GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
PhD in Education, Literacy Program

Course  
EDRD 832 001  
Research Methodologies and Trends in Literacy  
3 credits  
Fall 2015

Class Meeting  
Tuesday, 4:30-7:10  
Robinson Hall B 218

Instructor  
Seth Parsons  
Thompson 1405  
(703) 993-6559 (o)  
(703) 829-7036 (c)  
sparson5@gmu.edu  
Office hours: by appointment

Prerequisites  
EDUC 800, EDRS 810, or permission of instructor

University Catalog Description  
Develops knowledge and skills in the application of research methodologies in literacy to current national and international trends.

Course Description  
This course is a foundational course for doctoral students who have selected Literacy as a specialization or minor in the PhD in Education program. Other PhD in Education students may enroll with instructor permission. Emerging topics and issues are approached through multiple research designs prevalent in the field of literacy. Topics include emerging issues related to literacy research methods, processes, and practices. The course has a strong emphasis on research methodologies in the domain of literacy, so knowledge about foundational theories of literacy and literacy processes is assumed.
**Nature of Course Delivery**
This course will meet face-to-face each week. This course includes multiple instructional strategies. Individual session formats will vary and may include lecture, small group/large group discussion, hands-on, interactive work, student presentations, and cooperative learning.

**Learner Outcomes**
This course is designed to enable students to
1. Develop an understanding and appreciation of a few current research methodologies that encompass current trends and issues in the field of literacy.
2. Complete a content analysis of recent literature in the field of literacy and collaborate with classmates to create a report of current trends and issues in topics of study and methods used.
3. Prepare a research proposal in an area of research interest that fits within a specific research methodology.
4. Participate in class discussion with questions and ideas derived from the readings and pertinent to class topic.

**Professional Standards**
Not applicable

**GMU Policies and Resources for Students**
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [see http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/]
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].
- 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- 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/].
- 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 stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- 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/].

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.
Core Values Commitment
The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles [http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/).

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [see http://gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu).

Required Text

Course Assignments

1. **Participation – 30 points**
   Students are expected to
   - Attend every class
   - Complete all assigned readings and tasks
   - Actively participate in discussions

2. **Methodology Presentation – 30 points**
   Each student will select a chapter from the text to read, so s/he will learn about a specific methodology. The student will consult other sources about the methodology and sample studies of the methodology in use. Each student will conduct a presentation on his/her methodology. Each student will also assign a study for the class to read in advance of his/her presentation.

3. **Content Analysis – 40 points**
   Each student will be assigned a set of literature to review, from which s/he will document the topics of study and the methodologies used. Students will present their findings to the class. Collectively, the class will pull together each individual’s findings to create a picture of the topics being studied and the methods being used in current literacy journals.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>95-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>80-71</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>70-65</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
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### Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment and/or Readings Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/1</td>
<td>Introduction, Syllabus, Assignments, chapter selections</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>Epistemology and theory in educational research</td>
<td>Ch. 20; Kelly, 2006; Unrau &amp; Alvermann, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>Brief look at the recent history of the field of literacy research</td>
<td>Duke &amp; Mallette, 2001; Kamil, 1995; Pearson, 2004; Stanovich, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>Current status of the field of literacy research</td>
<td>Allington &amp; Pressley, 2015; Kamil et al., 2011; Tierney, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>Our project</td>
<td>Ch. 3; Previous content analysis manuscript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>Krippendorff, 1989; Stemler, 2015; Previous content analyses (jigsaw)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>2 methodology presentations; work on content analysis</td>
<td>2 articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>2 methodology presentations; work on content analysis</td>
<td>2 articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/27</td>
<td>2 methodology presentations; work on content analysis</td>
<td>2 articles</td>
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<td>11/3</td>
<td>2 methodology presentations; work on content analysis</td>
<td>2 articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>2 methodology presentations; work on content analysis</td>
<td>2 articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/17</td>
<td>Content analysis presentations</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>Writing Class</td>
<td>Saldaña, 2014</td>
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<td>12/1</td>
<td><strong>No class - LRA</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>Exam date</td>
<td>Ch. 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Reading List – EDRD 832, 2015

Epistemology and Theory

Brief Historical Look at the Field

Current Status of the Field

Content Analysis Methodology

Previous Content Analyses


**Writing**