

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Literacy Program**

EDRD 642.DL1 – Foundations of Literacy Instruction: Code-Based Skills  
3 credits, Fall 2023  
Asynchronous, Online

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Explores the relationships between speech and print, including how spelling represents sounds, syllables, and meaningful parts of words. Examines research-based instruction and assessment practices to support students' ability to decode and encode words.

**Course Overview**

Not Applicable.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before [@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:@masonlive.gmu.edu)) and email password. The course site will be available on August 21.

At Mason, one credit hour represents one hour in the classroom and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class work per week throughout a 15-week semester (see Academic Policy 2.3 in the University Catalog). Thus, this 3-credit course requires a minimum of 3 hours of classroom instruction (or the equivalent work for asynchronous learning activities) and 6 hours of out-of-class work each week. Please schedule your time accordingly.

**Under no circumstances may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

*Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.

- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

- Course Week:  
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Thursday, and finish on Wednesday.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so that others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Explain code-based components of reading and writing (e.g., phonological awareness, alphabets, phonics, word recognition, fluency).
2. Describe explicit and systematic spelling instruction, including awareness of the purpose and limitations of "invented spelling," orthographic patterns, and strategies for promoting generalization of spelling study to writing.
3. Identify research-based instructional and assessment practices in literacy to meet the needs of all students.

## Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will have addressed the following Standards for Reading/Literacy Specialist Candidates from the International Literacy Association's 2017 *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals*:

- 1.1 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of reading (e.g., concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) development throughout the grades and its relationship with other aspects of literacy.
- 1.2 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based aspects of writing development, writing processes (e.g., revising, audience), and foundational skills (e.g., spelling, sentence construction, word processing) and their relationships with other aspects of literacy.
- 1.3 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of language (e.g., language acquisition, structure of language, conventions of standard English, vocabulary acquisition and use, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing) and its relationships with other aspects of literacy.
- 5.3 Candidates develop, lead the implementation of, and evaluate policy for the integration of digital technologies in appropriate, safe, and effective ways, and assist teachers in these efforts.

Virginia Standards for Reading Specialist Programs addressed in this course:

- 2b. Demonstrate expertise in developing students' phonological awareness skills.
- 2c. Demonstrate effective strategies for facilitating the learning of standard English by speakers of other languages and dialects.
- 3a. Demonstrate expertise in explicit and systematic phonics instruction, including an understanding of sound and symbol relationships, syllables, phonemes, morphemes, decoding skills, word analysis, and word attack skills.
- 4b. Demonstrate expertise in systematic spelling instruction, including awareness of the purpose and limitations of "invented spelling," orthographic patterns, and strategies for promoting generalization of spelling study to writing.
- 6k. Demonstrate knowledge of current research and exemplary practices in English and reading.

## Required Texts

Gelzheiser, L. M., Scanlon, D. M., Hallgren-Flynn, L., & Connors, P. (2019). *Comprehensive reading intervention in grades 3-8: Fostering word learning comprehension and motivation*. The Guilford Press.

Moats, L. C. (2020). *Speech to print: Language essentials for teachers* (3rd ed.). Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Scanlon, D. M., Anderson, K. L., & Sweeney, J. M. (2017). *Early intervention for reading difficulties: The interactive strategies approach* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard and through GMU Library databases.

## Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

**Assignments and/or Examinations**(See Blackboard for guidelines and rubrics for all assignments.)

### 1. Online Modules (20%)

Throughout the semester you will complete asynchronous online modules that involve an array of activities designed to encourage you to think deeply about the materials you read/view as you critically analyze, synthesize, and reflect on the course content while applying your new understanding. Each weekly module will open on Thursday. All activities and assignments due within that module must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the following Wednesday (see the class schedule for specific dates). Late work within modules will not be accepted without prior approval. Once each module is opened, it will remain open so that you may review content as needed.

In this course, modules will follow an Absorb-Do-Connect (Horton, 2012) instructional design framework to encourage active learning. As you complete your assigned readings and view the provided resources, you will *absorb* key knowledge. Then, you will have opportunities to practice, explore, and discover as you *do* something with what you are learning. Finally, you will be asked to *connect* what you are learning to your prior learning and current work.

For each online module, you should thoughtfully and thoroughly complete all activities. Your discussions and other work should reflect learning from readings, videos, and any other online content within the module. While your current knowledge as an educator is important to your understandings, demonstrating the way that deep engagement with the course content expands your knowledge and skills as a reflective practitioner is expected and necessary for earning full credit for each online module.

In each module, Do and Connect activities will be scored using the rubrics below.

Criteria for Evaluation (DO)	Meets Expectations	Approaches Expectations	Below Expectations
<b>Completion</b>	<i>All activities</i> are complete. (2 points)	<i>Some activities</i> are complete. (1.6 points)	<i>No activities</i> are complete. (0 points)

Criteria for Evaluation (CONNECT)	Meets Expectations	Approaches Expectations	Below Expectations
<b>Completion</b>	<i>All activities</i> are complete. (1 point)	<i>Some activities</i> are complete. (0.8 points)	<i>No activities</i> are complete. (0 points)
<b>Understanding of Course Content</b>	Demonstrates <i>clear understanding</i> of the module content. Responses are <i>accurate</i> and include <i>correct terminology</i> . (1 point)	Demonstrates <i>emerging understanding</i> of the module content. Responses are <i>mostly accurate</i> but may lack sophistication or use <i>incorrect terminology</i> . (0.8 points)	Demonstrates <i>little to no understanding</i> of the module content. Responses are <i>highly inaccurate</i> . (0 points)
<b>Quality of Connections</b>	Includes <i>explicit connections</i> to content from the course <i>AND</i> personal professional practice. (1 point)	Includes <i>vague connections</i> to content from the course <i>OR</i> personal professional practice. (0.8 points)	Include <i>no connections</i> to content from the course or personal professional practice. (0 points)

### 2. Lesson Plans (20% each, 40% total)

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to design a lesson that targets instruction for learners with diverse learning needs. You will develop two detailed, scripted lesson plans that

include formative assessments, explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent practice. One plan will focus on phonological awareness or alphabet knowledge while the other will address more advanced phonics elements or word recognition skills.

### **3. Mid-Term Exam (20%)**

There will be a midterm exam. Material will come from assigned readings and class notes. The exam may include multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. The purpose of this assignment is to help prepare you for the licensure exam you must complete at the end of your program in order to be licensed as a reading specialist.

### **4. Final Exam (20%)**

There will be a final exam. Material will come from assigned readings and class notes. The exam may include multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. The purpose of this assignment is to help prepare you for the licensure exam you must complete at the end of your program in order to be licensed as a reading specialist. The final exam is NOT comprehensive.

- **Other Requirements**

#### **Assignment Guidelines**

All assignments should be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the date noted in the class schedule. Unless arrangements have been made beforehand with your instructor, 5% of the total points will be deducted from graded assignments for *each* day they are submitted late.

Assignments should follow APA (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) formatting (including 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with one-inch margins). Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall score for each assignment, so proofread carefully and use formal, academic writing. Be sure to use APA format (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) when providing citations for relevant research. (See Blackboard for resources.) When submitting electronic files, please include your name as part of the file name (ex: JANEDOELessonPlan1.docx).

Graduate level writing is expected for all assignments in this course. If you find that you need support, the University Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>) is available to you. They offer one-to-one consultations at any stage of the writing process. You can schedule in-person or video appointments with writing tutors or receive written feedback on drafts of your writing if you aren't able to meet during the Center's hours of operation.

#### **Communication**

Email is my preferred form of communication, so please check your GMU email account daily, as that will be the account I use to contact you. I am always available via email, but please allow a 48-hour response time for replies. If you have not heard from me within 48 hours, please email me again. I will also host regular online office hours throughout the semester or will meet with you by phone or online at other times by appointment.

#### **Advising**

Advising information is located on Blackboard, including timeline, program of study tracking, course sequencing, licensure exam registration information, graduation information, and program updates. To access, (a) login to Blackboard, (b) click the Organizations option in the main menu, and (c) go to the Literacy Program Advising Organization to find all documents. You are responsible for regularly checking the advising organization to maintain your program of study and desired program completion timeline.

- **Grading**

<i>Grading Scale</i>	
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	= 94 – 100
A-	= 90 – 93
B+	= 85 – 89
B	= 80 – 84
C	= 75 – 79
F	= below 75

Literacy students must re-take any licensure course in which they receive a grade of C or lower (note that the grade of B- is not given). Incompletes in licensure courses must be cleared before moving to the next course in the instructional sequence.

### **Professional Dispositions**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and 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/>.

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

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

### **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling](#)

[and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.**

**Class Schedule**

*Moats = Speech to Print*

Scanlon et al. = *Early Intervention for Reading Difficulties*

Gelzheiser et al. = *Comprehensive Reading Intervention in Grades 3-8*

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments
<b>Welcome Module</b> August 21-23	Course Overview	– course syllabus	Video Introductions
<b>Module 1</b> August 24-30	Comprehensive Literacy Instruction  Introduction to Code-Based Skills	Scanlon et al., Part I Intro, Ch. 1, 2, & 3  Moats, Ch. 1	Module 1 activities
<b>August 28 Last Day to Add Classes</b>			
<b>Module 2</b> August 31- September 6	Explicit Literacy Instruction	Robertson, D. A. (2021). Explicit instruction. In S. A. Parsons, & M. Vaughn (Eds.), <i>Principles of effective literacy instruction, grades K-5</i> (pp. 136-149). The Guilford Press.  Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2020). Direct instruction in early literacy. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 78(3), 76-77.  Odegard, T. N. (2020). Structured Literacy is exemplified by an explicit approach to teaching. <i>Perspectives on Language and Literacy</i> , 46(1), 21-23  Webb, S., Massey, D., Goggans, M., & Flajole, K. (2019). Thirty-five years of the gradual release of responsibility: Scaffolding toward complex and responsive teaching. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 73(1), 75-83. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1799">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1799</a>  Schutz, K. M., & Rainey, E. C. (2020). Making sense of modeling in elementary literacy instruction. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 73(4), 443-451. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002.trtr.1863">https://doi.org/10.1002.trtr.1863</a>	Module 2 activities

<b>September 5</b>	<b>Last Day to Drop Classes with 100% Tuition Refund</b>		
<b>Module 3</b> September 7-13	Print Awareness  Concept of Word	Scanlon et al., Part II Intro & Ch. 4	Module 3 activities
<b>September 12</b>	<b>Last Day to Drop Classes with 50% Tuition Refund</b>		
<b>Module 4</b> September 14-20	Phonetics	Moats, Ch. 2	Module 4 activities
<b>Module 5</b> September 21-27	Phonology	Moats, Ch. 3	Module 5 activities
<b>September 26</b>	<b>Last Day to Withdraw from Classes (No Tuition Refund)</b>		
<b>Module 6</b> September 28- October 4	Phonological Awareness	Scanlon et al., Ch. 5  Piasta, S. B., & Hudson, A. K. (2022). Key knowledge to support phonological awareness and phonics instruction. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 76, 201– 210. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2093">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2093</a>	Module 6 activities
<b>Module 7</b> October 5-11	Alphabet Knowledge	Scanlon et al., Ch. 6 & 7  Gehsmann, K. M., & Mesmer, H. A. (2023). The alphabetic principle and concept of word in text: Two priorities for learners in the emergent stage of literacy development. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> . Advance online publication. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2225">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2225</a>	Module 7 activities
October 12-18	Midterm Exam (The exam will open on October 12. It must be completed by 11:59 p.m. on October 18.)		
<b>Module 8</b> October 19-25	Orthography  Phonics	Moats, Ch. 4  Flanigan, K., Solic, K., & Gordon, L. (2022). The “P” word revisited: 8 principles for tackling today’s questions and misconceptions about phonics instruction. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 76(1), 73-83. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2101">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2101</a>  Mesmer, H. A., & Kambach, A. (2022). Beyond labels and agendas: Research teachers need to know about phonics and phonological awareness. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 76(1), 62-72. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2102">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2102</a>	Module 8 activities  Lesson Plan 1
<b>Module 9</b> October 26- November 1	Decoding	Scanlon et al., Ch. 8, 9, 10, 11  Gelzheiser et al., Ch. 8, 9	Module 9 activities



<p><b>Module 10</b> November 2-8</p>	<p>Spelling</p>	<p>Bear, D. R. (2019). Best practices for developmental word study in phonics, vocabulary, and spelling. In L. M. Morrow, &amp; L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), <i>Best practices in literacy instruction</i> (6th ed., pp. 175-198). The Guilford Press.</p> <p>Templeton, S. (2020). Stages, phases, repertoires, and waves: Learning to Spell and read words. <i>Reading Teacher</i>, 74(3), 315–323. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1951">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1951</a></p> <p>Vines, N., Jordan, J., &amp; Broemmel, A. D. (2020). Reenvisioning spelling instruction: Developmental word study nonnegotiables. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 73(6), 711–722. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1882">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1882</a></p>	<p>Module 10 activities</p>
<p><b>Module 11</b> November 9-15</p>	<p>Word Recognition Strategies</p>	<p>Scanlon et al., Part III Intro., Ch. 12</p> <p>Gelzheiser et al., Ch. 4, 5, 6</p> <p>Duke, N. (2020). When young readers get stuck. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 78(3), 26-33.</p>	<p>Module 11 activities</p>
<p><b>Module 12</b> November 16-29</p>	<p>Building Sight Vocabulary for Fluent Reading</p>	<p>Scanlon et al., Ch. 13</p> <p>Gelzheiser et al., Ch. 7</p> <p>Miles, K. P., Rubin, G. B., &amp; Gonzalez-Frey, S. (2017). Rethinking sight words. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 71(6), 715-726. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1658">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1658</a></p>	<p>Module 12 activities</p>
<p><b>November 22-26</b></p>	<p><b>Thanksgiving Recess</b></p>		
<p><b>Module 13</b> November 30- December 6</p>	<p>Supporting Students Experiencing Difficulties with Code-Based Skills</p>	<p>Scanlon et al., Part V Intro., Ch. 17, 18</p> <p>Moats, Ch. 8</p> <p>Griffith, R., &amp; Lacina, J. (2017). Teacher as decision maker: A framework to guide teaching decisions in reading. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 71(4), 501-507. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1662">https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1662</a></p>	<p>Module 13 activities</p> <p>Lesson Plan 2</p>
<p>December 7-13</p>	<p>Final Exam (The exam will open on December 7. It must be completed by 11:59 p.m. on December 13.)</p>		