EDCI 569: Teaching English in the Secondary School

Fall 2005: Mondays 7:20 – 10:00
Robinson B220

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Course Description
The EDCI 569: Teaching English in the Secondary School and EDCI 669: Advanced Methods of Teaching English course sequence is designed to support the development of reflective, professional, collaborative and research-based practitioners in the field of English/language arts instruction. EDCI 569 introduces preservice English teachers to the fundamentals of theory and practice for teaching English/language arts in middle schools and high schools. EDCI 669 deepens and extends the knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained in EDCI 569. Class sessions, reading/writing assignments, and required fieldwork in both courses emphasize current issues and recent developments in curriculum and methodology in the teaching of secondary school English/language arts.

Course Goals
The purpose of EDCI 569 and EDCI 669 is to prepare teachers of English/language arts who will understand, respect and effectively facilitate the language development and learning of diverse adolescents with who they work. The two-course sequence is designed to support English/language arts teachers as they:

1. develop a personal theory of language arts education which is supported by theory and research on the teaching and learning of the language arts,
2. plan and implement lessons and units of instruction which are consistent with a theoretically-strong personal theory of language arts education, and
3. make connections between theory and practice in reflective, critical analyses of curriculum and instruction in language arts.

More specifically, during the EDCI 569 course, students will:
1. read research and theory representative of current thinking in the teaching of English/language arts,
2. explore and report on one specific area of interest in the teaching of the English/language arts,
3. practice planning and implementing process-based writing experiences which facilitate students’ understanding of and reflections on their readings, their lives, and the world,
4. practice planning and implementing lessons on English language instruction that are taught within the context of the language arts,
5. practice planning and implementing activities and discussions which involve students in active, reflective responses to literature within a diverse community of learners,
6. observe and analyze teaching practices in light of course readings and discussions and
7. write a beginning personal theory of English education.
Performance Standards for EDCI 569/669
The two English/language arts methods courses have a set of performance standards, which establish expectations for student achievement. By the completion of the EDCI 569/669 sequence, students will be able to:

1. describe national, state and local standards for English/language arts and use them as the underlying basis of classroom curriculum and instruction,
2. design coherent units of instruction and effective daily lessons which reflect current research, theory and practice in English/language arts,
3. utilize knowledge of adolescence, language, learning, teaching, and diversity to plan and adapt instruction which maximizes learning for all students in today’s schools,
4. develop assessments appropriate for identified curricular objectives and related to national, state and local standards,
5. incorporate media/technology into the curriculum to enhance the teaching and learning of the English/language arts,
6. reflect upon and critically analyze one’s own and observed teaching practices in light of related theory and research in English education, and
7. articulate a developing personal theory of English education.

Course Readings


Additional readings will be assigned in class.

Students are required to obtain a student membership in either the National Council of Teachers of English or the International Reading Association and to subscribe to one of the following journals:

- English Journal
- Voices from the Middle
- Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy
Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation. Attendance is critical; class time will provide opportunities for (1) participation in hands-on activities, (2) demonstration of effective teaching strategies, and (3) reflection on course readings, class activities and assignments, and observations from the field experience. (If unavoidable circumstances prevent attendance at a class, please call the instructor in advance; contact a classmate to discuss missed assignments.) Students are expected to be consistently well prepared to participate in class as active, thoughtful discussants. Good teachers are lifelong learners, open to new developments in both theory and practice. **Weekly.**

Writer’s Notebook/Learning Log. Learning reflections and assignments, some completed in class and others as homework, will enable students to explore and/or practice the ideas presented in class sessions and in the required readings; these assignments should reflect a careful consideration of course content. The format of assignments will be varied and designed to reflect the range of possibilities recommended for use in today’s secondary classrooms. Writer’s Notebook/Learning Log assignments should be brought to all class sessions; they will be used as the basis of class discussions and activities and will be shared periodically with classmates and the instructor. **Due weekly at the discretion of the instructor and then in full on December 5.**

I-Search Paper/Poster Presentation/Handout. Students will select, research and report on one aspect of English/language arts instruction. The well-written, carefully edited I-Search Paper should include at least 10 *good* sources that reflect a combination of theory, research and best practice. At least five of these sources MUST be recent publications of the National Council of Teachers of English and/or the International Reading Association; at least one source must be an interview with an English educator; and at least one source must be a reliable, relevant website. Students are encouraged to develop and conduct structured interviews and/or surveys of inservice in what Ken Macrorie calls “I-Search” style (details in class and in assigned course pack reading) and should be 12 point font, approximately 10-12 pages long. The I-Search paper; a one-page, APA-style, annotated bibliography; a one-page synthesis handout for your classmates; and a “poster presentation” on your topic are **due in class on October 24.**

Field Experiences Report. Each student enrolled in EDCI 569 is expected to complete a minimum of 15 hours of fieldwork in a middle school or high school English/language arts classroom. Students are responsible for arranging their fieldwork to include the following: as study of the school’s and the cooperating teacher’s approach to the teaching of writing; a chance to read, diagnose and assess student writing samples; a study of the school’s and the cooperating teacher’s approach to the teaching of language and skills; a student of the school’s and teacher’s approach to the teaching of reading/literature; an opportunity to peruse the school/district’s English/language arts program of study in literature and well as the suggested and/or required works of literature; and an interview with the cooperating teacher and/or department head about issues facing today’s English teachers. Additional information about the fieldwork activities and assignment is included in the EDCI 569 Fieldwork Experiences Packet. If possible, individual fieldwork assignments should be completed by the dates specified in the course schedule; the entire fieldwork experiences report, including a signed copy of the summary documentation of hours, should be turned in **no later than December 5.**

Unit Plan. As a culminating project for this course, each student will use the “backwards design” process to develop a plan for teaching a literature-based unit which actively involves students in meaningful learning; carefully individualizes to accommodate the diverse strengths and needs of students; effectively integrates reading, writing, and oral language; and provides for authentic assessment. The unit can revolve around a particular literary work, a theme, a writer, a period or
genre, as long as the unit builds on the strengths and meets the needs of a diverse student population. Long-range plans will include: a narrative overview of the unit, its overall goals and objectives, the basic time frame, general procedures, a description of the intended learners, planned assessment techniques, the backwards planning chart, and a unit calendar. Specific daily lesson plans, including support materials should be included for any five lessons from the unit (which shall include at least one lesson emphasizing writing, one emphasizing language study, and one emphasizing oral language); each of the five daily lesson plans should make clear connections between stated objectives and planned assessment. The unit’s organization and methodological approaches should reflect current research and best practice in the teaching of English/language arts. **Due no later than November 28, although drafts may be due sooner.**

**Paper: A Developing Theory on the Teaching of English/Language Arts.** This concise (1-2 page) paper should clearly and concisely articulate your developing theory on the teaching of English/language arts in today’s secondary schools, and should reflect the research and theory upon which it is founded. **Due December 12.**

**Oral Exams: Fishbowl Midterm and “Faculty Meeting” Final.** Students will be called upon to demonstrate their knowledge and developing philosophies regarding research in the field of English/language arts instruction. The midterm will be conducted “fishbowl” style (more information will be presented on this teaching technique in class). The final will be conducted, in front of the rest of the class, one on one with the instructor. **Exams will take place on October 17 and December 12.**

**Schedule of Topics and Assignments**

8/29  **Introductions/Course Overview**  
**Writing Strand: Process Approaches to Teaching Writing**

Assignments due by next week: (1) Read the article about Learning Logs by Bernie Glaze. Write a reflection on the similarities and differences between Fletcher’s Writer’s Notebook and Glaze’s Learning Log and your own experiences with school-related journals. (2) Read chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7 of Vicki Spandel’s book. Be prepared to write an in-class Writer’s Notebook (WNB) entry on it on 9/12. (3) In your Writer’s Notebook, write the draft of a vignette that tells the story of a personal event in your development as a writer; use your personal experience graph for ideas. Be prepared to share this writing in next week’s class. (4) Read the articles by Romano and Flowers handed out in class. Using the principles, processes and terminology from these readings, write a reflective analysis of your own writing process/of yourself as a writer. (Hint: consider the process you followed as you wrote your vignette(s).) Post this writing self-analysis on the course Blackboard site by 5 p.m. Sunday (9/4).  
Reminders:
- Join NCTE or IRA; subscribe to one of their journals,
- Activate your GMU e-mail account; arrange for forwarding if that’s what you want to do,
- Change your password (and possibly your e-mail address?) on our course Blackboard site.

9/5  **NO CLASS – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

See above for assignments due next week.
9/12 Writing Strand: Process Approaches to Teaching Writing (continued)
Launching the Writer's Notebook/Learning Log

Assignments due next week: (1) Revise and edit your vignette of your development as a writer. (2) Read the Watson article and write a Dear Sam-style letter to your peers about your piece. Bring four copies each of your vignette and your Dear Sam letter to class. (3) Read the Graves and Sommers articles on responding to writing; be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on them. (4) Read the Macrorie article. Select a topic for your I-Search Paper; post your paper proposal on Blackboard by Sunday 9/28 at 5 p.m. No duplication of topics without instructor approval…. first come, first served! (5) Read Spandel, chapter 8. In two columns in your writer’s notebook, make a list of (a) some of the most helpful feedback you got on your writing as a student, and (b) some of the least helpful. (6) Some time between now and September 26, read *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.

9/19 Writing Strand: Response and Revision
The Writing Workshop
Peer Response Groups

Assignments due next week: (1) Read Burke, introduction and chapters 1, 2, 3, and 7; be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on your reading in Burke. (2) Read the articles by Weaver, Rowe, Rosen and Kietzer. Write a reflection on how grammar was taught when you were a student of secondary English in your WNB. (3) Based on the feedback you received during class, do another round of revision/editing of your vignette/memoir. Post your revised piece on Blackboard by Saturday 9/24 at noon, for online response from your peer response group. (4) Respond by Monday 9/26 at noon, to the revised vignettes posted on Blackboard by your peer response group members. (5) Work on your I-Search Paper; locate at least two good sources.

9/26 Writing Strand: Editing, Grammar and Correctness

Assignments due next week: (1) Plan a mini-lesson on writing that could be taught in conjunction with a unit on the Cisneros book. Complete a written draft of a lesson plan using the format provided in class and post it on Blackboard by Saturday 10/1 for peer response group feedback. (2) Before Monday’s class, make sure to log onto Blackboard to provide feedback to your response group members. (3) Read the article by Mondock on portfolios, and prepare a list of questions you have about implementing portfolios in the classroom in your WNB. Be prepared to share this list in class next week. (3) Do one final revision on your vignette. (4) Read Atwell chapters 1, 3, and 4. Be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on them next week. (5) Work on your I-Search Paper.
10/3 Writing Strand: Assessment and Publication
Peer Response Groups

Assignments due on October 17: (1) Read rest of Atwell. Write a WNB entry reflecting on how you might apply Atwell’s principles in your own classroom. (2) If possible, complete Fieldwork Assignments #1 and #2. (3) Work on I-Search Paper; post your pre-writing plan and a draft of your introduction on Blackboard by noon on Saturday 10/15 for response from your peer group. (4) Sometime between Saturday noon and Monday 10/17 provide feedback to your peer response group members on their I-Search drafts.

10/10 No Class: Columbus Day

See above for assignments due next week.

10/17 Fishbowl Exam

Assignments due next week: Finish your I-Search Assignment:
- I-Search Paper: with APA-style reference list,
- Poster Presentation, and
- Handout for your classmates
  - On front: key information about teaching strategies
  - On back: annotated bibliography of five best sources

10/24 I-Search Poster Presentations
I-Search Paper due

Assignments due next week: (1) If possible, complete Fieldwork Assignments #3 and #4. (2) Come to class with an idea for your unit plan. (3) Read Berger’s article on Reader Response journals. Write a reader response-style entry in your WNB in reaction to this week’s reading. (4) Read Burke chapter 10 on planning a unit of study. Come to class with your unit plan idea and any raw materials (resources, teaching ideas, related readings or activities) you may have collected at this point.

10/31 Reading Strand: Reader Response Theory
Unit Planning

Assignments due next week: (1) Work on your unit plan. Be prepared to bring part of a draft of your unit plan to class next week. (2) Read the articles by Baloche, Mauger, Willis, Filinuk, and Michalsky; Sowder and Woolever. In your WNB, sketch out a draft of a lesson plan using The House on Mango Street and some of the strategies proposed by these authors.

11/7 Reading Strand: Classroom Strategies – Assigned texts and Reader Response Unit Planning (continued)

Assignments due next week: (1) Read the Harvey Daniels piece on Literature Circles. Be prepared to complete an in-class WNB entry on the reading. (2) Read Burke, chapters 8 and 9, on teaching speaking, listening, and thinking. Be prepared to complete a learning log entry in class on the Burke reading. (3) Continue to work on your Unit Plan. Continue to bring your unit plan work to class.
11/14 Reading Strand: Choice – Paired Texts, Literature Circles
Unit Planning (continued)

Assignments due next week: (1) Read the article by Lynda Tredway on Socratic Seminars. Be prepared to engage in a Socratic Seminar next week in class. (2) Continue to work on your unit plan, and to bring it to class each week.

11/21 Oral Strand: Socratic Seminar
Developing a Theory of Teaching English
Unit Planning (continued)

Assignments due next week: (1) Completed Unit Plan. (2) Read the articles handed out in class on film in the English classroom. Complete the assignment handed out in class in preparation for next week’s guest speaker.

11/28 Film as Text (Kimberley Cetron, guest speaker)
Unit Plan due

Assignments due next week: (1) Read Shakespeare Set Free. Write a WNB comparing the strategies laid out in the reading with your own experiences as a student of Shakespeare. Include a list of five questions you have about implementing performance techniques in the English classroom. (2) Complete your Field Experiences Report. (3) Remember to bring your Writer’s Notebook/Learning Log to class next week.

12/5 Oral Strand: Performance Techniques
Unit Plan Feedback Workshop
Learning Log due
Field Experiences Report due

Assignments due next week: (1) Read Burke chapter 22, on becoming an English teacher. Complete your Theory of Teaching English paper. Be prepared to talk from it in the oral final.

12/12 Oral Final Exam: “Faculty Meeting”
Theory of Teaching English paper due

Course Evaluation

All assignments will be graded using a system developed by Lisa Green, English Department Chair at Robinson High School. Eligible assignments (with the exception of oral exams, the ‘Theory of Teaching’ paper and the Field Experiences Report) may be revised and/or edited and resubmitted for a “higher grade” up until the final deadline of December 5. Each assignment handed in will receive either (1) “R/E” (needs to be revised, edited and resubmitted), (2) “R” (needs revision prior to resubmission), (3) “E” (needs edits prior to resubmission), or (4) “A” (acceptable – no resubmission required). Eligible assignments may be revised and resubmitted as many times as you wish up until the deadline. At the point of “deadline” (12/5), codes become letter grades (A = A, E = B, R = C, and R/E = F) and no more resubmissions will be considered.
The grading system for graduate courses at GMU is as follows: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, F.
In this course, the following system will be used:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<td>F</td>
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All assignments must be turned in on time. Late assignments will not be given full credit; in the case of extenuating circumstances, approval must be granted in advance by the instructor.

Grades of “A” in this course are earned by students who do exemplary, distinguished work. The A+, A, A- student participates actively and thoughtfully in class; completes all required reading assignments and related assignments in a timely and professional way; shows coherence and thoroughness in lesson and unit planning; completes well-organized, well-written papers; and consistently demonstrates the ability to make connections between theory and practice.

Note: A semester grade of “C” is not considered acceptable in a graduate licensure course. Any student who receives a “C” in this course should see his/her faculty advisor immediately to discuss continuation in the Secondary Education Program.

EDCI 569 assignments are weighted as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Writer’s Notebook/Learning Log</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>I –Search Paper/Poster Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Plan</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Theory of Teaching English Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Experiences Report</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishbowl Midterm</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final (oral) Exam</td>
<td>10</td>
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**College of Education and Human Development Expectations**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolocies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://www.mail.gmu.edu and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Approved March 2004
Bibliography

The list of references at the end of this syllabus consists of respected texts in English Education; these works would make a good start for your personal library as an English teacher.


