Teaching Struggling Readers: Theory into Practice (E)
15:252:592; Spring 2014
🖥〽🖳 Online
Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Contact

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Instructor: Cheryl McLean	cheryl.mclean@gse.rutgers.edu
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Office Hours: by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: None
Mode of Instruction: ___ Lecture __ Seminar ___ Hybrid _X_ Online ___ Other	Permission required: _X_ No __Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: from the instructor

Required Readings

All Required Readings are posted on Sakai

Course Description, Goals, & Expectations/Requirements

This online course is designed to meet the needs to inservice and preservice teachers/educators at the upper elementary and secondary school levels who are seeking additional resources for teaching struggling readers. In this semester-long course, teachers will explore learning and teaching strategies for "struggling" readers who can be broadly defined as students with a range of reading competences including those who are unmotivated, in remediation, disenchanted or generally unsuccessful in school literacy tasks (Moore, Alvermann, & Hinchman, 2000).

The course will provide participants with a framework for studying their own practice. There will be an emphasis on the integration of research, theory and practice that invites participants to take a hands-on approach to understanding the current literature on struggling readers, and its applications to their own real-world classroom contexts. Course assignments will include critical discussions, professional development workshops, student case study, and instructional intervention unit plan. Course participants will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning through their full engagement, and to make the course as meaningful as possible to their specific interests and needs by developing and conducting tutoring plans, lessons and activities that target their own classrooms and students.

Learning Goals
1. To effectively synthesize literacy theory to assess, target and apply appropriate strategies for a range of struggling readers.
2. To critically reflect on and write about their personal and conceptual assumptions about of who are struggling readers and what it means to teach struggling readers.
3. To develop and document a reading intervention and framework for teaching diverse learners.
4. To apply intervention strategies to teach a class or tutor struggling reader(s).
5. To work collaboratively in groups to expand professional knowledge base by designing and delivering an online workshop on a literacy topic, instructional strategies, and professional texts.
6. To create and execute a plan for curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Expectations

This course is designed to support the teacher, educator and practitioner in his/her preparation for professional practice in his/her own classroom. Consequently, in order to better facilitate ongoing practice, course participants are encouraged to see themselves as practitioners and researchers of their practice.

<u>Note:</u> This syllabus is a general plan and is therefore subject to change.

Participation/Attendance
Each student is expected to be fully prepared to engage in meaningful sharing and co-construction of knowledge. Full and engaged participation in all assignments (individual and group) is required.

<u>All work must be submitted on time</u>. Late submission of assignments will result in a reduction in your overall course letter grade.

Disability Requirements: In accordance with Rutgers University policy, qualified students with disabilities will be reasonably accommodated. Please direct disability request(s) to instructor.

Academic Integrity: With reference to the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity, please note the following:

> *Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course.*
> http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html#Integrity

Assignments

Discussions (20 points)

1. Each student must **post five (5) Discussions** on the Discussion page on Sakai. Your post must be a critical, substantive discussion of the issues and ideas from the weekly readings, tasks, and discussions.
2. In addition to the Discussion posts, you are also required to *respond* **to the posts** of at least TWO of your classmates for each of the assigned weeks.

Workshop Presentation (20 pts.)

For this project, you will collaborate in pairs to create a digital workshop presentation. The workshop presentation must include (a) professional topic (b) practical strategy, and (c) book review.

Case Study Report (40 pts.)

This project requires you conduct apply the theory, strategies and approaches by working with one student of your choice. Your report must contain the following: (a) Student Reader Profile, (b) Tutoring Logs, and (c) Intervention Unit Plan and Critique.

Grading

Procedure

Grades will be based on the following projects/activities and criteria:

Discussion	20 points
Workshop	20 points
Case Report	40 points
Participation/Attendance	20 points
Total	**100 points**

Grading Scale
A = 92-100
B+ = 87-91.99
B = 82-86.99
C+ = 77-81.99
C = 72-76.99
D = 60-71.99

Rubrics

Discussions

4 points = Superior Evidence Shown
> The work shows clear evidence that the writer went beyond the expectations of competent effort by taking the care and effort to distinguish the work as an original, complex, and vigorous example of that criterion. It fulfills its potential given the limits of production and has impact.

3 points = Useful Evidence Shown
> The work is useful and clearly reflects care and concern in terms of fulfilling the needs of the criterion, but doesn't necessarily distinguish itself beyond the expectations of a competently crafted piece.

2 points =Adequate Evidence Shown
> The work fulfills minimum quality standards for the criterion, but shows little enthusiasm or intention to do more. It promises more than it delivers.

1 point = Little Evidence Shown
> The work does little to fulfill the minimum quality standards for the criterion.

0 points = No Evidence Shown / No submission
> The work shows no evidence of any effort to fulfill the criterion.

Criteria for Discussions, Workshop Presentations and Case Study Reports

General Criteria	Description
Depth of Thought and Expression	Includes the specificity with which arguments are supported and the use of details in ways that are apt and help the reader to more clearly see the author's perspective. It must bring out the individual nature of the work through vivid use of detail as well as connect that work to other works.
Organization of Thought & Expression	Includes the logical flow of the language and ideas, as well as the sequencing of details. The detail is organized in such a way that it deepens the grasp of the subject matter and delves beneath the surface. The work must feel cohesive in construction.
Originality of Thought & Expression	Includes deft and interesting use of language, insight into matters discussed, connections, and of thought. The work must feel original in thought and execution.
Synthesis of Ideas	Includes the way the ideas in the text come together as a whole, the way the text includes and rethinks the work of the class, and the way the text includes and rethinks the readings, assigned and otherwise, of the class. The writing must take the ideas of the class and make new meaning rather than merely rehashing or summarizing.
Conventions & Expectations	Includes spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, usage, writing conventions such as title pages and page numbers, physical presentation, correctness of detail, completion of all tasks, and use of appropriate (APA/MLA) formatting where applicable. The work must meet all expectations and requirements of the assignment, and show professionalism in all aspects of a final product and complete what it set out to do with vigor and engagement.

General Session Outline

Session	Date	Guiding Question	Readings	Assignments
1.	Jan 21	**The "Struggling" Reader**: What are my assumptions about the struggling reader/learner? Who are adolescents and how do they learn?	* Beers 1 * Readence 6 *Vaca & Vaca 1 &2 Alvermann_Identities	
2.	Jan 28	**Understanding Achievement (Gap)** How can we begin to understand learners the kinds of support learners need? What theoretical and pedagogical tools and structures of support are available across grade levels?	* Cooper * Palmer * Snow *Thompson * Williams	*Lecture 1*
3	Feb 4	**Reading Foundation:** **(a) Phonics & Spelling** **(b) Fluency and Word Decoding** What are some basic practices and belief about how students learn that can guide instruction?	*Ransinski et al. *Stahl et al. *Templeton *Archer et al. *Kuhn *Paige et al.	*Lecture 2* *Discussion 1*
4	Feb 11	**Reading Comprehension** How do I understand the concepts of comprehension, reading and engagement within the context of the classroom? What are the implications for reading outside of the classroom?	*Mathes * Liang * Kelly * Hall	*Lecture 3*
5	Feb 18	**The Reading Process** Reading to learn or learning to read? Are these mutually exclusive and how might these views inform ways of looking at engagement and instruction?	*Alvermann & Phelps *Ambe *Beers 6,7&8 *Schirmer 3	*Lecture 4* *Discussion 2*
6	Feb 25	**Reading and Literature** What motivates students to see the worth of reading and what discourages students from reading? What counts as useful and substantive texts?	*Buehl *Gavelek & Raphael *Raphael *Raphael & McMahon *Rickards Smith & Wilhelm	*Lecture 5* **Reader Profile**
7	Mar 4	**Intervention Strategies: Theory into practice** What can we do to help students who struggle as readers become more proficient and confident readers?	*Collins *Dunston *Fisher & Ivey *Graves *Litt *Thomas	*Lecture 6* **Tutoring Log #1** *Discussion 3*
	Mar 11	**Assessments** How do we approach the politics of literacy assessment?	*Alvermann/Phelps 5 *Blasingame *Dennis *Higgins & Miller	*Workshop Group 1*

			Vaca & Vaca 6	**Tutoring Log #2**
9	**Mar 25**	**SPRING RECESS**		
10	Apr 01	**The Teaching/Learning Context:** **Multimodal Literacy** How do we begin to engage students in multiple literacy practices?	*Beach 1&2 *Chun *Gambrell *Moje *Smetana *Vasudevan *Zambo	*Workshop Group 2* *Discussion 4*
11	Apr 8	**The Teaching/Learning Context:** **Classroom Environment** How do environments and instruction shape the learning that occurs?	* Afflerbach * Hynd 4 *Alvermann/Phelps 3 * Kalnin *Schirmer 8	*Workshop Group 3* **Tutoring Log #3**
12	Apr 15	**The Teaching/Learning Context:** **Learners, Readers & Writers**	*Casey *Patterson *Schirmer 7 *Schoenbach 4&7 Vaca & Vaca 3	*Workshop Group 4* **Tutoring Log #4**
13	Apr 22	**Critical Literacy** How do we become critical literacy teachers? What can we do to help students become more thoughtful and critical readers/learners?	*Compton *Alger * Nieto * Hicks * Delpit	*Workshop Group 5* *Discussion 5*
14	Apr 29	**The Reflective Practitioner** What is my evolving approach to literacy instruction for struggling readers/learners?		*Workshop Group 6*
15	May 5			***Case Report***