



## FAST TRAIN Programs

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
FAST TRAIN IB Certificate Program

**EDUC 516:**  
**Language Across the Elementary International School Curriculum**

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**Office:** 2603 Thompson Hall

**Meeting Dates:** June 24 – July 3

**Meeting Time:** 8:30 – 3:20

**Meeting Location:** University Hall -1203

**Course Description:** Introduces current methods of teaching transdisciplinary lessons utilizing language arts best practices in an elementary setting (K–6). Includes language and literacy development, second language acquisition, reading and writing, listening and speaking in the content areas, children’s literature, and using assessment to drive instruction. International focus considers needs of second language learners in regular classroom settings.

*Prerequisites: Admission to GSE, enrollment in FAST TRAIN program.*

**Nature of Course:** This course is delivered through a variety of instructional strategies. Session formats will vary and will include lecture, interactive hands-on activities, large and small group discussions, student presentations, and cooperative learning groups.

**Learner Outcomes:** This course is designed to enable students to:

***Build Background Knowledge on Language, Learning, and Literacy by:***

1. Demonstrating an understanding of the structure of the English language.
2. Creating connections between their own literacy learning histories and current theories of literacy teaching and learning.
3. Exploring and explaining the role of families, communities, and schools in children's literacy learning.

4. Demonstrating an understanding of reading and writing as a cognitive, sociocultural, psychological, and linguistic process.

***Practiced Strategies for Designing Literacy Instruction by:***

5. Creating literacy lessons that demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between children's phonemic awareness, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension strategies and their reading, writing, and spelling development.
6. Demonstrating an understanding of how to facilitate elementary learners' oral language development through creative writing, storytelling, drama, and choral/oral reading.

***Practiced Techniques for Assessing Students' Literacy Strengths and Weaknesses by:***

7. Describing the unique learning needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) and explaining how they will adapt lessons to meet their learning needs.
8. Demonstrating a familiarity with observation and assessment techniques to be used when assessing the reading development and needs of individual and groups of elementary learners.

***Reflected on Approaches for Integrating Literacy Instruction across the Curriculum by:***

9. Demonstrating an understanding of aligning instruction with assessment.
10. Demonstrating an understanding of the importance of promoting independent reading and reading reflectively by selecting quality literature, including fiction and nonfiction, at appropriate reading levels.
11. Demonstrating an understanding of how to organize classroom instruction to facilitate the literacy development of all learners.

**Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:** EDUC 516 is a methods course in FAST TRAIN, a program that prepares elementary teachers for international schools. FAST TRAIN applies the goals of the regular GMU elementary education curriculum to an international context. EDUC 516 specifically addresses the program goals that develop skills in instructional planning, implementation, and assessment. Overall, the INTASC Standards [<http://www.dpi.state.ne.us/pbl/pblintasc.html>] will be addressed by the following course activities:

**Content Pedagogy:** *The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Using Literature to Teach Literacy
- Reading Responses

**Student Development:** *The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support a child's intellectual, social, and personal development.*

- Literacy Reading Lesson Plans
- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Reading, Writing, and Spelling Analysis
- Reading Responses

**Diverse Learners:** *The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Using Literature to Teach Literacy
- Creating a Literacy Culture
- Reading Responses

**Multiple Instructional Strategies:** *The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage student development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Using Literature to Teach Literacy
- Creating a Literacy Culture
- Reading Responses

**Motivation and Management:** *The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement for learning, and self-motivation.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Using Literature to Teach Literacy
- Creating a Literacy Culture
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Reading Responses

**Communication and Technology:** *The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- In class activities
- Creating a Literacy Culture
- Literacy Strategies Presentation

**Planning:** *The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.*

- Literacy Lesson Plans
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- In class activities
- Using Literature to Teach Literacy
- Creating a Literacy Culture

**Assessment:** *The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.*

- Field Experience
- Literacy Lesson Plans
- In class activities
- Literacy Strategies Presentation
- Creating a Literacy Culture

**Reflective Practice:** *The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.*

- Field Experience
- In class activities
- Creating a Literacy Culture
- Reading Responses

**Professional Growth:** *The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.*

- Field Experience
- Creating a Literacy Culture

**IB-PYP Practitioner Award Programme Requirements:** *The teacher will learn to use transdisciplinary planning and teaching skills. The teacher will know about the learner profiles and how to use them to support teaching in language arts.*

- a. International education and the role/philosophy of the IBO PYP programme
- b. Curriculum frameworks; principles, structures and practices
- c. Curriculum and instructional design
- d. Curriculum articulation

- e. Learning, theories, strategies and styles
- f. Teaching methodologies and the support of learning
- g. Differentiated teaching strategies
- h. Selection and evaluation of teaching and learning materials
- i. Developing assessment strategies
- j. The principles and processes of reflective practice
- k. Collaborative working: planning, implementation and evaluation

EDUC 516 primarily addresses the following standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). EDUC 516 also addresses the following Core Values from the College of Education and Human Development.

Visit the appropriate links for complete descriptions and examples of each standard and/or value.

INTASC	ITSE	Core Values
Standard #1 Learner Development	Standard #1 Facilitate & Inspire Student Learning and Creativity	Value #1 Collaboration
Standard #2 Learning Differences	Standard #2 Design & Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences & Assessments	Value #4 Research Based Practice
Standard #4 Content Knowledge	Standard #3 Model Digital-Age Work and Learning	
Standard #5 Application of Content	Standard #4 Promote & Model Digital Citizenship & Responsibility	
Standard #6 Assessment	Standard #5 Engage in Professional Growth & Leadership	
Standard #8 Instructional Strategies		
Standard #10 Leadership & Collaboration		
<a href="http://www.ccsso.org/intasc">http://www.ccsso.org/intasc</a>	<a href="http://www.iste.org/standards">http://www.iste.org/standards</a>	<a href="http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/">http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/</a>

**Required Course Text:**

1. **Title: *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction (Fourth Edition)***  
Author: Morrow  
ISBN: 978-1609181789  
Year: 2011

Optional/Recommended:

1. **Title: *Bringing Words to Life (Second Edition)***  
Author: Beck, McKeown, Kucan  
ISBN: 978-1462508167  
Year: 2013
2. **Title: *Making Sense of Phonics***  
Author: Beck  
ISBN: 978-1593852573  
Year: 2005
3. **Title: *The Joy of Children's Literature (Second Edition)***  
Author: Johnson  
ISBN: 978-1111298364  
Year: 2011
4. **Title: *Reading with Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades (Second Edition)***  
Author: Miller  
ISBN: 978-1571109552  
Year: 2013
5. **Title: *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children***  
Author: Fountas and Pinnel  
ISBN: 978-0435088637  
Year: 1996
6. **Title: *Writing Essentials: Raising Expectations and Results***  
Author: Routman  
ISBN: 978-0325006017  
Year: 2004

**Technology Resources:**

- All students are required to have access to a computer with Internet access and a current GMU email account.
- Relevant Websites:
  - International Baccalaureate Organization – Online Curriculum Center (OCC)  
<http://www.ibo.org/>
  - Practitioner Research as Staff Development:  
<http://www.valrc.org/publications/research/index.html>
  - American Psychological Association  
<http://www.apa.org>

### **GSE Student Expectations:**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- 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 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/>].

### **Grading Scale for FAST TRAIN:**

A+	= 100
A	= 94-99
A-	= 90-93
B+	= 85-89
B	= 80-84 (no B- grades)
C	= 70-79 – does not meet licensure requirements or Level I award recommendation
F	= Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

**Incomplete (IN):** This grade may be given to students who are in good standing, but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F (Mason catalog). Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the

student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the FAST TRAIN office.

**GMU E-mail & Web Policy:** Mason uses electronic mail ([www.gmu.edu/email](http://www.gmu.edu/email)) to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly (Mason catalog).

**Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval:** For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (Mason catalog). Students must contact an academic advisor in FAST TRAIN to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

**Attendance Policy:** FAST TRAIN students are expected to attend *all* class periods of courses for which they register. In class participation is important not only to the individual student, but to the class as whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation and as a result lower the grade as stated in the course syllabus (Mason Catalog). Any unexcused absences (lateness) will result in a 3-point deduction from your participation grade. Missing an entire class will result in being dropped from the course.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to a collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmy.edu/values/>

**TaskStream:** Every student registered for any FAST TRAIN course with a required performance-based assessment (will be designated as such in the syllabus) is required to submit this assessment (for EDUC 516, The Reading, Writing, Spelling Analysis) to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course, or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of your performance-based assessment will also be provided using TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

### **Course Requirements:**

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via Blackboard **except** for the final assignments, the Project Based Assessment (PBA), field work log, and field work reflection. These final assignments will be uploaded into **Task Stream**. The submission deadline for assignments is 11:59pm EST of the due date indicated for each assignment. All projects must be typed, in a legible 12-point font, with

one-inch margins and double-spaced unless otherwise noted. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. ***Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, except in extraordinary circumstances.*** I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe.

**1. Performance Based Assessment (PBA): *Reading, Writing, and Spelling Analysis* (25%)**  
**\*\*Due November 15**

As you begin your *field experience*, select a target child. Between now and the middle of November you will assess the child's reading, writing, and spelling ability.

*Reading:* create opportunities to listen to the child read. Keep a log of when you read together. Gather data on the child's reading ability, including level, fluency, self-correction, strategy use, and comprehension. You may use anecdotal records, running records, interviews, discussions, reading inventories or any other form of assessment you see fit. You will present a snapshot of the child's reading ability at one point in time. **Supporting documents should be attached as appendices and cited in the text.** Include a research-based instructional plan.

*Writing:* collect at least three writing samples. Be sure they are dated. The samples should include different types of writing. Avoid having all three from the same source (e.g., 3 journal entries or 3 prompted stories). Based on these samples you will assess the child's writing ability. This will include the developmental level as well as specific examples of their strengths in form, function, and process. **Supporting documents should be attached as appendices and cited in the text.** Include a research-based instructional plan.

*Spelling:* based on the writing samples collected, information from a spelling inventory, and other observational data, identify the student's developmental spelling level as well as the word study strategies they use. **Supporting documents should be attached as appendices and cited in the text.** Include a research-based instructional plan.

The Reading, Writing & Spelling Analysis should be submitted as a final paper on the due date. **The assignment will only be graded in TaskStream according to the Performance Based Assessment Guidelines above.** Further instructions and the PBA rubric can be found on Blackboard.

## **2. Field Experience and Field Experience Reflection (10%)**

**\*\*Due November 15**

The **field experience is a required component** of the teacher preparation program at George Mason University. All students will complete a minimum of 20 hours in field experience for this course. Documentation of your field experience is required as well as a signed statement from your field experience teacher(s) or supervisor(s). The Fieldwork documents are located on Blackboard.

In addition to the fieldwork log, each student will write a 2-3 page reflection on the fieldwork experience. The reflection should explain what you have learned from the fieldwork experience and your overall reflections on the process of conducting the work necessary to complete the reading, writing, and spelling inventory.

**\*Field Logs and Field Experience Reflections to be uploaded on Task Stream**

NOTE: Failure to submit documentation of successful completion of your **field work in a timely manner** will make you ineligible to register for coursework or be recommended for licensure.

## **3. Participation (10%)**

Class participation is vitally important in a course such as this. Each class session we will have readings to discuss, ideas to unpack, and activities to do. You are expected to participate in the class discussions and activities in a substantive way, as this not only enriches the class, but also helps ensure that you will get the most out of the sessions.

## **4. Reading Responses (10%)**

**\*\*Due – according to student selection of readings**

Writing about what you have read is a useful way to synthesize your learning. In the reading responses you will respond to the assigned academic readings to discuss the ways in which these readings interest, provoke or stimulate your ideas about literacy development and instruction. While these writings do not need to be formal, they should be professional in tone, grammatically accurate, and make use of the readings to motivate the discussion. While the response should provide evidence that you did the reading **it should not simply be a summary of the readings**. The response is an opportunity to demonstrate your careful reading of the assigned texts; it is a space to work through and challenge ideas, and it provides an opportunity to make the readings relevant to your own teaching life experiences. You will need to complete **two (2)** reading responses, and you may pick and choose which readings to which you wish to respond. Responses should be one page, single-spaced and in a legible 12-point font.

## **5. Creating a Literacy Culture (10%)**

**\*\*Due June 28**

One of the most important things to think about as literacy instructors is how to create a literacy rich and friendly environment in which reading and writing are encouraged. For this assignment, each student will craft a 4-6 page paper in which the following issues are considered: 1) in what ways will you work to develop a culture of reading? In other words, what classroom routines and practices will you establish to promote and sustain literacy development? 2) How will you ideally set up a literacy space in your classroom? Define the space physically, describe the resources that would be available in the space, and explain how you envision the space being used.

Further details will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

## **6. Using Literature to Teach Literacy (20%)**

**\*\*Due July 1**

Children's literature provides a platform to engage students in development across the various domains of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. For this assignment, each student will create four literacy lessons based on **one** self-selected children's trade book: a text talk lesson, a robust vocabulary lesson, a writing lesson, and either a phonics, phonemic awareness, or spelling lesson.

Further details will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

## **7. Literacy Strategies Multimedia Presentation (15%)**

**\*\*Due July 3**

Each student will create a multimedia (Prezi, PowerPoint, etc.) presentation on a literacy strategy. A list of strategies will be provided in class, but students may select a strategy not on the list as long as it has been approved by the course instructor. The presentation should focus on 1) describing what the strategy is, 2) explaining how the strategy is enacted, 3) determining when the strategy could best be utilized, and 4) providing a summary of potential benefits and roadblocks.

Further details of the project will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard.

**Assignment Summary:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>	<b>Outcomes Addressed</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Participation	10	All	Daily
Reading Responses	10	All	Various
Creating a Culture of Reading	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11	June 28
Using Literature to Teach Literacy	20	5, 6, 7, 9, 10	July 1
Literacy Strategies Presentation	15	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	July 3
Performance Based Assessment (PBA): <i>Reading, Writing, and Spelling Analysis</i> *	25	1, 4, 5, 8, 9	November 15
Field Experience and Reflection	10	All	November 15

**\*Designated Performance Based Assessment**