

George Mason University  
College of Education & Human Development — Graduate School of Education

**EDRD 634 – 001 “School-Based Leadership in Literacy” (3 Credits)**

Spring 2010 (PW 08 Cohort)

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Class meetings

PW campus, Bull Run Hall 246; Wednesdays, 4:30-8:30, May 19 – July 21, except Wednesday, May 26. (The May 27 teacher researcher conference will substitute for this class \*Ask instructor for details).

Course Overview

*Prerequisites*

EDRD 630, 631, 632, and 633/637; admission to the literacy emphasis or permission of the program coordinator. Please note that ASTL/Literacy students must re-take any course in which they receive a grade of C or lower, in order to be eligible for licensure. (Please note that the grade of B- is not given). Incompletes must also be cleared before moving to any course for which the course is a prerequisite. (Note that EDRD 634 is a prerequisite for EDRD 635).

*Course Description*

EDRD 634 prepares the reading specialist as a school leader and expands knowledge of literacy gained in prerequisite courses and applies it to professional development work with teachers at their own school sites. The requirements for EDRD 634 are focused on designing and implementing specific literacy professional development activities. Consequently the assignments focus on individual and collaborative work to create, implement, and evaluate a variety of professional development experiences for teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals. This course addresses new and required state and national competencies for K-12 Reading Specialists. This course also provides an advanced, research-based study of literacy professional development for teachers seeking a Virginia Reading Specialist License.

*IRA/NCATE competencies addressed in this course*

- IRA 4.3 Model reading and writing enthusiastically as valued life-long activities.
- IRA 5.1 Display positive dispositions related to reading and the teaching of reading.
- IRA 5.3 Work with colleagues to observe, evaluate, and provide feedback on each other's practice.
- IRA 5.4 Participate in, initiate, implement, and evaluate professional development programs

### Virginia State Standards addressed in this course

- 6c: Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of cultural contexts upon language
- 6g. Demonstrate the ability to instruct and advise teachers in the skills necessary to differentiate reading instruction for both low and high achieving readers
- 6H: Demonstrate the ability to organize and supervise the reading program within the classroom, school, or division

### *NCATE/IRA Standards and Performance-Based Assessments*

Throughout the literacy masters programs, students are required to satisfactorily complete one or more performance-based assessments (PBAs) in each course and are required to submit these to an electronic system entitled “TaskStream.” **Satisfactory completion of every PBA as well as posting to TaskStream is required before moving to the next course.** The Taskstream assessment system can be found at <https://www.taskstream.com/pub/>. Students are REQUIRED to submit the designated PBA to each course instructor so that the assignment can be evaluated when the assignment is due. Only assignments/PBAs posted to TaskStream will be assessed. No final grades for courses will be posted until ALL required PBAs are posted to TaskStream

*Virginia Reading Assessment for Reading Specialists (Test 002).* Please note that taking this test is a program requirement, and achieving a passing score is a licensure requirement. *Students must scan their score sheet and it to Task Stream by the last session of EDRD 635.* Since after you take the test, it takes about 4 weeks to receive a score sheet, please plan to take this test either during EDRD 634 or in the first half of EDRD 635. Information on the test can be found at <http://www.va.nesinc.com/>. The test is given 6 times a year in a paper (non computer) format. Registration is about one month ahead of the test (for the regular fee). There are study materials on the web, for example, see: [http://www.va.nesinc.com/PDFs/VRA\\_02\\_TFworksheet.pdf](http://www.va.nesinc.com/PDFs/VRA_02_TFworksheet.pdf)

### General Course Requirements

#### *Readings and participation*

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 leadership activities, it is important to keep up with the readings and to participate in class. It is your responsibility to come to class with insights, questions, comments, and concerns from the readings; you will keep a reading log that includes responses to specific journal questions (will be provided). Class participation will influence your grade.

#### *Class attendance*

Attendance at all classes is required. However, if there is an emergency and you will not be in class, please leave an email ([esturtev@gmu.edu](mailto:esturtev@gmu.edu) -- preferred) or voicemail (703-993-2052-which is followed by an email when this is possible). You are expected to email assignments by the deadline if you are not in class. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions despite attendance. Attendance and/or lateness that is not excused will influence your grade.

#### *Assignments*

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule. All projects must be typed, in 12-point font, with one inch margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall evaluation for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances.

### *General*

Please see me with questions and concerns about assignments, expectations, or class activities. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please come to me within a reasonable timeframe. I will be available for the 15 minutes following class, by appointment, and by e-mail. I look forward to collaborating with each of you as you work toward your goals.

### *Electronic Access and Course Website*

Students must have access to email and the Internet, either at home, work, or the GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts which 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. Our course website (at <http://blackboard.gmu.edu/>) will include information and resources important to your successful completion of the course. These may include the course syllabus, an announcement page, notes or class presentations, assignment descriptions and rubrics, examples of exemplary written assignments from past students, and a bibliography of course readings and web resources. We also may hold discussions via blackboard.

### Our Class Structure

The class will be structured around discussion and small group activities. It is critical for you to keep up with the readings and to participate in class. Instructor- and student-generated questions related to course readings and assignments/projects will often be the focus of group discussions. Be prepared to discuss the content of the required reading and its relation to your teaching experiences, course assignments and projects, and to ask questions for clarification, exploration, or to promote discussion. In general, we will engage in three types of activities:

1. Mini-lectures, activities, and discussions related to literacy leadership activities
2. Discussions of the week's readings
3. Pair and small group meetings in which you will provide feedback and support for each others' literacy leadership activities
4. Presentations by class members of workshop components and leadership of article discussions.

### University Policies and Services

#### Academic Integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you must give full credit in the proper, accepted form (APA, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> edition). Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

#### GMU email accounts

Students must activate their GMU email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class.

#### Office of disability services

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

Other useful campus resources:

WRITING CENTER (available at all campuses and by email) (703) 993-1200;

<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES “Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>

Other university policies:

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

### Required Texts

Vogt, M. E & Shearer, B. (2007). *Reading specialists and literacy coaches in the real world* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Additional readings will be made available on-line or on electronic reserve.

### Course Requirements (Brief List)

(Note – a more detailed explanation of the assignments will be distributed).

- A. Textbook Learning/Discussion Log (20%). (see handout) For this assignment you will keep a notebook of writing related to each text chapter (13 total):**  
The journal will consist of brief writing assignments related to each of the assigned text chapters. These will be used during class discussion. They must be typed and turned in each week.
- B. Journal article discussion leadership (20%).** With a partner, you will select a journal article related to your literacy interests and serve as a discussion leader. You must have your article approved, and it must be from a well known scholarly journal. Everyone in the class will read the article, so you must send an electronic version. One week before the discussion, will conduct a preview of the article. For your discussion, you will use some type of published content reading strategy. You will turn in a detailed lesson plan (for the preview and the discussion) and a reflection on how the lesson went (one week later). You can use visuals (such as PowerPoint) but not to provide information (this is not a lecture). For example, you could put instructions or discussion questions on a PowerPoint, but not lecture notes.
- C. Individual Mentoring Project (30%).** (see end of syllabus) (Course PBA -- must post to Task Stream). For the mentoring project, you will work for 8 hours with one individual who is either a novice/beginning teacher or who has expressed an interest in working on developing professionally in a specific area of literacy teaching. The individual you work with needs to be a past, current or potential professional colleague—not a personal friend, neighbor, relative, or member of the program.
- D. Professional Development Workshop Project (30%). (see end of syllabus)** Plan a one-hour large group workshop for colleagues in a school or another educational setting on a topic related to literacy. You can choose the topic for the professional development workshop. It may be related to the topic of your mentoring project.

Grading Scale:

94-100points – A

90-93 points – A-

87-89 points – B+

80-86 points - B

74-79 – C

74 and below: F

## Graduation and Licensure

- The GMU Licensure Specialist is Joanna Bosik ([jbosik@gmu.edu](mailto:jbosik@gmu.edu)). You should apply for your license *immediately* after you have completed the literacy coursework and master's degree. If you wait until the following term you may have to pay a fee to re-activate your file. Joanna will provide forms to submit to your school district. If you are not teaching she will submit forms to the state for you.
- Review the GMU Registrar guidelines for graduation. You must file an "Intent to Graduate" form several months prior to the end of your certificate or master's program. Note: Do NOT file for the certificate if you are going on for the master's degree (if you do you will be locked out of your Core classes! See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/gif/index.html> for more information. Students may apply for January and May graduation at the beginning of our fall semester and August graduation in the beginning of the spring semester.

## Additional Resources

### **GMU Library**

<http://library.gmu.edu/>

### **Articles**

- Cochran-Smith, M., Lytle, S. L. (1999). The teacher research movement: A decade later. *Educational Researcher*, 28(7), 15-25.
- Rogers, R., et al. (2005). Professional development for social transformation: The literacy for social justice research group. *Language Arts*, 82(5), 347-358.

### **Books**

- Arhar, J., Holly, M. & Kasten, W. (2001). *Action research for teachers: Traveling the yellow brick road*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Bell, J. (1993). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education and social science*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Burnaford, G., Fischer, F. & Hobson, D. (1996). *Teachers doing research: Practical possibilities*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Guth, N. & Pettengill, S. (2005). *Leading a successful reading program*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Hubbard, R. & Power, B. (1999). *Living the questions: A guide for teacher researchers*. NY: Stenhouse Publishers.
- Falk, B. & Blumenreich, M. (2005). *The power of questions: A guide to teacher and student research*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- IRA. (2004). *Preparing reading professionals: A collection from the International Reading Association*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Macintyre, C. (2000). *The art of action research in the classroom*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- McAndrew, D. (2005). *Literacy leadership: Six strategies for peoplework*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Nieto, S. (2003). *What keeps teachers going?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Toll, C. (2005). *The literacy coach's survival guide: Essential questions and practical answers*. International Reading Association: [www.reading.org/publications/bbv/books/bk565/](http://www.reading.org/publications/bbv/books/bk565/)

### **Teacher Research Websites**

- [http://gse.gmu.edu/research/tr/tr\\_action/](http://gse.gmu.edu/research/tr/tr_action/) (GMU teacher research site)

- <http://www.accessexcellence.org/LC/TL/AR/> (teacher research site)
- <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ntrp/> (UK teacher research site)
- <http://www.teacherresearch.net/> (International teacher research site)

***Professional Organizations***

1. Greater Washington Reading Council: [www.gwrc.net](http://www.gwrc.net)
2. Virginia State Reading Association: [www.vusra.org](http://www.vusra.org)
3. International Reading Association (IRA) (organization for educators/ and researchers)  
[www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)
4. National Reading Conference (NRC) (an international literacy research organization):  
[www.nrconline.org](http://www.nrconline.org)
5. National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE): [www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org)

## Schedule

Class	Topic	Assignment due	Reading
Class 1 May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syllabus overview</li> <li>The role of the reading specialist</li> </ul>	<p>Make sure you can access Blackboard and Taskstream</p> <p>Sign up for TR conference May 27. (Form was sent via email).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class assignment: Review one of the documents below, and with a partner, share in class (you can use computers in the lab or library).</li> <li>IRA Position Statement: <i>Teaching All Children to Read: The Roles of the Reading Specialist</i>. (ALSO an Appendix in Vogt &amp; Shearer) <a href="http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/ReadingSpecialistPosition.aspx">http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/ReadingSpecialistPosition.aspx</a></li> <li>IRA Position Statement: <i>The Role and Qualifications of the Reading Coach in the United States</i> <a href="http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/ReadingCoachPosition.aspx">http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/ReadingCoachPosition.aspx</a></li> <li>Standards for Middle &amp; HS Literacy Coaches <a href="http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/CoachingStandards.aspx">http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/CoachingStandards.aspx</a></li> <li>Explore this site and select 1 resource to read from the Literacy Coaching Online Library <a href="http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/library.html">http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/library.html</a></li> </ul>
Class 2 May 27	Attend T/R conference on May 27. (Thursday)	Make notes on sessions you attend and bring to the next class (handwritten notes are OK – you will not be turning them in).	
Class 3 June 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Log #1, 2, 3</li> <li>Bring T/R conf notes (see above)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogt &amp; Shearer, Ch. 1, 2 and 3</li> </ul>
Class 4 June 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development</li> <li>Revisiting assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Log #4, 5, 6</li> <li>Mentoring interview/needs assessment due (Part I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogt &amp; Shearer, Ch. 4, 5, 6</li> </ul>
Class 5 June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapting instruction</li> <li>Language and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Log #7, 8, 9-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogt &amp; Shearer, 7, 8, 9</li> </ul>
Class 6 June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary Program Supervision</li> <li>Communicating with the principal/teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Log #10, 11, 12</li> <li>Mentoring time plan due (Part II)</li> <li>Discussion previews groups 1 and 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogt &amp; Shearer, 10, 11, 12</li> </ul>
Class 7 June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Middle/HS program Supervision</li> <li>Communicating with the principal/teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Log #13</li> <li>Groups 1 and 2 lead discussions</li> <li>Groups 3, 4, and 5 conduct previews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vogt &amp; Shearer, 13</li> <li>Article reading #1, 2 (articles will be selected by pairs of students and distributed the week prior with a pre-reading activity).</li> </ul>

Class 8 July 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article Discussion</li> </ul>	<p>Groups 3, 4, and 5 lead discussions.</p> <p>All groups be sure to turn in Lesson Plans on the day of your discussion and Reflections one week after the discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article reading 3, 4, 5 (see class 7)</li> </ul>
Class 9 July 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop Presentations (half of class)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop notebooks due - hard copy in a binder – see instructions.</li> </ul>	
Class 10 July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop Presentations (half of class)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final (Part III) of mentoring report due. Also post the entire report (all parts) in one doc to Taskstream.</li> </ul>	

## Mentoring Project

*Individual Mentoring Project (30 points) (Course PBA -- must post to Task Stream as one document, once all parts are completed)*

For the mentoring project, you will work with one individual (for at least 8 hours spread over at least 4 sessions) who is either a novice/beginning teacher or one who has expressed an interest in working on developing professionally in a specific area of literacy teaching. The individual you work with needs to be a past, current or potential professional colleague—not a personal friend, neighbor, relative, or member of the program. Following are the three main components of the mentoring project:

- a) 10 points of 30. **Mentoring needs assessment** – Use the questions in the syllabus (attached). Write up the answers to the questions and also a 2-3 page summary/analysis (double spaced). In the summary/analysis provide a brief overview of the teacher's background, the teaching situation, and main needs that you will focus on in the mentoring.
- b) 10 points of 30. Develop an **Action Plan** for working with the individual. This will include a list of goals for the mentoring and a specific schedule of dates/times with bullets about what you expect to work on at each session. A chart is often useful for this purpose
- c) 10 points of 30. **Summary/reflection.** Describe your experiences and the goals that were accomplished through your individual mentoring. Also reflect on the experience. What went well? What did you need to change/adapt along the way? What were some surprises? What would you do the same or differently next time? (About 3-4 pages, double spaced). You should give examples but do not use names of teachers.

*EDRD 634, "School-Based Leadership in Literacy"  
Individual Mentoring Project*

***Mentoring Needs Assessment Core Questions (Questions to ask your Mentee) – please submit a type-written summary of the answer to each question, keeping the mentee’s identity confidential. Also you will write a summary/analysis (see page 1).***

1. What do you consider your greatest strengths related to literacy instruction?
2. What challenges do you face related to literacy instruction?
3. What area(s) of literacy instruction are you most interested in learning more about? Why?
4. How do you currently assess your students in reading and writing?
5. How do you use this information to inform instruction?
6. How do you engage reluctant readers and writers?
7. What are three professional resources that you have found helpful? (For example, magazines, websites, teaching resources, reading specialist, literacy team, etc.).
8. What do you find most helpful about them?
9. How do you currently communicate with families about children’s literacy learning?
10. What was the most recent literacy class you took?
  - Title of course
  - Date
  - Location
11. What is the most recent professional development experience in literacy you have had?
12. What did you like most about that experience? What did you like least about it?
13. What else do you want me to know about you as a literacy teacher?
14. What do you consider your greatest strengths related to literacy instruction?
15. What challenges do you face related to literacy instruction?
16. What area(s) of literacy instruction are you most interested in learning more about? Why?
17. How do you currently assess your students in reading and writing?
18. How do you use this information to inform instruction?

19. How do you engage reluctant readers and writers?
20. What are three professional resources that you have found helpful? (For example, magazines, websites, teaching resources, reading specialist, literacy team, etc.).
21. What do you find most helpful about them?
22. How do you currently communicate with families about children's literacy learning?
23. What was the most recent literacy class you took?
  - Title of course
  - Date
  - Location
24. What is the most recent professional development experience in literacy you have had?
25. What did you like most about that experience? What did you like least about it?
26. What else do you want me to know about you as a literacy teacher?

## Workshop /Study Group Project

### *Professional Development Leadership Project (30 points)*

Using the content and information you learn in your mentoring project and from other sources (such as prior courses in your program or conferences you have attended), plan a one-hour large group workshop OR a two-session small group “study group” for colleagues in a school or another educational setting on a topic related to literacy. You can choose the topic for the professional development project. It may be related to the topic of your mentoring project or a need or interest of teachers at your school.

- a) Workshop Notebook (20 points of 30): Create an organized notebook for your workshop or study group. The following materials should be included in the notebook:
  - 1) Overview and purpose/goal statement in which you address the following questions: How would you describe the target audience? Why do you think that this particular audience would benefit from this workshop/study group?
  - 2) Detailed outline of the session(s): Be sure to include an introductory activity, learning activities, and closure; include estimated time for each phase. Imagine that you are writing a lesson plan for professional development that someone else has to follow – use that level of detail.
  - 3) **Five annotated** references that you use to create your presentation, which you would recommend to others for further information: Put this information into a handout to be given to teachers; be sure to follow APA format.
  - 4) List of all materials/equipment you plan to use, including any handouts, PowerPoint slides (copies are acceptable), materials for activities, and so forth. Put copies in the notebook.
  - 5) An anonymous evaluation form that you will distribute to participants and collect at the end of the workshop.
  
- b) Workshop Preview (in class) (10 points of 30): You will facilitate a 10-15 minute strategy snapshot for our entire class. Choose one strategy to share with the group (they will participate interactively, as learners). Be sure to bring any handouts or other materials that you need to facilitate this session. You will also share your evaluation form and gain feedback from the class on the questions you ask.

*Note: You may work with 1-2 other individuals on this project, but you must be sure that you can work with these same individuals to implement the project when you take EDRD 635.*