

**George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education: ASTL  
Secondary Education - Career Switchers Program**

**EDRD 619. X 02 or X03 Literacy in the Content Areas (3 cr.)**

**Spring 2011**

Instructor: Judith L. Fontana, Ph.D.  
Phone (work) 703-993-4496  
Phone (home) 703-912-6141 (Please call after 7 AM or before 9 PM)  
Email: [jfontan1@gmu.edu](mailto:jfontan1@gmu.edu) (for direct access use this address)  
Mailing Address: 4400 University Drive, 1 F 2  
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

Office Hours Before and after class, and/or by appointment

Location: Robinson B room 103

**Textbooks:**

Required:

Lenz, B.K., Deshler, D.D. with Kissam, B. R. (2004). *Teaching Content to all: Evidence-based Inclusive Practices in Middle and Secondary Schools*. NY: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Tovani, C. (2000), *I Read it But I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

From time to time you will need:

- A content area textbook(s) teacher's manual with student pages or T- manual and student text. There are some sample texts available in the Johnson Center.
- Access to: Standards of Learning for the grade/subject you anticipate teaching  
<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/> VDOE Home Page  
<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards>  
Select your subject, and grade level. Look for the appropriate curriculum framework. You will need to print this and bring it to class. Pay attention to the essential knowledge section. (links verified 1-16-11.)

**Resources you may wish to explore:**

Soc St. and Language Arts:

Fisher, D., Brozo, W.G., Frey, N., Ivey, G. (2007). *50 Content Area Strategies for Adolescent Literacy*. Pearson: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Math:

Barton, M.L. & Heidema, C. (2002). *Teaching Reading in Mathematics: a Supplement to Teaching Reading in Content Areas*. Aurora, CO: McREL Purchase from ACSD Alexandria VA.  
Available: GMU's library.

Science: Barton, M.L. & Jordan, D.L. (2001). *Teaching Reading in Sciences: a Supplement to Teaching Reading in Content Areas*. Aurora, CO: McREL Purchase from ACSD Alexandria VA.  
Available at GMU's library.

**A number of book chapters have been placed on the GMU libraries electronic reserve system.**

Students are responsible for accessing these documents. They will be noted as specific reading assignments in the class schedule.

The password is: TBD

A number of articles are available on our Blackboard site. Assigned articles will be noted on the course schedule.

To access Blackboard: Courses.gmu.edu

### **Course Description**

Offers understanding of language and literacy process as it applies to teaching in secondary schools. Emphasizes reading and writing in content areas, and instructional strategies to support students' literacy development. Focuses 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**

The following objectives have been established for the course:

1. Students will explore and explain the role of literacy in learning the content areas.
2. Students will be introduced to and use strategies that middle/high school students can apply to successfully comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate content-related texts.
3. Students will design reading and writing instruction that supports students' literacy development in middle and high school classrooms.
4. Students will create instructional goals and activities appropriate for their own students' active learning through interaction with print, media, and computer texts.
5. Students will develop content area curriculum that integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening using multiple media forms throughout students' learning experiences.
6. Students will adapt instruction to accommodate secondary students' varying degrees of literacy and linguistic proficiency.
7. Students will assess print and non-print media and adapt it for effective instruction for a diverse student population.

### **Course Policies and Assignments**

#### **College of Education and Human Development**

##### *Student 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/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

### **Please note also::**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of electronic devices that produce sound or otherwise interfere with the learning of others (i.e., cell phones, pagers, etc.) is prohibited during class. Phones may be set on vibrate. However, In general, please turn these devices off before the start of class.</li> <li>• Texting and other non-class use of cell phones or similar devices is prohibited during class sessions.</li> <li>• Computer access during class must be confined solely and completely to content related to the class. Refer to GSE Statements of Expectations, particularly Professional Behavior and Dispositions, in this syllabus. Misuse of GMU's internet access during class sessions will result in suspension of computer access during class sessions.</li> <li>• Students are expected to attend all classes, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (refer to web site noted in top bullet above for Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner.</li> </ul> |
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- When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes, syllabus revisions, etc.) from another class member (not from the instructor (s) prior to the class meeting that follows the absence.
  - Points will be deducted for work submitted late without prior explanation and may be deducted for late arrival to or early departure from class beginning with the second occurrence unless clearly justified.
  - With permission of the student, exemplary work may be kept and shared in the future.
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- Papers or projects with excessive spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors will not be accepted.
  - Routine access (daily) to electronic mail and the internet for communication and assignments is crucial to participation in this class; students are required to activate their GMU email account; if desired, follow “mail forwarding” procedures to have email sent to your ISP email address. GMU makes such accounts available at no cost to students.
  - For each in-class hour devoted to EDRD 619 content, students are expected to spend 2 hours outside of class on course related assignments (8 hrs. weekly/ summer 27 hrs weekly)
  - **The instructor reserves the right to change or adapt the syllabus based upon the perceived needs of and after discussion with students.**

### General Information and Course Requirements

1. 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 in middle and high school classrooms, it is important that you keep up with the readings in order to participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, please contact the instructor *in advance via email*. Specific accommodations may be negotiated.
3. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. However, it is recognized that students may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in advance. Points may be deducted for work that is turned in late. Note: Because of the state requirements for the Career Switcher Program, a grade of

Incomplete in this course will result in a non-completion of Phase I of the program and the inability to be issued an Eligibility License.

### **Guidelines for Written Assignments**

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If you are not confident of your own ability to catch errors, have another person proof-read your work.

**When in doubt, check the APA manual 5<sup>th</sup> edition.** Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/Expectations>

- Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy. Please do not use “utilize”.)
- Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
- Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
- Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

The University Writing Center (Robinson A114) 703-993-1200 is a free writing resource open to everyone involved in the George Mason community, including graduate students. The Writing Center offers individual, group, and online tutoring sessions in a comfortable, supportive atmosphere. GMU students may register for the On-Line Writing Lab (OWL), the distance arm of the Writing Center that allows students to submit papers electronically. Access to a writing tutor, plus assistance with writing, editing, and composition are available at <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

**Attendance and Participation (10 points):** Attendance is critical and class time will provide opportunities for:

- Demonstration of effective, research based literacy strategies
- Participation in hands-on activities
- Reflection on readings, class activities and assignments
- Applications or extensions related to assigned readings

In class activities will build upon readings. Occasionally student products will be generated and used to document participation. There will be no opportunity to make up points awarded for student products generated during class time

**Assignments: Critical details for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard**

1. Observations and Reflections: Each student enrolled in EDSE 619 is required to observe in an appropriate classroom(s) for 15 hours. Students will keep a log of hours and reflections of their experiences. (12 points) *Please refer to Blackboard/assignments for details.*  
**Assignment is due on or before June 18**
2. ABC assignment: Three options see A, B, C below: Select one 15 point assignment (only 1 of these assignments will be accepted for credit). Each has a written and oral component (10-15 min. for the oral part).  
**Due dates written component - July 6, oral component – July 8**  
**NOTE change Hard copy due July 8 Oral due July 11**

**Inform Fontana of your assignment choice on or before June 18**

**For options B & C please submit your book or article for approval prior to June 18**

**A. Literacy Strategy Notebook:** The purpose of this assignment is to create a basic collection of no fewer than 10 potentially useful strategic activities that promote literacy and are content related.

You will be asked to :

- Share the notebook
- Demonstrate the use of one strategy interactively with your content in class.
- Provide a handout for the instructor and class relative to this demonstration strategy. Be sure to cite your resources.

*Please Refer to Blackboard for assignment details*

**B. Book review:**

**You are expected to:**

- Read and report on a literacy methods book appropriate to your content. There is a written and oral component.
- Book must be approved. A list of suggested texts is available on Blackboard If you select a book not on the list please bring it in so that I can look it over.

*Please Refer to Blackboard for assignment details*

**C. Strategy Article:**

**You are expected to:**

- Select an intervention research article from a professional journal (e.g., *Reading Research Quarterly*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Educational Researcher*, or any content specific peer reviewed journal).
- Prepare and present a summary of the study.
- Embed your content into the strategy highlighted in the article and present the strategy interactively in class. Provide a 1 page summary of the article for the class.

Your article must be approved. Please provide a hard copy for Fontana NLT 2/4/11.

*Please Refer to Blackboard for assignment details*

**3. Position Statement on Content-Specific Literacy (20 Points):** The purpose of the position is to assist the student to synthesize theory, research and best practice from course readings, activities and assignments into a coherent philosophy of adolescent literacy as it relates to their specific content. There is no set format for the position statement, however, the final product should be a well- organized presentation of key points, support from theory and research and specific recommendations for the integration of literacy strategies into instruction.

**You may choose to submit the assignment in stages for feedback. If you do so due dates will be staggered consult Blackboard for details on each component and dates for feedback:**

- **Status of Adolescent Literacy**
- **Literacy and (insert your content)**
- **The importance of being literate in (insert your content)**

- **General suggestions for infrastructure that would support literacy instruction in your content.**

**The final complete paper is due on or before July 18<sup>th</sup>**

**4. Electronic resources (13 points):** The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to explore several electronic resources that might prove helpful in planning and teaching.

*Please Refer to Blackboard for assignment details*

**Due on July 1 (Note Use class time on June 27 and 29 to prepare)**

**5. Unit Plan (30 points): See Blackboard for templates and details**

Create an instructional unit with 5 consecutive lessons. A variety of templates are provided for lessons planned for this assignment. The plan should reflect best practice, as cued by the template. The overview page must be included.

**Required components are detailed on Blackboard:**

**Hard copy: Due July 15**

**Poster Presentation: July 18**

### **Grading Scale**

A 95 - 100

A- 90 - 94

B+ 86 - 89

B 80 - 85

C 70 - 79

F below 70%

Grades of A and A- in this course are earned by students who do exemplary, distinguished work. The "A" range student participates actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and activities; completes all course readings and assignments in a timely and professional way; shows coherence and thoroughness in planning; writes well-organized papers; consistently demonstrates the ability to make connections between theory and practice; and meets the general requirements and guidelines of the course, as listed below. The instructor reserves the right to award an A+ to students who consistently exceed basic course requirements.