



George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Elementary Education

Children's Literature for Teaching in Diverse Settings
ELED 258 – DL4
3 Credits
CRN: 80936
Fall 2024
Asynchronous Online

Instructor: April Mattix Foster, PhD

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Office Hours: By appointment

Office: 1800 Thompson, Fairfax Campus

Meeting Dates: August 26 – December 8, 2024

Meeting Time: online

Meeting Location: online

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Recommended: C or better in ENGH 101

University Catalog Course Description

Introduces children's literature as a tool for working with children across a range of contexts, including early childhood and elementary classrooms. Explores multiple approaches and strategies for literature use in diverse settings with an eye towards format, genre, curricular connections, and overall utility.

This course fulfills the Mason Core Literature requirement.

Course Overview

This course broadly and deeply examines literature for children in preschool through Grade 6. The focus is on selecting and using appropriate books for children in a variety of diverse contexts including literature-based reading and content area instruction. In addition, students explore multiple instructional approaches and strategies for literature use in diverse settings.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Mason's Learning Management System (LMS). You will log in to the course site using your Mason email name (everything before @gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 19th at 12:00 pm.

- To access your course in Canvas: <https://canvas.gmu.edu/login/canvas>.

Under no circumstances may students participate in online class sessions while operating motor vehicles.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Read and comprehend the content of various kinds of children's books with attention to detail, nuance, and literary qualities and literary devices (INTASC 4 & **Mason Core Literature Outcomes 1 and 3**)
2. Plan for meeting the needs of diverse classroom populations including disabilities, SES, ethnicities and race, gender, and linguistic diversity (INTASC 1, 2, 3)
3. Integrate children's literature across content areas (INTASC 1, 4, 5, 7)
4. Describe why learning communities and motivation are important and describe the major strategies for motivating students. (INTASC 1, 3, 5)
5. Identify genres in children's literature and collect, read, and categorize books based on these genres (INTASC 3, 4, 5, 7)
6. Engage in book discussion to deepen knowledge about and appreciation of children's literature in conjunction with language arts content standards and the historical and cultural contexts within which the literature is situated (INTASC 4, 5, 8 & **Mason Core Literature Outcome 4**)
7. Plan for and use various instructional strategies including presentation, direct instruction, concept teaching, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and classroom discussion and adapt each to meet the needs of diverse students. (INTASC 8)

This course fulfills the Mason Core Literature requirement and addresses the following learning outcomes:

1. Students will be able to read for comprehension, detail, and nuance.
3. Analyze the ways specific literary devices contribute to the meaning of a text.
4. Identify and evaluate the contribution of the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts in which a literary text is produced.

**Elementary Education Standards are not applicable

Required Texts

Schneider, J. J. (2016). The inside, outside, and upside downs of children's literature. Retrieved from http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/childrens_lit_textbook/

**Additional required readings will be posted in Course Reserves.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed internet access with updated browsers.
 - Canvas supported browsers: <https://guides.instructure.com/a/720329>
- Consistent and reliable access to GMU email and the course LMS, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Speakers and a microphone or a microphone-enabled headset for use with the synchronous web conferencing tools.
- Note that students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

Course Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Mondays, and finish on Sundays.
- **Log-in Frequency:**
Students must actively check the course LMS site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least [3] times per week.
- **Participation:**
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due. It is highly recommended that you print a copy of the course schedule to keep track of the various assignments.
- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must

always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor. The submission deadline for assignments is 11:59 pm 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. **All writing assignments should be submitted as Word document.** 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 for in extraordinary circumstances. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe.

1. Module Activity Journals (15%)

Due: Each Module

Your challenge is to immerse yourself in the topics and perspectives presented in the course. Each Module you will be asked to engage with the material and reflect on what you have learned. You should present your opinions in your activity journals, but you must justify them with facts and proper sources.

2. Module Assignments (30%)

Due: Each Module (Modules 1-14)

Each week there will be a content assignment related to the topic of the module. These assignments will be explained within each module, and assignments will be due at the end of the module. These assignments are meant to give you an opportunity to engage with the material and to apply your learning.

3. Quizzes (15%)

Due: Each Module (Modules 1-13)

Each week there will be a five-question content quiz. All questions come directly from the course readings and lecture. Each quiz has a thirty-minute time limit, and one try – but you are free to use your course materials and notes to take the quiz.

4. Self as a Reader(15%)

Due: September 29

Our reading identity is formed over time as we choose and experience books to read. Selections

may be based on our interests, preferences, academics, and biases. What we read shapes our thinking, perceptions, beliefs, and responses. Books fill our needs, teach us, and impact who we become.

- This assignment is designed to help us consider the powerful role literature can play in shaping young readers' identities by focusing on the young person we are most familiar with: ourselves.
 - What book or books did you read as a child or young adolescent that helped you love reading? What made the book such a positive experience? Was there a particular character you identified with, a character you loved to hate, a book you didn't want to stop reading?
 - Select **one of the following activities** from your reading life and write an essay:
 - **Create a timeline of your history of reading.** What reading experiences have been most influential in your life? How were you encouraged and discouraged to become a reader? What does the timeline reveal about your reading identity? What did you learn about yourself by creating your timeline?
 - **Reread a book that you first read as a child or young adolescent.** Begin your essay with a 1-2 paragraph summary of the book, then develop your essay juxtaposing your identity and experience reading this book as a child or young adolescent with your identity and experience reading this book as an adult. What motivated you to read the book? What did you find most engaging about the book?
- Write a 3-4 page essay describing your timeline experiences or the book. Your essay should be personal, insightful, and should build a strong emotional response in your reader. ***This assignment is intended to be a personal and reflective piece rather than an academic or scholarly essay.***

4. Author Study (25%)

Due: December 8

As we are immersing ourselves in children's picturebooks, we also need to explore some of the influential writers of picturebooks. The author study assignment is an opportunity for you to do this with one author. **Please note:** there will be a sign up of selected authors in class. It is your responsibility to select an author from the provided list for this assignment. Students who do not select an author from the list will be assigned one. **ONLY** authors from the list may be used to complete this assignment.

Assignment Directions:

- You will research your selected children's book author and three picturebooks by the author.
- You will closely read at least 3 of the author's picturebooks and analyze them for literary elements and apply the anti-bias checklist, comparing titles through a critical literacy lens.
 - NOTE: Do not choose books from the same series.
- You will submit an audio PowerPoint presentation and write a synthesis paper (2-3 pages). The audio PowerPoint is a PowerPoint presentation that you voice record what you would say during a presentation for each slide.

- **Audio PowerPoint**
 - Slide 1: Introduction to the author
 - Slide 2: Biographical information on the author
 - Slide 3: Book 1 (Provide a picture of the picturebook)
 - Slide 4: Literary Analysis of Book 1
 - Slide 5: Anti-bias checklist of Book 1
 - Slide 6: Book 2 (Provide a picture of the picturebook)
 - Slide 7: Literary Analysis of Book 2
 - Slide 8: Anti-bias checklist of Book 2
 - Slide 9: Book 3 (Provide a picture of the picturebook)
 - Slide 10: Literary Analysis of Book 3
 - Slide 11: Anti-bias checklist of Book 3
 - Slide 12: Your favorite book (tell what your favorite book of these three are – and tell WHY)
- **Synthesis Paper**
 - Explain how the author’s writing has changed over time **in these three picturebooks**
 - The author’s contribution to children’s literature **in these three picturebooks**
 - Your paper should include a strong thesis and summary statement
 - Include a reference list of the books included and sources cited in the analysis.
 - **You MUST cite and reference a minimum of five course readings. If you do not include this, you will have to resubmit the paper.**

Further information and a rubric are available on Blackboard.

Assignments Due Dates Chart

Assignment	Percent of Final Grade	Due Date
Activity Journals	15	One each module end date, for modules 1-14
Module Activities	30	One each module end date, for modules 1-14
Quizzes	15	On each module end date, for modules 1 - 13
Self as a Reader	15	September 22
Author Study	25	December 8

- **Grading**

Students are expected to submit all assignments **on time** in the manner outlined by the instructor. Blackboard will be used for uploading assignments. **Late assignments will automatically lose 1 point per day.** Please be aware of the due dates on by 11:59pm on the last day of the Module. This includes larger assignments, modular assignments, and the discussion board responses and replies (*unless specified in the syllabus).

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grading</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
A+	97-100	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A	93-96	
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77 – 79	
C	73 – 76	
C-	70-72	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course. Grade does not meet the minimum requirement for licensure courses.
D	60-69	
F	<60	

Honor Code & Integrity of Work

Integrity of Work: Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated as such. In regard to honesty in work students will be expected to:

- a) Review the University integrity and honesty policies in the student handbook for guidelines regarding plagiarism and cheating (summarized below). I will gladly clarify my stance on any questionable or “grey area” issues you may have.
- b) Refrain from dishonest work as it will receive a minimum penalty of zero on the assignment and a maximum penalty of a **zero** for the course with a report to the Honor committee. The GMU Honor Code requires that faculty submit any suspected Honor Code violations to the Honor Committee. Therefore, any suspected offense will be submitted for adjudication.
- c) ***All work submitted in this course must be your own original work; use of AI writing tools, such as ChatGPT, are prohibited in this course and will be considered***

a violation of academic integrity. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Academic Integrity.

Violations of the Honor Code include:

1. Copying a paper or part of a paper from another student (current or past);
2. Reusing work that you have already submitted for another class (unless express permission has been granted by your current professor **before** you submit the work);
3. Copying the words of an author from a textbook or any printed source (including the Internet) or closely paraphrasing without providing a citation to credit the author. For examples of what should be cited, please refer to:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

Use of Generative AI

Use of Generative AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of Mason's Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

Professional Dispositions (CEHD Student Guide)

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide>.

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Class Schedule

Module 1	<i>Why Read Children's Literature</i>
Dates	August 26 – September 1
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Syllabus carefully• Watch VIDEO: Introduction to the text• Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 1• Read ARTICLE: <i>The Wonder of Reading Children's Literature as an Adult</i>• Watch VIDEO: <i>The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore</i>
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read through syllabus2. Read and reflect on Module 1 materials3. Create a journal entry4. Quiz Module 1

	5. Submit Initial Thoughts Assignment
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Module 2	<i>What is Children's Literature</i>
Dates	September 2- September 8
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 2, pp. 9-22 and Chapter 3, pp. 28-31 and 44-53 • Watch VIDEO: Last Stop On Market Street • Watch VIDEO: Where Are You From? • Watch VIDEO: Your Name Is a Song by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow (BEGIN at 1:15 and end at 12:50)
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 2 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quick Module 2 4. Submit Scavenger Hunt Assignment

Module 3	<i>How is Children's Literature Categorized?</i>
Dates	September 9 – September 15
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 4 • Watch VIDEO: Dreamers • Watch VIDEO: Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut • Watch VIDEO: Eyes That Kiss in the Corners • Listen to AUDIOFILE: Analysis of Princess Furball illustrations
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 3 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 3 4. Submit Picturebook Analysis Video Assignment

Module 4	<i>Literary Elements and Critical Literacy</i>
Dates	September 16 – September 22
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 5, pp. 126-129 • Read TEXT: Horning, Chapter 7, pp. 148-163 • Read ARTICLE: O'Byrne (2018) What is Critical Literacy? (**Be sure to click on and watch the first embedded video.

	<p>Stop reading when you reach the "Dialectic Critique" section.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Sims Bishop (1990) Windows and Mirrors • Watch VIDEO: The Cart That Carried Martin
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 4 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Submit Literary Elements in a Favorite Picture Book Chart Assignment 4. Quiz Module 4 5. Submit Self as Reader Assignment

Module 5	<i>Challenged and Banned Books</i>
Dates	September 23 – September 29
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 12 • Read ARTICLE: Scheib, The Politics of Children's Literature • Read ARTICLE: Ferguson, Must Monsters Always Be Male? • Explore WEBSITE: American Library Association, Advocacy Books • Watch 3 VIDEOS of your choice: Banned/Challenged books (available on Blackboard)
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 5 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 5 4. Submit Challenged Books Chart Assignment

Module 6	<i>Critical Literacy and Anti-Bias Books</i>
Dates	September 30 – October 6
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Derman-Sparks, Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books. • Read ARTICLE: Bigelow, Time to Abolish Columbus Day • Watch VIDEO: Critical Literacy • Review WEBSITE: Social Justice Books
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 6 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 6

	4. Submit Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books Assignment
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Module 7	<i>Multicultural Texts</i>
Dates	October 7 – October 13
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: CLA Position Paper • Read ARTICLE: Lu, Multicultural Children's Literature • Read ARTICLE: Hill, The Color of Authenticity • Explore WEBSITE: Center for The Study of Multicultural Children's Literature https://www.csmcl.org/ • Read ARTICLE: Why Diverse Books Matter: Windows and Mirrors (Note: You are not required to watch the embedded videos in this article, but they are excellent!) • Watch VIDEO: Fry Bread
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 7 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 7 4. Submit Selecting Multicultural Books Assignment

Module 8	<i>Nonfiction-Informational Text and Biography</i>
Dates	October 14 – October 20
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 11 • Read WEBSITE: Nonfiction Award-Winning Books • Watch VIDEO: Paper Son by Julie Leung • Watch VIDEO: Creature Features
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 8 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 8 4. Submit Contemporary Nonfiction Assignment

Module 9	<i>Traditional Literature</i>
Dates	October 21 – October 27

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 9, pp. 252-266 • Explore WEBSITE: Start with a Book • Read BLOG: Just a Minute Review • View VIDEO: Just a Minute
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 9 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 9 4. Submit Literary Elements Assignment

Module 10	<i>Contemporary Realistic Fiction</i>
Dates	October 28 – November 3
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Andrews, Characteristics of Realistic Fiction • Read WEBSITE: Kotek Children’s Literature Blog: Contemporary Fiction • Watch VIDEO: Fiction Book Genres – What is Realistic Fiction • Watch VIDEO: Those Shoes • Watch VIDEO: Shortcut
Assignments due	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 10 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 10 4. Submit Contemporary Realistic Fiction Assignment

Module 11	<i>Historical Fiction</i>
Dates	November 4 – November 10
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Bradman Historical Fiction for Children • Read BLOG: Kotek Children’s Literature Blog: Historical Fiction • Read ARTICLE: Kalges, Why Historical Fiction is Important • Read ARTICLE: Redinger Children's Historical Fiction • Read ARTICLE: Kingsbury Historical Fiction Picture Books • Review WEBSITE: Uncover the Past • Watch VIDEO: Faithful Elephants • Watch VIDEO: The Cats in Krasinski Square

Assignments due	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 11 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 11 4. Submit Historical Fiction Assignment
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Module 12	<i>Fantasy and Science Fiction</i>
Dates	November 11 – November 17
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: <i>Fantasy Books: There's a Whole Other World Out There</i> • Read WEBSITE: Best Fantasy for Kids • Watch VIDEO: Sulwe
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 12 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 12

Module 13	<i>Poetry</i>
Dates	November 18 – November 24
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read TEXT: Schneider, Chapter 10 • Read ARTICLE: Vardell, Poetry Power • Read ARTICLE: The Thirty Poems You Should Know • Watch VIDEO: Looking Like Me
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 13 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Quiz Module 13 4. Submit Lyrical Book Assignment

Module 14	<i>Course Reflection</i>
Dates	November 25 – December 1
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read ARTICLE: Crippen, The Power of Children's Literature
Assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and reflect on Module 14 materials 2. Create a journal entry 3. Submit Journal Reflection Assignment

Module 15	<i>Author Study</i>
Dates	December 2 – December 8
Readings	• None
Assignments	1. Submit Author Study Assignment

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason’s Academic Standards (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:
 - Canvas: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see: <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

- Timely Care: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
- Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Statements of Position

Student and Faculty Names and Pronouns

Name and pronoun use: If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via email. I encourage students to use tools Mason provides to change your name and pronouns on Mason records, if you so choose:

<https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/>

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The College of Education and Human Development, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic/class status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and ability status, among other characteristics.

- We value our diverse student body and desire to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff.
- We commit to supporting students, faculty and staff who have been the victims of bias and discrimination.
- We promote continuous learning and improvement to create an environment that values diverse points of view and life experiences.
- We believe that faculty, staff, and students play a role in creating an environment that engages diverse points of view.
- We believe that by fostering their willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources and viewpoints, our students will gain competence in communication, critical thinking and global understanding, and become aware of their biases and how they affect their interactions with others and the world.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Land acknowledgment engages all present in an ongoing indigenous protocol to enact meaningful, reciprocal relationships with ancestors and contemporary tribal nations. As a state

university, we have a responsibility to include and support indigenous communities and sovereign tribes in our work.

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to these Potomac River life sources, to the Doeg ancestors, who Virginia annihilated in violent campaigns while ripping their lands apart with the brutal system of African American enslavement, to the recognized Virginia tribes who have lovingly stewarded these lands for millennia, including the Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Nansemond, Monacan, Mattaponi, Patawomeck, and Nottaway, past, present, and future, and to the Piscataway tribes, who have lived on both sides of the river from time immemorial.



Common Policies Affecting All Courses at George Mason University

Updated August 2024

These four policies affect students in all courses at George Mason University. This Course Policy Addendum must be made available to students in all courses (see [Catalog Policy AP.2.5](#)).

Additional policies affecting this course, and additional resources or guidance regarding these policies, may be provided to students by the instructor.

Academic Standards

Academic Standards exist to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution's goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourage continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.

As members of the George Mason University community, we are committed to fostering an environment of trust, respect, and scholarly excellence. Our academic standards are the foundation of this commitment, guiding our behavior and interactions within this academic community. The practices for implementing these standards adapt to modern practices, disciplinary contexts, and technological advancements. Our standards are embodied in our courses, policies, and scholarship, and are upheld in the following principles:

- **Honesty:** Providing accurate information in all academic endeavors, including communications, assignments, and examinations.
- **Acknowledgement:** Giving proper credit for all contributions to one's work. This involves the use of accurate citations and references for any ideas, words, or materials created by others in the style appropriate to the discipline. It also includes acknowledging shared authorship in group projects, co-authored pieces, and project reports.
- **Uniqueness of Work:** Ensuring that all submitted work is the result of one's own effort and is original, including free from self-plagiarism. This principle extends to written assignments, code, presentations, exams, and all other forms of academic work.

Violations of these standards—including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating—are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with university policies. The process for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating violations is [outlined in the university's procedures](#). Consequences of violations may include academic sanctions, disciplinary actions, and other measures necessary to uphold the integrity of our academic community.

The principles outlined in these academic standards reflect our collective commitment to upholding the highest standards of honesty, acknowledgement, and uniqueness of work. By adhering to these principles, we ensure the continued excellence and integrity of George Mason University's academic community.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for understanding how these general expectations regarding academic standards apply to each course, assignment, or exam they participate in; students should ask their instructor for clarification on any aspect that is not clear to them.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <https://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu. Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for registering with Disability Services and communicating about their approved accommodations with their instructor *in advance* of any relevant class meeting, assignment, or exam.

FERPA and Use of GMU Email Addresses for Course Communication

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) governs the disclosure of [education records for eligible students](#) and is an essential aspect of any course. **Students must use their GMU email account** to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. Instructors will not respond to messages sent from or send messages regarding course content to a non-GMU email address.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for checking their GMU email regularly for course-related information, and/or ensuring that GMU email messages are forwarded to an account they do check.

Title IX Resources and Required Reporting

As a part of George Mason University's commitment to providing a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities. Accordingly, **all non-confidential employees, including your faculty member, have a legal requirement to report to the Title IX Coordinator, all relevant details obtained directly or indirectly about any incident of Prohibited Conduct** (such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based stalking, dating/domestic violence). Upon notifying the Title IX Coordinator of possible Prohibited Conduct, the Title IX Coordinator will assess the report and determine if outreach is required. If outreach is required, the individual the report is about (the "Complainant") will receive a communication, likely in the form of an email, offering that person the option to meet with a representative of the Title IX office.

For more information about non-confidential employees, resources, and Prohibited Conduct, please see [University Policy 1202: Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence](#). Questions regarding Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator via email to TitleIX@gmu.edu, by phone at 703-993-8730, or in person on the Fairfax campus in Aquia 373.

Student opportunity: If you prefer to speak to someone *confidentially*, please contact one of Mason's confidential employees in Student Support and Advocacy ([SSAC](#)), Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)), Student Health Services ([SHS](#)), and/or the [Office of the University Ombudsperson](#).

This document is updated annually and maintained by the [Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning](#), in cooperation with GMU Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee.