What is Literacy?

Wednesdays 4:00 - 5:00pm
FIT 405

Course Blog: https://whatisliteracyblog.wordpress.com/

January 20 - Introduction: The Theoretical and the Personal

January 27 – What is reading? What do we mean by literacy?
Guest Video: P. David Pearson, Jeanne Chall lecture
Speaker: Mark Conley, University of Memphis
YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/hH2qPlIIXprw
Review of the various characterizations of reading from the past 50 years.

February 3 – How does someone learn how to read? How does someone learn how to write?
Speaker: Mark Conley, University of Memphis
A critique of the fight around two differing perspectives on learning to read: The Simple View versus the Not-So-Simple View.

February 10 – How does someone not learn how to read or write? What should we do about it?
Guest Speaker: Richard Allington, University of Tennessee
The author of No Quick Fix and What Really Matters for Struggling Readers will share his views of difficulties with reading and writing and what to do about them.

February 17 - What is the role of play in learning to read or write?
Early Literacy
Guest Speaker: Kathy Roskos, John Carroll University
Long time early childhood researcher will share her work on the relationship between play and literacy development. This contrasts with some current views that advocate for intensive instruction rather than play for early literacy.

February 24 - What are the differences in literacy in Memphis? What is behind the differences? What are various people and organizations doing to respond to the challenges?
Guest Speaker: Adriane Williams, formerly of Seeding Success and the Collaborative Action Network, Memphis
Presentation on what literacy looks like across the educational landscape of Memphis and what some in the community are doing to confront the challenges.

**March 2 - What are effective interventions intended to help students who struggle with reading and writing? The Memphis Literacy Corps and others**
*Speaker: Mark Conley, University of Memphis*
Presenting the characteristics and research around effective reading intervention programs, including the locally developed Memphis Literacy Corps.

**Spring Break March 9**
No public meeting

**March 16 - What is the role of identity and community work in supporting reading and writing?**
*Guest Speaker: Marcelle Haddix, Syracuse University*
Research about the roles of personal identity and community in supporting literacy both in teachers and young children.

**March 23 – No Class, No Public Meeting**

**March 30 – What is disciplinary literacy? How is it different from basic or early literacy?**
*Speaker: Mark Conley, University of Memphis*
Notions of what it means to be literate from a subject matter perspective, in research, standards and practice.

**April 6 – What is adult literacy? How is adult literacy similar or different from literacy at other ages or in other contexts?**
*Guest Speaker: Kevin Dean, Director, Literacy Mid-South, Memphis*
Dimensions of adult literacy and what makes adult literacy different in theory and practice in comparison with other areas of literacy.

**April 13 – How are reading and writing similar or different in digital media contexts?**
*Guest Speaker: Don Leu, University of Connecticut*
Presentation about digital literacies and school contexts, including issues of equity and practice in high needs versus high resourced school environments.

**April 20 – How do we assess reading and writing? What is the potential and what are the limitations? How will we know when we have “made it?”**
*Speaker: Mark Conley, University of Memphis*
Assessment development and practice in international, national and state contexts. Implications of the current fight over assessment practices for education and beyond.

**April 27 - Class project presentations**
No public meeting