COURSE DESCRIPTION

A. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master’s in New Professional Studies program; IETT 750 Language & Culture I

B. Catalog Description: Building on IETT 750, students investigate more closely academic discourses and ways they frame lived realities. Exploring theme of how language and culture shape and open interpretations of the world, students research language and culture in their practice.

Building on the work of Language and Culture I, this course explores relationships among languages, identities, cultures, and power structures, providing opportunities for teachers to consider how languages shape both human consciousness and social relationships. It investigates how structures of power are embedded in language use and how language can be used to perpetuate or resist the status quo. Moreover, the course considers how teachers’ use of language might become increasingly welcoming while providing access to learning for all students. Finally, the course guides teachers in exploring the development of “new literacies,” particularly those related to emerging technologies that students have already encountered or that they are likely to encounter in the future, so that they might reflect on ways to make curriculum increasingly engaging and relevant to students.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including teacher action research, interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the relationships among languages, identities, cultures, and power structures?
2. How can teachers create classrooms that are hospitable and respectful to all students’ 
languages of origin, including various dialects by native English speakers?
3. How can teachers create strategies so that students can learn by using their languages 
of origin, while also ensuring that students learn standard English?
4. What does the word literacy mean, and what are some new, emerging forms of 
literacy? What is the latter’s significance to teaching and learning?

COURSE OUTCOMES
1. Teachers will demonstrate an understanding of relationships among languages, 
   including:
   • Uses of language to “other,” exploit, oppress, and exclude.
   • Uses of language to affiliate, promote, empower, and include.
   • How language is used in their own schools and classrooms and the 
     potential/real impact on their students.
2. Teachers will make recommendations regarding the use of language in their 
   classrooms and schools.
3. Teachers will explore and grow in understanding about new forms of literacy, 
   including emerging digital forms, and design and present a lesson that captures 
   what they’ve learned and potential ways to translate that learning into practice.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Supplemental readings

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization
IET faculty have developed a set of assumptions about teaching and learning that are spelled out 
in our Beliefs and Principles in IET Practice document. One of the central assumptions relates to 
the importance of school-based inquiry. The Beliefs are states as follows:
• The needs of students and the potential and limits for school change become more visible 
  when teachers study education in the context in which they work.
• When school is a naturalistic base for teacher’s inquiry and research, problems in 
teaching or curriculum are not idealized, but grounded in the complexity and difficulty in 
which teachers find themselves in schools.
• Teachers appear more enterprising and autonomous in the conduct of school-based 
  inquiry, providing an opportunity for students to see teachers, and to see themselves, as 
people who construct knowledge and critique knowledge.
• When teachers’ inquiry and research projects are based in their own practices, they are 
  more likely to lead to action and meaningful change.

This course fits the mission of the Graduate School of Education, which is committed to:
• Developing reflective professionals who are leaders in research and practice,
• Expanding and refining the knowledge base for teaching and learning,
Transforming higher education, schools, and other organizations through applied research, teaching, and collaboration; and
Understanding and modeling democratic values and social justice.

By helping teachers to do research based in their own classrooms and schools, this course also supports the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards propositions 1, 4, and 5:

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning,
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; and
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

Course Requirements, Assignments, and Evaluation Criteria

Readings: We have carefully chosen readings to stimulate your thinking and promote dialogue about the essential questions of this course and the central mission of your work—student learning. You will read *New Literacies* and perhaps a few supplemental readings. These readings will not contain answers; rather they are designed to raise questions. Any “answers” we come to will arise out of our deliberations as we compare ideas in books with classroom experience and practical wisdom. Evidence of incorporation of critical interaction with readings into on-line discussions, team meetings, journals, and papers is the essential element of documenting that one has engaged with the readings.

Criteria for Grading:

1. Imagination and Creativity.
2. Multiple Perspectives.
3. Theorizing
4. Content Understanding
5. Multiple Perspectives
6. Collaboration
7. Writing, Presentation, Representation Skills.
8. Research and Praxis for Social Justice/Change

(Please see attached RUBRIC)

Attendance and Participation in Class Activities:
Your attendance and participation is essential. As you know, IET faculty have structured learning around cohorts and teams so that teachers can learn from each other and breakdown both the traditional isolation of teachers’ work lives and the privatization of teaching practice. Moreover, we take practitioner knowledge/wisdom very seriously and believe that your bringing that knowledge/wisdom to one another is a substantial part of your education toward your Masters. Each class day is equivalent to approximately three weeks of class in a traditional program. It is important be on time and be engaged. Coming late or leaving early undermines the possibility of learning from your peers and helping your peers learn. Research on learning suggests that students learn best when are actively engaged with the material to be learned, when they have opportunities to operate collectively and collaboratively, when they have sufficient interactions with their teachers, and when all can learn together how new learning can be applied to lived experiences and professional practices. We build a great deal of collaborative activity into our class days and the learning that happens in them often cannot be “made up.”
Because of the fullness of every class day, anyone who misses more than two days of class—regardless of the reason—will be asked to consider dropping his/her enrollment in the program. To ignore absences, or to assume they won’t make a difference, is insulting and unfair to those who put aside other activities to attend and participate. Absences can also cause problems for other members of your team.

Of course, absences due to emergency situations or serious illness are unavoidable. When such a situation arises, you should call or email us before class. When you must miss all or a portion of a class day, you must take the responsibility to obtain the class agenda, confer with your team about the missed activities, email your advisor with a plan to make up the work, and follow through by submitting the makeup work to your advisor within two weeks of the missed class. Failing to take this personal initiative and responsibility will result in unsatisfactory completion of the participation requirements for this course.

**Class Day Reflective Feedback**
At the end of each class day, you will be asked to provide feedback on how you experienced the learning opportunities/environment. Faculty members consider this feedback valuable and use it to inform their teaching.

**Teaming**
Your team provides the context for your primary learning community, a site for ongoing critical reflection, dialogue and inquiry, as well as support and motivation. Meeting weekly as a team is necessary for achieving the aims of the program and is, therefore, a requirement. Within the team, you have the opportunity to explore your own thinking, to probe the thinking of others, and to construct positions on crucial aspects of teaching and learning. Team meetings should be used to discuss all aspects of the research process and progress, as well as the content of your courses.

**Reading Blogs**
You are asked to post reading blogs at the end of each reading assignment (see Second Year Overview and Second Year Assignments for details).

**ASSIGNMENTS:** The following are your assignments for this course:

**Language, Culture, and Power Project:**
As we have been discussing, language, culture, and power are closely interrelated. They build on one another, affect one another, constitute one another. As a result, language, culture, and power affect human relationships both systemically and interpersonally. They can seal, sustain, perpetuate, and destroy them. Language, culture, and power can work for new possibilities (good or evil) or for the status quo. It is crucial for teachers to remember that language, a major medium for learning, is a means of self expression and self definition and a means for shaping consciousness, opinion, and critique. It is, on the one hand, a means for building kinship and community, and also a vehicle for control, abuse, and domination. To disrespect one’s language is to disrespect one’s identity, family, and culture. It is important for educators to recognize all of this because power relations permeate school and classroom walls, affecting which students have access to meaningful learning and which students do not have that
access. Remember Alt Ed and Sidewalk as you work on this. There are 3 phases to this assignment:

Phase 1: Individual reflection on Language and Culture and the Holocaust. You took a field trip to visit the Holocaust Museum. During that field trip, you were asked to think about the use of language to “other,” oppress, and dehumanize. Write as individuals a paper that does three things:

1. Discuss your experience and three to five significant ways you noticed language being used to make the Holocaust possible or the ways language was used to resist it;
2. Explore how you might see language and propaganda being used in our society today to continue to oppress, dehumanize and negate individuals and groups;
3. And reflect on the use of new literacies, technologies and communication methods that might increase or decrease the ways we can “other” people?

This paper should be between 3-5 pages long.

Phase 2: Individual reflection on Language, Identity, and Autobiography. Write a three page reflection on the joys and struggles of language in your own life. Possibilities you might think about are:

- times when you felt your use of language was inadequate or inferior to others or vice versa
- characteristic ways you speak and write that make you feel particularly comfortable or uncomfortable
- the use of profanity
- song lyrics
- the use of language in media
- the use of language in academic settings
- experiences working with others who use language far differently than you
- experiences being in a group speaking another language

End with a reflection on the importance of language in shaping your worldview.

Phase 3: During the first month of school, stay especially aware of how language is used in your classrooms and schools. What do teachers say about and to kids? What's the language like in class rules/school rules/student handbooks? What kind of language is used over the intercom? How is the language on written assignments? How do you yourselves use language in talking to kids? What are kids saying in the hallways, cafeterias, playgrounds, etc.? What are kids struggling with in language? In what ways are they using language creatively? How is language being used to control? to resist? to liberate? In a late September meeting, share your individual reflections and write, as a group, a three-page paper in which you discuss your significant insights into how language is being used in your schools--positively and negatively. Don’t forget to include the use of language in new technologies and forms of literacy. Include recommendations for the future. And then: Hand in to your advisor a packet with individual and group papers.
LESSON USING NEW LITERACIES
Our students are sometimes more proficient or “differently proficient” in technology than we are. Every good teacher understands that good teaching requires that we “meet students where they are” and “communicate in a language they understand.” Think about your own students, about “new literacies” and about educators’ responsibilities regarding both.

Then work in your school team to design a 20-minute “lesson” on any topic in which you incorporate some of what you have learned about “new literacies.” This “lesson” can be for either students or other educators (your colleagues). If you are really struggling with “new literacies,” as either individuals or as a team, you can be honest about that, name what you want to learn, and suggest ways that you need to be supported in order to learn. You will be presenting this lesson in small groups on December 12. Be as creative as you want to be, but try to really engage your colleagues in new learning.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING
See attached rubric.

SUMMARY OF GRADES
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Blogs</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Language, Culture, and Power Project</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<td>Lesson Using New Literacies</td>
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Grade Distribution

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS: All students must abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12 for the full honor code.

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.
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see your adviser and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.
## Guidelines for Continuous Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imagination and Creativity</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Accomplished</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
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<td>Recognizes problems/issues and takes some risks beyond what is familiar while generating solutions</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Generates multiple possibilities before attempting to solve problems creatively; takes risks toward innovative solutions</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages. Creatively approaches problem-solving while generating multiple possibilities, entertaining multiple perspectives, employing divergent and convergent thinking, and demonstrating tenacity</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning,” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages. Demonstrates a capacity for critical self-reflection/metacognition in creative problem solving, while entertaining multiple perspectives and possibilities. Demonstrates flexible cognition by using both divergent and convergent thinking and persevering in the face of obstacles. Sees and acts beyond socio-cultural, economic, and institutional constraints toward new possibilities.</td>
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| Multiple Perspectives | Demonstrates an emerging understanding of how own perspective affects teaching and relationships with children, families, pedagogy, and colleagues | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage; recognizes other perspectives exist and have validity. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages. Recognizes and respects differing perspectives and avoids employment of deficit models or “othering” attitudes and beliefs. Recognizes, names, and assesses assumptions. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning,” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages. Develops capacity for thoroughgoing critique of own perspectives and their cultural and autobiographical origins; develops critical metacognition in assessing opinions, attitudes, and beliefs; employs empathic reasoning to encounter diverse perspectives; questions assumptions. Actively seeks understanding of others’ cultural knowledge/perspectives. Creates inclusive conditions for learning. |

<p>| Theorizing | Begins to question own thinking about pedagogy or practice; begins to entertain others’ theoretical perspectives in critical reading and dialogue. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Questions own thinking about pedagogy and practice. | Demonstrates skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages (see columns to left). Actively seeks perspectives of students and families, research texts and studies; reassesses and revises own theories; experiments with theories of others; connects new theoretical approaches to practices through application. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning,” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” Synthesizes own and others’ theories, hypotheses, and research; constantly revises practices in light of expanded theoretical perspective; understands and uses theories of, in, and for teaching practices (Cochran Smith and Lytle); uses theory to constantly improve practice and uses practice to test theory. |</p>
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<th><strong>Content Understanding</strong></th>
<th><strong>Beginning</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Exemplary</strong></th>
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<td>Completes readings and assignments; makes some references to readings in assignments; incorporates ideas generated during class days in assignments; responds to and completes all parts of assignments.</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Demonstrates understanding of ideas/theories presented in assigned readings and class days and makes references to them in assignments. Completes all parts of assignments and makes explicit connections between theories and teaching practices.</td>
<td>Demonstrates all of the skills in the “Beginning” and “Developing” stages (see columns to the left) and also critically questions ideas/theories encountered in courses; translates relevant ideas/theories into practice. Reports these efforts during class days and in course assignments.</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves all of the skills in the “Beginning,” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages and develops capacity to critically assess translation of newly-learned theories and ideas into practice; synthesizes new learning and incorporates them coherently into teaching stance and practices. Uses course knowledge to improve learning for students. Reports these efforts during class days and in course assignments.</td>
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<p>| <strong>Critical Consciousness</strong> | <strong>Emergent understanding of personal and/or social power in own experience</strong> | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Emergent understanding of personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts | Demonstrates skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages. Demonstrates consistent understanding of personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts and how power connects to perspectives, marginalization, cultural capital, social justice, and achievement. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages. Analyzes personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts, including institutional and societal contexts, and how power and privilege connects to worldview, marginalization, cultural capital, social justice, and achievement. Uses critical consciousness as framework in formulation of theory and practice in teaching and learning. |</p>
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<th>Collaboration</th>
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<td>Listens to others and contributes ideas. Expresses relevant ideas and opinions clearly and civilly in class and meetings. Reads assignments in preparation for team meetings and class days.</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Ensures contributions are relevant and respectful. Demonstrates regular involvement in planning and implementation of group activities. Incorporates ideas from assigned readings during team meetings and class days.</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages. Considers multiple viewpoints and contributes constructive ideas/theories. Proactively contributes to team research, planning, creative problem-solving, and implementation of group activities. Attends to quality of collegial relationships and maintains respectful and civil discourse.</td>
<td>Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages. Is willing to speak up in disagreement, critique self and others, negotiate conflict, and work toward respectfully and inclusively creating common ground. Perseveres through obstacles and difficulties to remain actively involved in research, planning, creative problem-solving, and implementation of group activities. Helps team to reach fair decisions and follows through in a timely manner.</td>
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| Writing/Presentation Skills           | Demonstrates understanding of assignments and responds to all parts them. Writing, speech and representations are clear, coherent, and in standard English. Writing/speech makes relevant references to course readings or ideas generated during class days. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” stage. Writing, speech and representations demonstrate usage, mechanics, and grammar of standard English. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning” and “Developing” stages. Writing, speech and representations offer insights into self and others, make connections between course learning and ongoing practice, reflect capacity for critique, use course readings and ideas generated in class as lenses for interpretation, and appropriately incorporate multiple media. | Demonstrates and improves skills in “Beginning,” “Developing,” and “Accomplished” stages. Writing, speech, and representations demonstrate innovative ways to make classrooms and schools better places for students’ learning. |

| Research and Praxis for Social Justice/Change | Research question is a qualitative research question and data sources clearly connect to the question. | Research question is a qualitative research question. Data sources are triangulated and analysis is a multifaceted process used to find the complexity of the experience. | Triangulated data sources and multifaceted analysis serve to answer a research question that leads to a qualitative understanding of your praxis of social change. Imaginative, creative, and critical thought are present in some aspect of the research process and additional organizational aspects of the research project. | Triangulated data sources and multifaceted analysis serve to answer a research question that leads to a qualitative understanding of your praxis of social change. Imaginative, creative, and critical thought are present throughout the research process and additional organizational aspects of the research project. |