

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

EDRD 619 LITERACY IN THE CONTENT AREAS (3 CREDITS)

Fall 2009, Section 002
Thursday 7:30 – 10:00 PM

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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisites: Methods I and II. This course is designed to be taken concurrently with EDCI 790 Student Teaching Internship. Only students enrolled in Student Teaching Internship are allowed to register for EDRD 619.

EDRD 619 offers understanding of language and literacy processes as they apply to teaching in secondary schools. The course emphasizes reading and writing in content areas, and instructional strategies to support students' literacy development. The focus is on ways reading, writing, speaking, and listening are developed and used in learning discipline-specific curriculum, including adaptations for culturally diverse and exceptional learners.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of how content area learning can be enhanced through reading, writing, and language-based strategies.
2. Students will plan and demonstrate a lesson that integrates literacy with instruction in their own teaching specialty or content area.
3. Students will survey adolescent literature, media, and other print, visual, or technological resources that can be used to connect reading, writing and other language arts to their teaching specialty or content area. From these resources a book talk will be presented.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Email Access

Students must have access to email and the Internet, either at home, work, or on the GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts that must be accessed for information sent from the university or the Graduate School of Education. Go to <http://mason.gmu.edu/> for information on accessing email.

GSE 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. Professional dispositions are expected of all members of the GSE community. Please go to <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/#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

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK/READINGS

Vacca, R. & Vacca, J. (2008). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum (9th ed.)*. New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, Inc.

Faltis, C. & Coulter, C. (2008). *English learners and immigrant students in secondary schools*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall

Other readings course readings will be assigned and made available through Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignment	Points possible	My Grade	Due date
Literacy autobiography	30		Sept. 10
Response journals	45		Sept. 17, Oct. 1, Oct. 22, Nov. 19
Strategy lesson and mini-lesson	40		Oct. 8
Mini-lesson	20		TBD
ELL Interview	40		Oct. 29
Unit plan (final project)	100		Dec. 10
Participation and attendance	25		
TOTAL	300		

***Rubrics will be posted on BB. Please download and attach a rubric to each assignment.

Final grades are calculated as a percent of total points earned:

95%	A	86%	B+	74%	C+	64%	D+
91%	A-	81%	B	70%	C	60%	D
		77%	B-	67%	C-	< 60%	F

CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICY

Students are expected to attend class and complete all readings and assignments before class to facilitate active participation during each class session. Attendance and participation is required to earn the full 25 points for class participation. Five points will be deducted from your class participation grade *each time* a student:

- Misses class
- Arrives late or leaves early (unless prior arrangements are made with me)
- Does not participate during in-class activities

It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet each week. The only exclusions are class cancellations by the University or the professor.

RESPONSE JOURNALS

The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate critical reading and reflection of the texts. On the left-hand side of your paper, identify and record the key points of the reading or as Rosenblatt calls says, take an efferent stance (see Vacca & Vacca, p. 23-25). This should be brief and address only the key points. You may do this in the format of your choice (i.e. bullets, graphic organizer, narrative).

On the right-hand side of your paper, think deeply about what you have read and write a narrative aesthetic response to the reading. You may choose to respond to a specific aspect of the reading, particular section, or all of it. Write about questions/comments the reading generated, connections to your own professional experiences or learning experiences, or related class discussions and readings. This should not be a summary. You may want to begin with one of the following prompts:

- The reading made me realize
- I used to think but now
- A question I have from the reading is
- The reading relates to
- I agree with the author(s) that
- I disagree with the author(s) that
- The most interesting part of the text is
- My feelings and/or attitudes toward the reading are

LITERACY AUTOBIOGRAPHY: (3-4 pages)

The purpose of this assignment is to explore past experiences and life histories as important factors that shaped your perceptions and beliefs related to literacy and people we label “adolescents,” “youth,” “teenagers,” etc. Travel back in your memory and consider your own experiences as an “adolescent,” particularly in school contexts. Write a literacy autobiography that examines the following questions:

- What was the role of literacy in your *in school* and *out of school* life? (Remember literacy extends beyond the written page to include multiple forms of communication such as multi-media texts).
- What people and events related to literacy stand out in your memory? Why?
- How do you think they influenced your beliefs and feelings about school and literacy?
- How do you think they influenced your decision to become a teacher?

STRATEGY LESSON AND MINI-LESSON

The purpose of this assignment is to give you practice designing, teaching, and reflecting on strategy lessons in your content area. Part 1 requires you to design and implement a content literacy strategy lesson in your classroom and write a reflection of the experience. Part 2 requires you to design and teach a mini strategy lesson to your classmates.

Part I

- Craft and teach a motivating text-based lesson that uses content literacy strategies described in Vacca and Vacca. Use the Before, During, and After (B-D-A) lesson structure on p. 346-357 in your text in conjunction with the lesson plan format at your school. You must include and cite (using APA 5) at least one *before* reading, one *during* reading, and one *after* reading strategy from the text. Write a first-person narrative describing the lesson (~1 ½ pages) and a reflection on the experience (~1 ½ pages). Include the following:
 - **Instructional Context:** Briefly describe the strategies and provide an APA 5 citation. Identify a) the subject, grade, and level(s) in which it was taught, b) number and demographic information on students, and c) the specific unit of study (e.g. biomes, quadratic equations, Civil War).
 - **Procedures:** List the steps you followed to conduct the strategy in your classroom. Be thorough.
 - **Assessment:** Briefly describe how you assessed student learning of the content.
 - **Reflections on Effectiveness:** Think carefully about the effectiveness of your lesson. Specifically, consider: a) why this was/was not an effective lesson to teach (i.e. what learning took place/how do you know/were the strategies appropriate); b) successes of the lesson; c) modifications you would make next time; d) what you learned from this experience. Include examples to substantiate your findings.
 - **Attachments:** Provide actual lesson material and sample student work (be sure to black out student names).

Part 2: ** Due at the time of your presentation

- Using one of the strategies from this lesson, craft a 10 minute mini-lesson to share with our class. Be sure your classmates are motivated and actively involved in *doing* the strategy and learning/relearning the content, just as your students were. Provide hand-outs and materials, as you did in your classroom.
- After your mini-lesson, your classmates will give your feedback.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER INTERVIEW

The purpose of this assignment is to learn more about placement, instruction, and assessment of ELLs in your school. For this assignment you will need to interview your cooperating teacher or another teacher in your content area and a faculty or staff member who is knowledgeable about ELL assessment and placement in your school. Create a set of interviews that will provide insights into the following:

- When new ELLs enroll in your school, what types of assessments are they given (see Faltis and Coulter, p. 156-161) for identification? What types of assessments are they given for reclassification?
- How are ELLs assigned to content classes in your subject area?

- How do teachers in your content area differentiate to meet the needs of ELLs?
- How do teachers in your content area assess content learning for ELLs?
- Which characteristics of culturally responsive teaching (Vacca & Vacca, p. 81-86) are evident in your classroom? How does your teacher facilitate this?
- Which commitments in practice (Faltis and Coulter, p. 37-41) are evident in your classroom? How does your teacher facilitate this?

Analyze the data from your interviews and write a clear description of what you learned (~2-3 pages). Attach your interview questions and the names and titles of the people you interviewed.

UNIT OF STUDY (final project)

Create a graphic organizer for an inquiry-based unit of study, which may last 2 to 3 weeks. (Revisit Vacca and Vacca p. 357-365). Include the following:

Title

- Identify the subject (be specific) and grade-level
- Select a title reflecting the topic or theme of the unit

Content Analysis

- List the major concepts to be learned (~ 5-7)
- Identify key vocabulary words (~10-15 special and technical words)

Texts and information sources

- List resources you will use: texts, trade books, electronic, original documents, videos, DVDs, journals/magazines/newspapers, etc.

Include at least:

- 1 text
- 3 trade books (non-fiction, fiction, graphic novel or comic books)
- 2 articles from magazine or newspaper
- 2 web-based resources
- 1 other resource

Instructional Activities (see Vacca & Vacca and Faltis & Coulter)

- Select at least 1 before reading, 1 during reading, and 1 after reading instructional strategy to support each major concept

Include at least:

- 2 comprehension strategies
- 2 talking to learn strategies
- 3 writing to learn strategies
- 2 study strategies
- 1 reading guide
- 5 strategies for struggling readers/ELLs

- Select at least 3 instructional strategies to support vocabulary development, keeping mind the needs of your ELL students

Assessment (see Vacca & Vacca and Faltis & Coulter)

- How will you assess students' prior knowledge?
- How will you assess student progress during the unit (i.e formative assessment)?
- How will you assess end of unit learning (i.e summative assessment)?

EDRD 619 CLASS SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
Class 1 Sept. 3	Overview of course; Texts; BB; Reserves	
Class 2 Sept. 10	Adolescent literacy	VV ch. 1 & 2 BB: Literacy instruction in the content area; Reading Next DUE: Literacy Autobiography
Class 3 Sept. 17	Diverse Learners	VV ch. 3 FC ch. 1 & 2 DUE: RJ #1
Class 4 Sept. 24	Assessment	VV ch. 4 FC ch. 8
Class 5 Oct. 1	Assessment Text-centered lessons	VV p. 341-361 BB: Darling-Hammond, L., et. al., (2008). <u>Creating Excellent and Equitable Schools</u> . <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 65(8), 14-21 DUE: RJ #2
Class 6 Oct. 8	Vocabulary	VV ch. 5 BB: Jacobson, J., et. al., (2007). <u>A seven-step instructional plan for teaching English-language learners to comprehend and use homonyms, homophones, and homographs</u> . <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 51(2),98-111 DUE: Strategy Lesson
Class 7 Oct. 15	Prior Knowledge	VV ch. 6 Explore the website of your professional organization
Class 8 Oct. 22	Engagement/Motivation	VV ch. 7 BB: TBA DUE: RJ #3
Class 9 Oct. 29	Writing in the Content Areas	VV ch. 8 BB: Writing Next DUE: ELL Interview
Class 10 Nov. 5	Study Guides & Strategies	VV ch. 9 Bring in an article from your professional journal to share (e.g. Science Teacher, Social Education)
Class 11 Nov. 12	Content Instruction for ELLs	FC Part II (Jigsaw: read the chapter related for content area)
Class 12 Nov. 19	Unit planning Trade books/electronic texts	VV p. 336-340, 361-375, ch. 11 & 12 Bring in a picture book or graphic novel for your content area DUE: RJ #4
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving recess	
Class 13 Dec. 3	No Class I will at NRC	Work on Unit Plan!
Class 14	What did we learned?	DUE: Unit Plan

Dec. 10	What more do wonder?	
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