EDRD 632  LITERACY ASSESSMENTS AND INTERVENTIONS FOR GROUPS

Advanced Studies in Teaching & Learning—Master of Education Program
Fall 2005, Rappahanock Cohorts, taught in Stafford County, VA

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DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on literacy assessments and interventions for groups of learners. Study includes an exploration of assessment tools for students in classroom settings. Appropriate instructional practices for groups of students will be explored.

RATIONALE

As a required portion (course III) of the literacy specialization in the Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning (ASTL) program, this course addresses required Virginia Department of Education and International Reading Association competencies for K-12 Reading Specialists. This course also provides an advanced, research-based study of literacy for teachers seeking master’s degrees.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Books

Also helpful (from earlier class):

ARTICLES: AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH GMU LIBRARY WEBSITE (WWW.GMU.EDU, CLICK ON LIBRARIES) – GO TO ELECTRONIC RESERVE; INSTRUCTOR NAME: STURTENANT; COURSE: EDRD 632-001; PASSWORD: READING
GSE SYLLABUS STATEMENTS OF EXPECTATIONS
The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See www.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/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://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.

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

OUTCOMES

ASTL/Literacy Program Outcomes [International Reading Association (IRA) Standards]

Note: those in bold will be emphasized in this course.

1. Candidates have knowledge of the foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.

2. Candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction. (Must include appropriate grouping, use of technology, and attention to stages of development and cultural/linguistic differences).

3. Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading instruction.

4. Candidates create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments.

5. Candidates view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
This course uses a seminar format based on discussion of class topics and readings as well as related experiences and assignments from the classroom-based practicum. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session and to be prepared to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Activities will include small group discussions, presentations, whole class sharing, and reflection.
**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to literacy assessments and interventions, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.

2. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.

3. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

**GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If you are not confident of your own ability to catch errors, have another person proofread your work. When in doubt, check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/.

**Expectations**

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)

2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.

3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)

4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part A: Community, School, and Class Profile *</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part B: Assessment of Writing, Reading, and Attitudes *</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project, Part C: Instructional Planning, Grouping and Analysis*</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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The above performance-based assessments are designed to provide evidence that program candidates meet **required program completion standards**. Successful completion of these performance-based assessments and a grade of B or better in the course are required to move to the next course in the ASTL/Literacy course sequence. **If you are concerned that you may**
be having difficulty meeting these standards, please speak to your course instructor and your advisor.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

1. Class attendance is extremely important due to the interactive nature of the course. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must contact the instructor and leave a message. Two or more absences will likely result in a lowered grade because essential class work will be missed.

2. Active involvement in in-class experiences is essential for creating a supportive classroom community that enhances learning.
ASSIGNMENTS

TERM PROJECT, PART A: COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, AND CLASS PROFILE

In this part of the project, you will create a profile that provides information gathered from existing and recently collected data about your community, school, and class of students. Specifically, the profile will include the following components:

A. Community: using websites and material available in the community (such as the public library) write a 2-3-page double-spaced description of the community including information on the population, income levels, types of employment, examples of resources available for families and children/youth, and so forth. Also include any challenges the community is facing that would affect children/youth (e.g., fast growth, high unemployment, gang presence, etc.)

B. School: Using websites (school, district, or state) and material available in the school or district, create the following:
   - A one page description of the school (size, grade levels, and other demographics). Do not include any names of people.
   - A computer-generated chart or graph (that you create) providing a summary of standardized testing results.
   - A list of resources and programs related to reading/literacy available to students at the school.

B. Class: Using information available to you, write a 2-3 page description of the “target” class as a whole (how many students, #girls/boys, age range of students, range of levels of past achievement, special needs such as eligible for ESOL or special education services, special services such as inclusion teacher or paraprofessional in the classroom).

C. Summary/conclusion: Briefly summarize the information in A, B, and C above (1 page) and discuss (2 pages) how the teacher can use the information gathered in planning for the class during the school year. Mention specific challenges the teacher will face in serving the students’ needs and discuss some potential resources for helping to address these challenges.

D. List of resources (text materials or websites) that you used, in APA format.
Term Project, Part B: Assessment of Reading, Writing, and Attitudes

In this part of the project, you will select a focus group of 3 students in the class. You will give each of them 3 assessments and record this information on a chart. (If it is more convenient, you can give all of your students the assessments, but select 3 to focus on for this assignment).

A. Assessments:

1. Interest/attitude assessment: choose one from the readings or adapt one. Be sure it pertains to reading, writing, or both.

2. Writing: collect a writing sample from students (it can be based on a prompt or assignment, and should be taken from all at the same point in time in order to make a comparison). You will assess this with information provided in class.

3. Reading: using information in one of your course texts (for example, Flippo, chapters 3 and 4) create an informal reading assessment appropriate for your group of students. This could range from a Content Area Reading Inventory (for intermediate or secondary students) to an emergent literacy assessment (for young children).

B. Analysis:

Score the assessments, and create a chart or database showing the results for all 3 students. For each student, also include at least one relevant standardized test score on the chart.

C. Summary:

1. Three (3) pages: Using the assessments from your three students, summarize (one page for each student) what each student knows/needs to learn in the areas of writing and reading. Also discuss each student’s strengths and needs in the areas of attitude.

2. Two (2) pages: Analyze the similarities and differences across the three students in terms of learning needs. What areas of instruction could be whole group (for all three)? What areas of instruction would need to be individualized or in small groups? (Keep in mind that these three students are only your focus for this project; in actual practice they would be combined with other class members who have similar strengths needs for small group instruction).

**Turn in:**

- A copy of each assessment
- Your chart or database for all 3 students
- Your summaries (C1 and C2)
- Your target student’s 3 work samples (assessments in reading, writing, and attitude).
Term Project, Part C: Instructional Planning, Implementation, and Analysis

PLANNING

First, select a concept you will be teaching to your students in the next few weeks. This will obviously vary depending on the grade level and needs of the students. Concepts selected should be knowledge-based, for example, “What causes war?” or “Why do worms come out in the rain?” Use your school curriculum to identify an appropriate concept. It is helpful to pose the concept as a question.

Second, thinking of your 3 focus students, make an instructional plan that will help them learn about this concept over a 2-3 day period (about 3 hours of instruction). (You do not have to teach them separately from the rest of your class!).

Your instructional plan must include:

1. A paragraph that names the concept you wish to teach, and provides the appropriate objective(s) (you may use your curriculum materials for the objectives).

2. A list of materials that will serve the needs of all members of the focus group, and a description of how you will use these materials so that students have 1) choice, 2) appropriate scaffolding for any important material that is too difficult and 3) opportunity to read text that is appropriate for them. Materials can include books, magazines, selected websites, etc.

3. Instructional plans:
   - Reading: A one class (approx 90 minutes) plan for teaching about your concept using a specific reading instructional strategy described in one of your textbooks (cite the author and page). Be sure your plan provides opportunities for oral/communication and interaction among students. In your plan, describe how you will implement the strategy and why you have selected this strategy (why is it appropriate; what students will learn that they need to learn, based on your earlier assessments).
   - Writing: A one class (approx 90 minutes) plan for teaching about your concept using a specific writing instructional strategy described in one of your textbooks (cite the author and page). Be sure your plan provides opportunities for oral/communication and interaction among students. In your plan, describe how you will implement the strategy and why you have selected this strategy (why is it appropriate; what students will learn that they need to learn, based on your earlier assessments).
   - In at least one of the plans, include use of technology (if not available to you or your students, please include a brief description of what you would use if available).

4. An explanation describing how and why your plans will meet the developmental and the cultural/linguistic needs of your six focus students. Include in this explanation a description of how you will use grouping in an appropriate way.

5. Develop a simple way to keep notes on your students’ learning during the lesson (e.g., an observational checklist or system of notetaking).

IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Implement at least one 90 minute lesson (2 or 3) above, with your students. Write a reflection (3-4 pages) that describes what occurred and what you learned about the three students from the lesson. Also explain what you would do in the next lesson for these students, based on what you learned from teaching this lesson.