OVERVIEW:

The course explores theory, research and practice related to emergent literacy and literacy development during childhood. Topics include: literacy acquisition and development; historical trends in theories of literacy development; psychological and linguistic, socio/cultural, and instructional influences on literacy development; vocabulary development; the role of narrative and scripts on linguistic development; literacy teaching expertise and literacy development in academically diverse children.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

A. Students will be able to summarize, synthesize and compare specific psychological and linguistic influences on literacy acquisition and development in early, middle, and later childhood.

B. Students will be able to summarize, synthesize and compare specific socio-cultural influences on literacy acquisition and development in early, middle, and later childhood.

C. Students will be able to synthesize and analyze instructional influences on children’s developing literacy.

D. Students will read original research and classic research summaries in order to identify and compare the variety of theoretical perspectives and research designs currently used to study literacy.
E. Students will be able to compare and contrast specific literacy studies in terms of methodology and results.

F. Students will review research studies in an area of personal interest that have encouraged the use of specific classroom applications such as reciprocal teaching or authentic assessment.

COURSE READINGS:

Course Readings to be distributed in class

*Required Text:*

*Optional Text:*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Discussion participation. Each person will be responsible for reading the articles designated for discussion. (15%)

2. For two of the articles in literacy acquisition and development, preparation of written, focused critiques. At least one of the written critiques needs to be on a research article. Each student and the instructor will determine the articles for the critiques. (20%)

3. Students will be required to present one of the assigned critiques of literacy research studies to the discussion group. The criteria are included on a handout and will be discussed in class. (15%)

4. Students will be required to write and present an integrated review of studies on a topic of their choice. The review needs to include: an introduction; specific sections related to the topic of the review; a section, which summarizes specific applications of this area of literacy research to practices in instructional settings; and an overall summary. The components and structure of the review will be discussed in class. (50%)
EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Each of the critiques will be evaluated using a rubric. The rubric will consist of the criteria for critiquing literacy research studies provided on the handouts and will be discussed in class.

2. The presentation of the critique of the assigned research study and ability to discuss the article and related topic will be evaluated using criteria for critiquing literacy research studies provided on the handouts and will be discussed in class.

4. The integrated reviews will be evaluated by the instructor using a specified set of criteria that is linked to the criteria used to evaluate the critiques of individual research studies and will be developed.

DUE DATES:

Critiques of Two Research Studies:
NO LATER THAN WEEK 7 (October 11)

Presentation of Research Study Critique and Discussion:
(INDIVIDUAL DUE DATES)

Integrated Review and Application of Literacy Research:
DUE WEEK 15 (December 13)

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

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/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.
TOPICS, SCHEDULE, AND ASSIGNED READINGS:

Weeks 1 and 3 (August 30 and September 13 – No Class Week 2 on September 6): Historical and Theoretical Foundations of Literacy Acquisition

Assigned Readings:


Readings to Choose From:


OR


Weeks 4 and 5 (September 20 and September 27): Psychological, Cognitive, and Linguistic Influences on Literacy for Younger Learners

Assigned Readings:


**Weeks 6 and 7**
(October 4 and October 11): Social, Cultural, Political, Contextual Influences on Early Literacy

*Assigned Readings:*


**Weeks 8 and 9 (October 18 and October 25): Instructional Influences and the Assessment of Literacy Learning for Younger Learners**

*Assigned Readings:*


Week 10 (November 1): Teaching Literacy Teachers of Younger Learners

Assigned Readings:


Weeks 11 and 12 (November 8 and November 15): The Literacy Needs of Younger Learners from Diverse Populations

Readings to Choose From:


OR


Assigned Readings:


**Week 13 (November 22): Family Literacy**

*Assigned Readings:*


**Week 14 (December 6) Work on Integrated Review. Meet with instructor for Feedback on Integrated Review Papers**

**Week 15 (December 13) Integrated Review Papers Due and Review Presentations**

Note: This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the group. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or need or special circumstances please inform your instructor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.