EDUC 500: Essentials of Literacy Instruction I
Spring 2012
August 4, 2011- June 13, 2012
LCPS Administration Building
Online on Loudoun VISION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Using a writing workshop as a framework, participants will investigate principles of writing instruction that prove to be essential for the writing development in secondary students.

COURSE PURPOSE AND INTENDED AUDIENCE:
This course is intended to provide secondary teachers will the opportunity to examine curriculum, instructional strategies, and principles of writing instruction. In addition, the course provides the opportunity for participants to investigate the use of a writing workshop instructional framework with their students. Participants will also develop their writing skills while participating in collaborative writing groups.

COURSE FORMAT:
The course will consist of a variety of learning formats to include:
- Instructor led discussions and presentation of demonstration lessons
- Facilitated online discussions and forums
- Small group writing conferences
- Each week of class, participants will participate in an online learning community for the completion of coursework and homework.

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES:

Having completed this course successfully:

- Participants will understand and apply the following essential principles of writing instruction:
    - To become a better writer, students need consistent, predictable time to write independently.
    - For students to understand the habits of an effective writer, habits of mind must be modeled for them by a writer, their teacher.
    - Students must define engaging purposes and real audiences for their writing that help to shape composition, diction, and voice.
    - Students need consistent, targeted feedback on their writing skills.
    - Individual conferences are one of the essential structures for assessing students' needs and areas of growth.
    - Portfolios are essential structures for students to self-assess and reflect on their needs and growth.
    - Consistent minilessons provide targeted instruction to meet the needs of the learners in the writing workshop community.
    - Building a community of learners builds an environment in which, "respect for the intelligence of every learner is the starting place for all activity, and where all learners are expected and required to take responsibility for their own learning as well as for assisting others to learn." (Blau 2000)
- Participants will design and create a writing workshop in their classroom.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:

National Council of Teachers of English Standard 4
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 5
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 6
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 7
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 8
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 11
National Council of Teachers of English Standard 12

REQUIRED/SUPPLEMENTAL/RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR READINGS:

Required Texts:
In the Middle by Nancy Atwell
Lessons that Change Writers by Nancy Atwell

Supplemental Readings:
Participant selected and instructor approved books and articles related to writing instruction.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS, EVALUATION CRITERIA, AND GRADING SCALE:

Course Expectations:
- Attend all class sessions online and actively participate in class discussions, small groups, and exploration activities.
- For each class session, there are three types of learning activities:
    - Reading assignment
    - Writing assignment
    - Participation in an online learning community including discussions and forums.

Assignments:
- Participants will write two 500 word reflective papers, one at the beginning of the course and one at the end of the course describing their philosophy and practice in writing instruction.
- Participants will complete one writing project of their design. Each design must have instructor approval. For example, participants might choose to write and submit an article for a professional journal, create a collection of demonstration pieces for their students, create a personal writing project.
- Participants will develop a 9-week plan for the launching and continuation of their writing workshop with their students.
- Participants will participate in online discussions centered on a book chapter, article, or writing sample.
- Participants will create a Literacy Journey Portfolio that shows reflection about their instructional practice linked to evidence of understanding the student outcomes for this course.

Completion of online learning activities and participation in discussion	30% of total grade (This includes a minimum of 2 substantive postings on at least 2 different days of the week. A substantive posting offers new insight, makes a new connection or elaborates on something already shared.
Literacy Journey Portfolio	70% of total grade (The portfolio is assessed against a rubric.)

GRADING SCALE:
A= 96-100
A-= 90-95
B+= 86-89
B= 80-85
C= 70-79
F= 69 and below

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT 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. See gse.gmu.edu 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.

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE:
LAST DAY TO DROP CLASS WITHOUT ACADEMIC/FINANCIAL PENALTY IS BEFORE 20% OF THE CLASS SESSIONS HAVE MET IS AUGUST 21, 2011

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings/Assignments
	We Are a Writing Community	Read chps 4, 5, and 10 of *In the Middle*. Bring a quote that speaks to you about teaching and/or writing to class on 8/4.
Face to Face 8/4 Admin 100C 9AM-4PM	Overview of the Writing Workshop: Creating a Community of Writers	
Online Wk of 8/21	Minilessons	Read Chp. 6 of *In the Middle* Develop your writing proposal. Reflect & participate in the online community. Writing Project Proposal and Initial Reflective Paper due 9/14
Online Wk of 9/18	Conferring	Read chp 7 of *In the Middle*. Continue the Writing Project. Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 10/2	Assessing Writers	Read chp 9 of *In the Middle*. Continue the Writing Project. Reflect & participate in the online community.

Online Wk of 10/16	Launching Your Writing Workshop	Review chps. 4 &5. Continue the Writing Project. Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 10/31	Launching Your Writing Workshop & English Core Units	Continue the Writing Project. Reflect & participate in the online community. **9 Week Plan, Due 11//11**
Online Wk of 11/27	Teachers as Writers Portfolio: Collecting Phase	Launch your writing workshop. Teachers as Writers discussions Complete 1st draft of the writing project. Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 1/1	Teachers as Writers Portfolio: Collecting Phase	Teachers as Writers discussions Complete 2nd draft of the writing project. Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 1/30	Reflecting on Your Practice Portfolio: Selecting Phase	Read Choice Text Complete the Writing Project Complete Partner Video Reflection Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 2/26	Teachers as Writers Portfolio: Reflecting Phase	Teachers as Writers discussions Complete the 1st draft of the reflective paper. Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 3/4	Choice Text Discussion	**Draft Literacy Portfolio Due 3/6** Choice Text Discussions Reflect & participate in the online community.
Online Wk of 3/25	Teachers as Writers Portfolio: Reflecting Phase	Teachers as Writers Discussions Revise the Literacy Portfolio. Read a Reading Workshop text **Literacy Journey Portfolio Due 4/11** Reflect & participate in the online community.
Face to Face 6/13 Admin Bldg 9AM-4PM	Overview of the Reading Workshop: Creating a Community of Readers	

Literacy Journey Portfolio Rubric

Student Outcomes	Grades
To become a better writer, students need consistent, predictable time to write independently	**A** The portfolio shows a detailed, insightful reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice linked with consistent, clear, and convincing evidence of all eight of the student outcomes.
For students to understand the habits of an effective writer, habits of mind must be modeled for them by a writer, their teacher.	**A-** The portfolio shows a detailed, insightful reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice linked with consistent, clear, and convincing evidence of seven of the student outcomes.
Students must define engaging purposes and real audiences for their writing that help to shape composition, diction, and voice.	**B+** The portfolio shows an insightful, reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice linked with clear evidence of all eight of the student outcomes.
Individual conferences are one of the essential structures for assessing students' needs and areas of growth.	**B** The portfolio shows an insightful reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice with clear evidence of seven of the student outcomes.
Portfolios are essential structures for students to self-assess and reflect on their needs and growth.	**C** The portfolio shows a reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice linked with limited evidence of student outcomes.
Consistent minilessons provide targeted instruction to meet the needs of the learners in the writing workshop community.	**F** The portfolio shows a reflection that shows change or refinement of instructional practice linked with little or no evidence of student outcomes.
Building a community of learners builds an environment in which, "respect for the intelligence of every learner is the starting place for all activity, and where all learners are expected and required to take responsibility for their own learning as well as for assisting others to learn." (Blau 2000) Participants will design and create a writing workshop in their classroom.	Examples of evidence might include, unit of study plans, photos of the classroom environment, assignment descriptions/handouts, conference records, student work samples, demonstration pieces, goal-setting records, student testimonials.