

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education**

EDRD 619 (3 credits)
Literacy in the Content Areas
Spring 2011, Section 002
Thursdays, 7:20 – 10:00 p.m.
Art and Design Building, Room 2026

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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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

The following course requirements will be explained in detail during class meetings:

Assignment	Point Value
Class Participation	25
Group Chapter Strategy Demonstration	35
Article Reflection	30
Student Interview	20
Content Area Alternative Texts Collection	40
TOTAL	150

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

A	= 90% - 100%	150 – 135 pts.
B	= 89% - 80%	134 -- 120
C	= 79% - 70%	119 -- 105
D	= 69% - 60%	104 -- 90
F	= 59% or lower	89 -- lower

CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICY

To maximize the benefit of this interactive content literacy course, students are expected to attend and participate actively in every class session. Attendance for book talk and strategy share sessions is especially critical. Attendance is all that is required to earn the full 25 points for class participation. For each session you are absent, 5 points will be deducted from your class participation grade. Attendance will be taken beginning on the second class session. The only exclusions are class cancellations by the university or the professor.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK/READINGS

Vacca, R. T., Vacca, J. L., Mraz, M. (2011). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum*. Boston: Pearson.

The National Reading Panel Summary Report:

<http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/publications.htm>

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 faculty may add at the conclusion: For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

RHT faculty may add at the conclusion: For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

GSE Statements of Expectations

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

ASSIGNMENTS

ARTICLE REFLECTION

Write a 4 page reflection on three peer-reviewed articles. Reflections should begin with a brief description of each articles, followed by how the articles are similar, how they differ, and your reflection on each article, including how it can be used in your teaching practice and your overall impressions of the articles and their content.

CHAPTER STRATEGY DEMONSTRATION

Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you the opportunity to bring to life a strategy from the textbook in a group led strategy demonstration.

Completion Procedures

1. Form a team of 3-4 students to collaborate on the assignment.
2. Your group will be assigned a chapter of the textbook.
3. From your assigned chapter pages identify 2 strategies that can be discussed and demonstrated for the class. At least one should be a “motivational” strategy – a strategy, that engages and sustains. Your demonstration should include the following:
 - A brief description of the chapter topic (i.e., study guides)
 - A brief description of the professional literature supporting the topic area
 - A brief explanation about why your group selected the particular strategies
 - Time spent demonstrating the strategy for replication by class mates
 - An explanation about how the strategy can be used in at least two different content areas (e.g., science and history)
 - Examples of strategy applications
 - Questions, issues, or challenges for other students in the class to consider when thinking about using the strategy in their classrooms
 - Time to discuss the issues, answer questions, think through challenges related to ways of applying the strategy in the other students’ classrooms
4. PowerPoint slides, overheads, and handouts should accompany the Chapter Strategy Demonstration
5. Chapter Strategy Demonstration Team should plan 30-35 minutes for the activity.

Evaluation Chapter Strategy Demonstration Team will be given a grade based on (a) effective planning and coordinating of the presentation and discussion of the strategy; (b) how succinctly and understandably key information about the strategy was presented; and (c) the extent to which the demonstration used engaging techniques for helping students understand how to apply the strategy in their particular teaching contexts.

CONTENT TEACHER INTERVIEW, ALTERNATIVE TEXTS COLLECTION AND MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY

FINAL PROJECT

Part 1: Adolescent Interview Procedures

1. Identify an adolescent or pre-adolescent to interview. Preferably, this would be a youth-of-color and/or an English language learner. The youth may be a student from your own middle or secondary class or school, or someone from your neighborhood, a relation, etc. (Be sure to gain parental permission, if necessary.)
2. Conduct an interview of the youth using the following guidelines and protocol:
 - * Psychological/Motivational
Outside-of-school interests; reading and writing interests; skills and strategies; literate identity
 - * Sociological
Preferred instructional context; funds of knowledge; culture
 - * Linguistic
Language development issues

Required Interview Questions

- What kind of reading do you do outside of school? (name books, magazines, favorite authors, etc.)
- What kinds of things do you do outside of school? What do you like to do the most? (specific activities as glimpses into out-of-school literacies and/or print experiences)
- How would you characterize yourself as a reader? (self-description of ability and attitude and literate identity)
- What skills and strategies do you use when you read? (particularly relevant for school-based reading)
- What kinds of opportunities have you had or do you have at home for reading? (gets at home and cultural values of reading and literacy)
- Do your parents like to read? (Describe)
- Do you go to the library and bookstores? (Describe)
- What do you like the most and/or least about reading in school? (instructional/social context of school)
- How could school reading be made more enjoyable to you? (instructional/social context of school)
- What opportunities and experiences have you had and do you have for learning English? (relevant to English language learners)
- How do you think your ability with English influences your ability to read English? (gets at identity and metalinguistic awareness)
- (Other relevant questions at your discretion)

Draft the following and post on Blackboard by October 28.

- A. **Interview Subject and Context** (1/2 page) Provide the first name or a pseudonym of the student. Explain why the student was chosen for your interview. Include the date and time of the interview and where it took place.
- B. **Interview Findings** (2 - 3 pages) Summarize the student's responses to the interview questions around motivation, sociological and linguistic domains.
- C. **Reflection** (1/2 page) Reflect on your findings.

Part 2: Content Alternative Test Collection

This assignment is designed to: (a) help you discover the importance of multiple perspectives on subject area topics; (b) incorporate livelier texts into content area teaching; and (3) identifying a motivational strategy to teach content area subject.

Completion Procedures

1. Identify a disciplinary topic (e.g., manifest destiny – history; biomes – science, etc.) you are likely to teach in your classroom in the coming weeks/months.
2. Collect the following reading pieces related to your topic that will likely be of high interest to the student you interviewed. Listed are the minimums and categories may overlap. If you find other pieces you would like to include you are welcome to do so; however, your collection must have:
 - * At least one reading from the perspective of a person of non-white-European Background
 - * At least one reading from the perspective of an English language learner or Nonstandard English speaker
 - * At least one reading from the perspective of a woman
 - * Two magazine articles (from popular magazines for adults or teens)
 - * Two newspaper articles
 - * Two Web sites
 - * One nonfiction book
 - * One young adult novel
 - * One comic book or graphic novel
3. Identify a motivational strategy that could be used to engage your student in learning the disciplinary topic identified. Be prepared to share this strategy with the class.
4. Write a short paper (8 or more double-spaced pages) with the following components/subheadings:
 - A. ***Interview Subject and Context*** (1/2 page) Provide the first name or a pseudonym of the student. Explain why the student was chosen for your interview. Include the date and time of the interview and where it took place.

- B. **Summarize Interview Findings** (2 pages) Summarize the student’s responses to the interview questions.
- C. **Citations, Annotations & Rationales** (4or more pages) – provide a full bibliographic citation for each source using APA format; briefly describe each source and its connection to the disciplinary topic and why you think it will appeal to adolescents. *Sources should not be older than ten years.*
- D. **Strategies for Teaching with the Sources** (1 page)– propose some approaches and strategies you would use for engaging the student with these alternative texts as opposed to simply assigning them. Be sure your strategy suggestions are applied specifically to the source content. Also this should also be tied to your motivational strategy.
- E. **Motivational Strategy for Teaching the Disciplinary Topic Identified** (1 page)– write a brief description of the motivational strategy identified and how it will be used to teach the disciplinary topic identified. In addition include a justification for the strategies use based on current research and how it will be used to engage adolescent.
- F. **Reflection** (1/2 to 1 page). Reflect upon the interview, the collection and the strategies.
- G. **Reference.** Reference research that support strategies used in D and E.

5. Share 2-3 pieces of your collection.

Evaluation This assignment will be evaluated based on (a) the appropriateness of the alternative texts to the disciplinary topic; (b) the succinctness of the annotations; (c) the relevance of the teaching suggestions; and (d) overall clarity, APA, and editing.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Session 1, January 27	Course Introduction Adolescent Literacy and Youth Culture <i>Read: Chapter 1: Literacy Matters and National Reading Panel Summary Report</i> Assignment Explanations Model “My Bag”
Session 2, February 3	Principled-Based Practices of Adolescent Literacy <i>Chapter 5: Planning Instruction for Content Literacy</i> Class “My Bags”
Session 3, February 10	Chapter Strategy Group Meeting
Session 4, February 17	Motivation for Literacy and Learning Chapter 6: Activating Prior Knowledge and Interest
Session 5, February 24	Comprehension Processes <i>Read Chapter 7: Guiding Reading Comprehension</i>

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 7: Reading Guides, pages 225 - 231)

Session 6, March 3

Writing

Chapter 9: Writing Across the Curriculum

Read Chapter 9

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 9: Writing in Disciplines, pages 306-313)

Session 7, March 10

Assessment

Read Chapter 4

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 4: Portfolio Assessment, pages 98 - 108)

Session 8, March 17

No-Class – Spring Break

Session 9, March 24

On-Line Assignment – Summary of Adolescent Interview Due

Session 10, March 31

Word Knowledge

Read Chapter 8: Developing Vocabulary and Concepts

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 8 Vocabulary Building Strategies, pages 266-275)

Session 11, April 7

On-Line Assignment – Article Summaries Due

Session 12, April 14

Supporting Striving Readers

Read Chapter 3: Culturally Responsive Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 3: Sheltered Instruction for Learners, pages 73-82)

Session 13, April 21

Text and Alternative Text

Chapters 10 and Chapter 11: Learning with Trade Books

Chapter Strategy Demonstration (Chapter 10: Making Notes, Taking Notes and Study Guides: 339-350)

Session, 14, April 28

Off-Campus Assignment – Work on Collection

Session 15, May 6

Collection Presentations

NOTE: Sessions 3, 8, 9, 11 and 14 will not meet on campus. All other classes will be held in the Art and Design Building, Room 2026.