitted is required for successful completion of Part III.

Grant Proposal Rubric

IRA Standards/ Elements	Exemplary (3)	Proficient (2)	Developing (1)	Not Met (0)
1.1a Interpret major theories of reading and writing processes and development to understand the needs of all readers in	The proposal presents a well-researched and well-defined and well-connected theoretical base	The proposal presents a well-defined theoretical base but it is not well connected to the work to be funded	The proposal presents a theoretical base, but it is not well defined	The proposal does not present a theoretical base for the work to be funded
1.1d Read and understand the literature and research about factors that contribute to	The proposal presents a concise and well- researched treatment of the current and	The proposal presents current and relevant knowledge of the topic for the work to be funded	The proposal includes a review of research that is relevant to the work to be funded	The proposal does not include a review of research on the topic

reading success	relevant knowledge of topic for the work to be funded			
2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum for all students	The proposal demonstrates a very strong understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum for all students	The proposal demonstrates a strong understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum for all students	The proposal demonstrates a moderate understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum for all students	The proposal demonstrates a limited understanding of the research and literature that undergirds the reading and writing curriculum for all students
6.2d Demonstrate effective interpersonal, communication, and leadership skills	The proposal demonstrates a very strong understanding of audience and professionalism in communication	The proposal demonstrates a strong understanding of audience and professionalism in communication	The proposal demonstrates a moderately strong understanding of audience and professionalism in communication	The proposal demonstrates a weak understanding of audience and professionalism in communication
6.4b Write proposals that enable schools to obtain additional funding to support literacy efforts	The plan for using the funds is well organized and presents a clear picture of how the funds will support literacy efforts in the school as well as who will be involved in executing the plan and how the plan will be evaluated	The plan for using the funds is well organized and presents a clear picture of how the funds will support literacy efforts in the school. EITHER involved personnel OR evaluation of the plan are discussed, but not both	The plan for using the funds is well organized and presents a clear picture of how the funds will support literacy efforts in the school. NEITHER involved personnel NOR evaluation of the plan are discussed	The plan for using the funds is not clearly organized

Writing Rubric:[across all papers]

	Exemplary (3)	Proficient (2)	Developing (1)	Not met (0)
Writer uses a variety of resources to support ideas.	Writer uses multiple, relevant resources that very strongly support ideas and insights; inclusion of references evenly blends into writing.	Writer uses many resources, mostly relevant; supports ideas and insights; inclusion of references blends into writing.	Writer uses some resources; somewhat relevant; loosely supports ideas and insights may be choppy	Writer uses few resources, may not be relevant; weakly supports ideas and insights; may be disjointed from text
Readability	Error free: accurate spelling, grammar, language usage; variety of sentence structures; broad, rich vocabulary. APA consistently followed	Minor errors (1-3) in spelling, grammar, language usage; some variety of sentence structures; appropriate vocabulary. APA mostly followed, may have minor errors.	Several errors in spelling, grammar, language usage; minimal variety of sentence structures; limited vocabulary. APA contains several errors.	Contains numerous errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or sentence structure. APA not followed.