



University of Memphis College of Education

College of Education
The University of Memphis
Instruction and Curriculum Leadership
Reading 4241
Fall Semester 2009
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College of Education Norms

I take 100% responsibility.
I seek equity of voice.
I am willing to talk about sensitive issues.
I listen for understanding.
I appreciate the strengths and contributions of others.
I bring positive energy and encouragement to the team.
I commit to the mission of the college.

RDNG 4241 Reading in Grades 4-8

Course Description:

Instructional strategies and assessment procedures relevant to the acquisition of reading, speaking, listening, writing, and thinking skills for students in the middle grades. Fourteen hours field experiences. **PREREQUISITE:** admission to TEP and ELED 4240.

This course is about early adolescence, changes in standards and demands for the future for our youth, and what teachers can do to help their students on the journey. This course is about you, a beginning teacher, and your transition from successful student to, as one principal puts it so well, “coming from around the desk” to become a professional teacher. No one course can give you everything you need to know about this journey. This course focuses on literacy in the context of classroom, content area and community. It also offers opportunities for observing and experiencing students and literacy in classroom settings. Welcome to our course!

Prerequisites: Admission to TEP and ELED 4240

Text(s):

Conley, M. (2007). Content Area Literacy: Learners in Context. New York: Pearson.

Course Objectives:

In this course, students will:

- develop an understanding of oneself, as a person and as a teacher, as a basis for understanding others;

- understand the interplay between individual, diverse students and the contexts in which they live and learn (personal, subject matter, school, community);
- develop knowledge, skills and dispositions required for literacy teaching in the middle grades;
- increase positive dispositions toward working with diverse adolescents, especially young adolescents;
- promote knowledge about literacy, the role of literacy in students' lives, and in subject matter teaching and learning; and
- build on field-based teaching and other course experiences to reflect on your role as a beginning teacher.

Major Topics:

Date	Topic	Reading Assignments Due	Assignments
Week 1, September 1	Course Introduction	Download and read the syllabus.	
Week 2, September 8	The Literacy Crisis in Grades 4 through 8, Changes in Literacy Demands in the Middle Grades	Read Chapter 1, Helping All Adolescents Learn in New Times, Chapter 2, Adolescent Literacy, Diversity and Teaching Today's Learners	Design a PowerPoint slide that introduces you as the teacher you are going to be and upload it in the drop box on our website. Present your PowerPoint slide in class.
Week 3, September 15	How Can you Demonstrate that You Know your Content Area?	Read Chapter 3, How to Pursue High Expectations for Teaching and Learning in an Era of Standards and Accountability	Select some readings for a curriculum unit that you will prepare this semester. Select several Tennessee curriculum standards that you will teach, using these readings.
Week 4, September 22	Evaluating texts	Read Chapter 5, Understanding and Using Texts	Prepare a PowerPoint slide that represents the content for your curriculum unit.
Week 5, September 29	Who are Your Students? How are You Going to Teach Them When They May be All So Different?	Read Chapter 4, Ongoing Assessment	

Week 6, October 6	Demonstrate how you will assess and know your students in order to teach them and help them learn.	Read Chapter 12, Building Community from Inside and Outside the Classroom	Prepare a PowerPoint slide that represents your approach to ongoing assessment
Week 7, October 13	Identify strategies for effective classroom management.		
Week 8, October 27	Incorporating literacy instruction in your content area.	Read Chapter 6, Planning for Teaching and Learning	Please note: This begins the content that is essential for passing the TN Praxis!
Week 9, November 3	Activating Prior Knowledge and Motivating Students	Read Chapter 7, Activating Prior Knowledge and Increasing Motivation	
Week 10, November 10	Building Vocabulary,	Read Chapter 8, Building Vocabulary Knowledge and Strategies	
Week 11, November 17	Developing Comprehension	Read Chapter 9, Guiding Students' Reading to Learn	
Week 12, November 24	Promoting Critical Thinking	Read Chapter 10, Guiding Students' Critical Literacy	
Week 13, December 1	Writing Instruction and Your Content Area	Read Chapter 11, Developing Content Area Writers	Prepare a PowerPoint slide that demonstrates that you know how to incorporate literacy into your content area teaching and learning.
Week 14, December 8	Who Am I as a Teacher? presentations		Present your PowerPoint that demonstrates your

			talents as a curriculum developer.
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Course Assignments and Grading Criteria:

Who Am I as a Literacy Teacher? – PowerPoint and Final Presentations

One of the goals of this course is to help you get gainfully employed as a successful, practicing teacher. In this competitive environment with great concern over education, not everyone gets to be a teacher, much less employed as one. To compete, you need to be uniquely committed to reaching all children. Literacy is a key part of that commitment. Over the span of this semester, you will be provided many resources and ideas about how to demonstrate your commitment. The tool for demonstrating your commitment will be a PowerPoint (you may also create a website, or portion of a website you have already started) that you can take with you to a job interview. Your job will be to convince a prospective employer that (1) you know your content area well, (2) you have ways to assess and know your students and communicate about their progress, and (3) you understand multiple ways to provide literacy help with their understanding in your content area. This will be the focus of your PowerPoint and final presentation for the course.

Grading Criteria

Students are responsible for

- participating in all class discussions, including those online;
- completing all course readings in advance of class;
- and satisfactorily completing all course assignments.

The instructor reserves the right to determine if individual students have completed particular assignments with sufficient quality. Assignments that do not meet course standards will be returned and students will be asked to revise them.

Please note: Consistent with teacher preparation program standards, Expectations of All Candidates Seeking Teacher Licensure at the University of Memphis, students who fail to follow the attendance policy outlined below (informing the instructor in advance about missing class) will not receive the highest grades for the course.

For an A:

Course performance is above and beyond expectations. Class participation and online discussions are informed by independent work, seeking out additional information in print and online.

For a B +:

Course performance is satisfactorily meets expectations and sometimes exceeds expectations.

For a B:

Course performance satisfactorily meets expectations.

For a C +:

Course performance does not meet expectations in at least one area (online and class participation, attendance, final project, field-based teaching).

For a C:

Course performance is substandard in more than one area (online and class participation, attendance, final project, field-based teaching).

Attendance Criteria

You are required to come to class and participate in the online discussions as outlined in this syllabus. Professional behavior consists of *contacting your instructor in advance of any absences, and making arrangements with your instructor to make up any lost time or assignments*. Failure to do so could lead to a reduction in your grade and/or failure in the course (0.0 course grade). Please keep your instructor informed at all times of any anticipated absences. This policy is consistent with expectations you will need to meet as a prospective professional educator.

Please Note: There is a requirement for 14 hours of school-based fieldwork for successful completion of RDNG 4241. Failure to meet this requirement consists of grounds for failing the course. Submission of your Clinical Experience Sign-In Sheet is evidence that you have met this requirement.

ICL Department Attendance Policy

For classes that meet once a week:

Attendance is required.

At the 2nd unexcused absence 5 points are deducted from your final grade.

At the 3rd unexcused absence the student receives an automatic F in the course.

Arrival at class late or leaving early twice equals one absence.

For classes that meet twice a week:

Attendance is required

At the 3rd unexcused absence 5 points is deducted from your final grade

At the 5th unexcused absence the student receives an automatic F in the course.

Arrival at class late or leaving early twice equals one absence.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Memphis does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations. *The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor (at the beginning of the course) of any disabling condition, which will require modification to avoid discrimination.* Faculty are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

Written Assignments and Academic Misconduct: All written work submitted must be the student's original work and conform to the guidelines of the *American Psychological Association (APA)* available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning *plagiarism*. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions by the College of Education.