

George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
EDUC 831-001; fall 2009
Foundations of Literacy: Adolescence through Adulthood
As of August 31, 2009

Course Description:

The doctoral seminar explores theory, research, and practice related to adolescent and adult literacy. Topics include influences on adolescents' and adults' literacy practices and development, current and historical understanding of literacy, connections between literacy and learning in the content areas, and needs of diverse learners. Students study both a common core of research literature and topics of individual interest.

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Office Hours: before class, by appointment

Class time and location: Mondays, 7:20-10pm; Innovation Hall 316.

Note: please leave an email or voicemail if you must miss class due to an emergency.

Perspective:

This course will be taught from an inquiry-oriented perspective, in that students will have the opportunity to develop and explore their own questions in a way that makes sense given their work to this point in the Ph.D. program. As part of this process, each individual will propose and conduct a project based on her or his own interests and learning needs.

Student Outcomes:

- A. Students will read and analyze research studies and research reviews related to adolescent and adult literacy.
- B. Students will provide leadership for colleagues in class discussions.
- C. Students will develop questions regarding adolescent and adult literacy and will create a scholarly project or paper to address those questions.
- D. Students will develop an historical understanding of the field.
- E. Students will develop an increased understanding of ways to participate in the academic community through exploration of professional organizations and development of a conference proposal.

Texts:

- Sturtevant, E. G., Boyd, F. B., Brozo, W. G., Hinchman, K. A., Moore, D. W., Alvermann, D. E. (2006). *Principled practices for adolescent literacy: A framework for instruction and policy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Selected sections of: Kamil, M.L., Mosenthal, P.B., Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of reading research (Vol. 3)*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Readings listed in syllabus (available on library electronic reserve).
- Students will also need access to the American Psychological Association Manual, 5th Edition.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION METHODS:

1. Complete all course readings before the related class (see schedule). Please bring a copy of the reading to class as we will refer to it during discussion. If you like, your copy can be electronic if you bring a laptop to class.
2. Complete any assigned pre/during/post reading activities. These will be decided by instructor or class members leading discussions on a week-by-week basis. Some of this work may be out-of-class and/or online and some will be in-class.
3. Lead a discussion on a class reading that shows and understanding of the topic and is engaging to other class members. Topics will be assigned.
4. Write a conference proposal either independently or collaboratively. The suggested conference is the National Reading Conference, 2010 (see www.nrconline.org). At this time only the 2009 proposal format is posted – use this since they are generally almost the same from year to year. The conference will be in December 2010. (Check with instructor for location). This can be related to either a previous or current project/paper.
5. Determine an audience and write a short paper (10-12 pages) related to an adolescent literacy topic. Include both research articles/reviews and interviews in your paper. For example, you might interview one or more students, teachers, parents, policy maker (e.g., a school or government official), or a researcher. Discuss with the instructor issues related the HSRB approval and whether interviews should be in person or via phone/internet. It is helpful to think of an overall question for the paper that is very focused. It is assumed you will try to publish this paper.
6. Participation – attend all classes and participate actively. If an emergency prevents attendance, please discuss the situation with the instructor. Also participate in online discussions if these are arranged by discussion leaders.

General Information

Email Access

Students must have access to email and the Internet, either at home, work or 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/](http://mason.gmu.edu/) for information on accessing email.

George Mason University Honor Code:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at www.gmu.edu. Code in the University catalog can be found online at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>.

George Mason University Policy on Disabilities:

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474). The Disability Resource Center website is at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>

Additional Suggested Reading (some of the below are required- see schedule).

- Alvermann, D. E. (2004). *Effective Literacy Instruction for Adolescents*. Available online at www.nrconline.org. (Published as a white paper for the National Reading Conference and also as an article in the *Journal of Literacy Research*).
- Alvermann, D. E. & Moore, D. W. (1991). Secondary school reading. In Barr, R., Kamil, M., Mosenthal, P., and Pearson, P. D. (Eds.), Handbook of Reading Research (Vol. II). New York: Longman.
- Alvermann, D. E. & Qian, G. G. (1994). Perspectives on secondary school reading: Implications for instruction. Reading and Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties, 10, 21-38.
- Alvermann, D. E., O'Brien, D. G. & Dillon, D. R. (1990). What teachers do when they say they're having discussions of content area reading assignments: A qualitative analysis. Reading Research Quarterly, 4, 296-322.
- Anderson, R. C. (1994). Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell & H. Singer (Eds.). Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th edition), 469- 482. International Reading Association, Newark: DE.
- Applebee, A. N. (1984). Contexts for learning to write: Studies of secondary school instruction. Norwood, NJ: Apex.
- Au, K. H. (1995). Multicultural perspectives on literacy research. Journal of Reading Behavior, 27, 85-100.
- Brown, A. L. (1980). Metacognitive development and reading. In R. J. Spiro, B. Bruce, & W. Brewer (Eds.), Theoretical issues in reading comprehension. Hillsdale, NJ: Earlbaum.
- Dillon, D. R., O'Brien, D. G., Wellinski, S. A., Springs, R., & Stith, D. (1996). Engaging at risk high school students: The creation of an innovative program. In D. J. Leu, C. K. Kinzer, and K. A. Hinchman (Eds.) Literacies for the 21st century: Research and practice (45th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference), 15-46, Chicago, IL: The National Reading Conference.

- Dillon, D., O'Brien, D., Moje, E. & Stewart, R. (1994). Literacy learning in secondary school science classrooms: A cross-case analysis of three qualitative studies. Journal of research in science teaching, 31, 345-362.
- Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Herder & Herder
- Guthrie, J. T. et al. (1996). Growth of literacy engagement: Changes in motivations and strategies during concept-oriented reading instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, 31, 306-333.
- Jimenez, R. T., Garcia, G. E., Pearson, P. D. (1996). The reading strategies of bilingual Latina/o student who are successful English readers: Opportunities and obstacles. Reading Research Quarterly, 31, 90-113.
- Ma, W. (2008). Participatory dialogue and participatory learning in a discussion-based graduate seminar. Journal of Literacy Research, 40 (2), 220-249. (Available through GMU library electronic journal system).
- Meyer, V., Estes, S. L., Harris, V. K. & Daniels, D. M. (1991). Norman: Literate at age 44. Journal of Reading, 35, 38-42.
- Mikulecky, L. & Drew, R. (1991). Basic literacy skills in the workplace. In Barr, R., Kamil, M., Mosenthal, P., and Pearson, P. D. (Eds.), Handbook of Reading Research (Vol. II). New York: Longman.
- Moore, D. W. (1996). Contexts for literacy in secondary schools. In D. J. Leu, C. K. Kinzer, and K. A. Hinchman (Eds.) Literacies for the 21st century: Research and practice (45th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference), 15-46, Chicago, IL: The National Reading Conference.
- Moore, D. W., Readence, J. E., & Rickelman, R. J. (1983). An historical exploration of content area reading instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, 18, 419-438.
- O'Brien, D. G., Stewart, R. A., & Moje, E. B. (1995). Why content literacy is difficult to infuse into the secondary school: Complexities of curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture. Reading Research Quarterly, 30 (3), 442-463.
- Padak, N. D. & Padak, G. (1991). What works: Adult literacy program evaluation. Journal of Reading, 34, 374-379.
- Pearson, P. D. & Stephens, D. (1994). Learning about literacy: A 30-Year Journey. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell & H. Singer (Eds.). Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th edition), 469-482. International Reading Association, Newark: DE.
- Spear-Swerling, L., Sternberg, R. J. (1994). The road not taken: An integrative theoretical model of reading disability. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 27, 91-103.

Short, D., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Sturtevant, E. G. (1996). Lifetime influences on the literacy-related instructional beliefs of experienced high school history teachers: Two comparative case studies. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *28* (2).

Weber, R. (1991). Linguistic diversity and reading in American society. In Barr, R., Kamil, M., Mosenthal, P., and Pearson, P. D. (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research (Vol. II)*, 97-119. New York: Longman.

SUGGESTED JOURNALS

Literacy related:

College English

Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy (formerly Journal of Reading)

Journal of Literacy Research (formerly Journal of Reading Behavior)

Literacy Research and Instruction (formerly Reading Research and Instruction)

Reading Research Quarterly <http://www.reading.org/rrqonline/>

Reading and Writing Quarterly

Written Communication

Yearbooks of the National Reading Conference

Yearbooks of the College Reading Association (now Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers)

General Scholarly Education Journals(this list is not comprehensive):

American Educational Research Journal

Educational Researcher

International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education

Journal of Curriculum Studies

Journal of Educational Research

Review of Research in Education

Qualitative Studies in Education

Also Important:

Research Handbooks

[e.g., Handbook of Reading Research (three volumes), Handbook of Research on Teaching, Handbook of Research on Teacher Education, and several others).

Related Organizations:

- National Reading Conference NRC (literacy researchers, any topic)
- American Educational Research Association AERA (all educational researchers)
- International Reading Association IRA (literacy practitioners and researchers)
- National Council of Teachers of English NCTE (English teachers/researchers—similar in many ways to IRA)
- Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER) formerly the College Reading Association (CRA) (has divisions for “Teacher Education,” “Clinical”, “College Reading” and “Adult Reading”)

Class Assignments and Schedule

Class Session	Date	Topic	Reading Due
1	8/31	Introduction: Adolescent and Adult Literacy	In class – we will read the <i>Forward</i> (R.T. Vacca) and <i>Preface</i> to the book, “Principled Practices”
	9/07 Labor Day	No Class Note that university-scheduled makeup is <i>Tuesday, October 13</i>	-
2	9/14	Literacy over the lifespan.	<i>The Path to Competence: A Lifespan Developmental Perspective on Reading</i> , Alexander, P. (www.nrconline.org) International Reading Association’s <i>Position Statement on Adolescent Literacy</i> http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/AdolescentLitPosition.aspx Principled Practices, Chapters 1, 2, 3
3	9/21	Content area literacy – a bit of history – up to 1990.	Principled Practices, Chapter 4 Moore, D. W., Readence, J. E., & Rickelman, R. J. (1983). E reserves Alvermann, D. E. & Moore, D. W. (1991) E reserves
4	9/28	Moving into the 1990’s – contexts for instruction.	Principled Practices Chapter 5 O’Brien, D. G., Stewart, R. A., & Moje, E. B. (1995). E reserves Sturtevant, E. (1996). E reserves Also see HRR Ch 34 (used in summer 829 class) and update by Tom Bean on this chapter at http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=/articles/handbook/bean/index.html
5	10/5	Affective Influences: Engagement/Motivation	Principled Practices, Chapter 6 HRR: Chapter 24 (Guthrie & Wigfield)

6	10/12 no class 10/13- Class will be held	Cognitive Influences: Comprehension and Vocabulary	Principled Practices, Chapter 7 HRR: Chapter 30 (Pressley) HRR: Chapter 28 (Blachowicz & Fisher) Also see seminal article on schema, Anderson, R.C. (1994).
7	10/19	Sociocultural Influences Literacy and Identity	Principled Practices Chapter 8 Ma, Wen (2008) E reserves Kirkland & Jackson (2009) E reserves
8	10/26	Individual/Cultural Needs and Differences	Principled Practices- Chapter 9 HRR Chapter 36 (Klenk & Kibby)
9	11/2	Individual/Cultural Needs and Differences	Principled Practices Chapter 10 Ivey & Broaddus 2007 Short, D., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007)
10	11/9	School Responses/Programs	Principled Practices Chapter 11 Slavin et al. 2008 E reserves Draft of paper due
11	11/16	Adolescents Outside of School	Guzzetti & Gamboa (2004) E reserves Lewis & Fabos, 2005 E reserves Gee, J., (2000) E reserves
12	11/23	Focus on Adults	NCSALL report http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/report17.pdf Purcell-Gates et al. (2002) E reserves
13	11/30	Preview of NRC program for 2009	Work on proposals
14	12/7	Proposal Sharing	Turn in proposal.
15	12/14	Proposal Sharing	Turn in revised paper and submit it for publication.