RUTGERS
Graduate School of Education

Literacy Development in the Elementary and Middle School
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – Graduate School of Education
Spring 2016. Course 15:299:516 (online)
3 Credits

Instructor: Kristine Shurina	Email: kristine.shurina@gse.rutgers.edu or Kshurina@gmail.com
Phone Number 973-885-1147 (email is the preferred and most reliable way to reach me)	
Office hours: Virtual (in the eCollege Live Chat Room): By appointment (Send an email to set up a day/time)	Prerequisites or other limitations: Must possess initial teacher certification in order to take the online section of this course.
Mode of Instruction: ___ Lecture ___ Seminar ___ Hybrid _x_ Online ___ Other	Permission required: X No __Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: from the Office of Academic Services in the GSE

Students with Disabilities:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

Course Overview

This course serves as an introduction to the teaching of literacy in the upper elementary and middle school. The major focus of the course will be literacy instruction in grades 3 through 8 with some discussion of literacy learning at other levels. We will focus on general classroom instruction, but always with an eye to how to support students who struggle with reading and writing tasks.

Learning Goals:

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:
- Articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and builds upon these connections when creating learning opportunities.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills that are needed for creating and implementing a literacy curriculum using small and large group work, collaborative learning, conferencing, and individual work based on professional standards.
- Identify, plan, and design literacy instruction based on students' needs, developmental progress, learning styles and prior knowledge.
- Identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different types of assessments for evaluating how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and what kinds of experiences will support students' growth and development.
- Critically reflect on his/her teaching and learning.
- Identify and use available resources and materials for instructional planning.
- Articulate how educational research can be used as a means for continuous learning and development.

The **New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)** can be found at http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap9.pdf. In this course, we will be covering the following standards:

Standard One: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard Four: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches, particularly as they relate to the Common Core Standards and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard Seven: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Standard Eight: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

Standard Ten: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

The **Council for the Accreditation of Education Professionals** (2013) standards can be found at http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final_board_approved1.pdf. We will address the following standard in this course:

Standard One: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge The provider ensures that candidates develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and, by completion, are able to use discipline-specific practices flexibly to advance the learning of all students toward attainment of college- and career-readiness standards.

Course catalogue description:

Emphasizes integrated language arts approach to literacy learning in grades three through eight. Connections between reading, writing, and oral language addressed. Reviews strategies to integrate literacy learning with instruction in the content areas.

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General Course Information

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Office Hours
Contact the course instructor through email for an appointment. Office hours are typically held online, but can be arranged on-campus as well.

Course Website
eCollege site: https://ecollege.rutgers.edu/index2.jsp

Required Texts

- Tompkins, G. E. (2009). *Literacy in the middle grades: Teaching reading and writing to fourth through eighth graders* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson. (ISBN: 978-0132348492)
- One children's or young adult nonfiction or historical fiction text published since approximately 2010. (See additional criteria and email the instructor for approval.)
- A variety of required readings in the form of PDF files, websites, online texts, etc. will be available through the Rutgers library system and/or from your course instructor
- One professional book from a list provided in class for your professional development group (PDG)

Additional Resources (provided by course instructor)

Journal Articles:

Botzakis, S. (2014). Visual and digital texts. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 57*(6), 503-505.

Fang, Z. & Pace, B. G. (2013). Teaching with challenging texts in the disciplines: Text complexity and close reading. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 57*(2), 104-108.

Hagood, M. C., (2012). Risks, responsibilities, and rewards of using new literacies in the middle grades. *Voices from the Middle, 19*(4), 10-16.

Henry, L. A. (2006). SEARCHing for the answer: The critical role of new literacies while reading on the internet. *The Reading Teacher, 59*(7), 614-627.

Hutchinson, A., & Woodward, L., (2014). A planning cycle for integrating digital technology into literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 67*(6), 455-464.

Kucan, L. (2012). What is important to know about vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 65*(6), 360-366.

McLaughlin, M., & DeVoogd, G. (2004). Critical literacy as comprehension: Expanding reader response. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 48*(1), 52-62

Pacheco, M. B., & Goodwin, A. P. (2013). Putting two and two together: Middle school students' morphological problem solving strategies for unknown words. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 56*(7), 541-553.

Snow, C., & Moje, E. (2010). Why is everyone talking about adolescent literacy? *Phi Delta Kappan, 91*(6), 66-69.

Digital Resources: Podcasts, blogs, newscasts:

Voice of Literacy podcast by Dr. Julie Coiro http://www.voiceofliteracy.org/posts/44978

"Does the Fight for a Cursive Comeback Miss the Point?" NPR "All Things Considered" broadcast http://www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2014/03/25/294212825/kids-these-days-can-type-but-cant-write-cursive-is-that-bad

"Why Writing By Hand Could Make You Smarter" by William Klemm in *Psychology Today (2013)* http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/memory-medic/201303/why-writing-hand-could-make-you-smarter

"What's Lost as Handwriting Fades? by Maria Konnikova in *The New York Times (June 2, 2014)* http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/03/science/whats-lost-as-handwriting-fades.html?src=me

"New Literacies and the Common Core" by William Kist, *Educational Leadership (2013)* http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar13/vol70/num06/New-Literacies-and-the-Common-Core.aspx

"Digital Literacies and the Common Core" a blog post by Joe Wood at JoeWoodOnline http://www.joewoodonline.com/digital-literacy-common-core/

"Why Core Standards Must Embrace Media Literacy" by Richard Beach and Frank Baker, *EdWeek 2011* http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/06/22/36baker.h30.html

Course Organization

This course is organized into ten modules. Each module will have its own page in eCollege that will outline all the work to be done. It may be helpful to think of each module as a class session, which if held in person would be about three hours in duration. So, in addition to readings that should be completed before the module (class session), there will be activities and other work listed on the module that will take approximately three hours to complete. Then, as would be the case in a face-to-face course, there will be additional major assignments due periodically throughout the semester.

Module 1 is designed to introduce you to the course and to the various technologies that will be used throughout the semester. You will have the opportunity to introduce yourself to your classmates and to begin to make connections with those who have similar interests and goals for the course.

Module 2 "sets the stage" for discussing literacy instruction in grades 4-8. You will learn about research, theory, and educational standards (both state and national) that guide teaching at this level.

Modules 3 – 8 make up the majority of the course. Within this section of the course, you will take a close look at effective instruction in various literacy domains including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and word study. You will also examine issues related to differentiation and critical literacy.

Module 9 gives special attention to the materials and instructional programs that can be used to teach literacy or require literacy skills (e.g. textbooks). Here you will consider how to best use the materials available to teachers at this level. You will also consider the types of instructional support needed to ensure success in the reading and writing texts required in content area classes (e.g. science class or math class.)

Module 10 will be your creation. It is here that you will share with your classmates what you have learned about a particular aspect of literacy instruction through a webinar that you design.

Course Policies

Assignments
Assignments are due as indicated on the course schedule. The syllabus, course schedule, and due dates can be found on our class eCollege website. You are responsible for knowing what the due dates are.

Some of your assignments require you to post information onto our class eCollege site. I will be regularly visiting the site, so please make sure all comments and responses are posted by their due dates. Major assignments are to be submitted to the Dropbox on the eCollege site by their due date. If there is a problem with the eCollege site or the Dropbox, you should submit your assignment to email addresses listed above.

Participation Policy
Your active participation in this course is vital to the course and to your learning. Your colleagues and I depend on you to share your load of reading for meaning, participate in online discussions, give feedback to your peers, share how you connect readings to classroom experiences, and so on. You are expected to participate in a variety of ways throughout the semester, and your various assignments and projects will incorporate participation as part of their grade. In summary, however, you will be expected to do the following:

- All modules will be posted several days before you will be expected to begin working on them.
- Log into our eCollege site at least twice a week to keep updated on assignments, group activities, peer discussions, etc.
- Participate in online discussions on our eCollege website to illustrate your understanding of weekly readings and how they connect to your own lives.
- Meet deadlines for assignments so that you can keep on track, make steady progress throughout the course, and provide feedback to your peers in a timely manner.

Academic Integrity Policy
You can find the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at the following site: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml . You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policy. Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to

an appropriate penalty. Please pay particular attention to the information provided on Cheating, Fabrication, and Plagiarism.

Confidentiality: When discussing classroom situations during course sessions, do so carefully. Mask the name of a student on any written or visual work shared in class or used in an assignment. When discussing teaching practices you have observed in the field, be mindful of maintaining a tone of professional courtesy. Under no circumstances should you relate stories from classrooms or schools that may be embarrassing to specific teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or family.

Netiquette
Please remember that communicating online should not be any different from when you communicate in a face-to-face class. Although some of your writing assignments do allow for less "academic" and more informal conversations, please refrain from using Internet slang, abbreviations, and acronyms. We cannot assume that everybody understands them. All communications should be courteous and professional.

Technology Policy
In order to make the most of your online learning experience, there are several technical requirements you will need to fulfill. Refer to the guidelines at the following website to help ensure your online success: https://ecollege.rutgers.edu/technicalreq.jsp.

Throughout the semester, you will be using various online programs and tools. Many of these are Web 2.0 tools that are found on free, public websites. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate technology capabilities to successfully complete assignments and activities. Rutgers University does provide technology assistance for programs like eCollege, and I am also available to assist you whenever I can.

Murphy's Law states, "Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong." Computers crash. Internet access can be limited during a thunderstorm. All of these issues cannot prevent you from submitting assignments on time. My advice to you is:

- Aim to complete all assignments one day early. This way you have one more day to get to the library or a friend's house if the worst happens. You'll also have time to contact me and notify me of any problem.
- Be sure your computer is in good working order. If it has any problems or issues you want to make sure those are ironed out BEFORE the course begins.
- Be sure to arrange access to a 2nd computer. This could be your own; this could be the computer lab or a friend's home computer. This may become important if your first choice computer fails at some point in the semester.
- Test the websites you are assigned to use as soon as you receive the assignment. Our e-College course website may work at your place of business; however, you may find that later in the course that a site you are expected to access is filtered (not accessible from your place of business). Some sites don't work on older computers while others don't work on newer computers. Videos may not play. Security settings may need to be checked.
- Keep usernames and passwords in a safe place.
- Create back-ups. You should always have two copies of your work. Copying your file to a USB drive and deleting the original is not a back-up. The USB drive can fail too. You should save your work in several places, keeping all files until the course is complete. It may not be going too far to say that important work should be stored online as well as locally (meaning

store a copy online somewhere. This can be accomplished by sending yourself an email with the file attached.)

- Consider drafting your comments for discussion boards on Google Docs so that your work is being saved while it is in progress. You may want to avoid drafting in e-college because if you lose connection before you save, your work could be lost.
- Double-check that your work has been submitted successfully. Make sure assignments are uploaded and posts are submitted. You will be able to check the Dropbox folder to see that your assignments have uploaded. If you have emailed an assignment to me, be sure that you have received an email verifying that I have received it within 24 hours. If you don't hear from me, email me again and reattach your work.

Grading Overview, Assignments & Tentative Schedule

Grading Scale

A = 90% and above
B+ = 87 – 89.9%
B   = 80 – 86.9%
C+ = 77 – 79.9%
C   = 70 – 76.9%
D   = 60 – 69.9%
F   = below 60%

Grading Summary

A = Outstanding work
B = Good work
C = Satisfactory work
D = Poor work
F = Failing work

Your overall course evaluation and final grade will be based on the following:
Online Discussions/Chats (20%)
Nonfiction/Historical Fiction Multimedia Book Talk (15%)
Lesson Plan (15%)
Documentary Assignment (25%)
Professional Development Group Webinar (25%)

Assignment Details
Additional information will be available as the assignment due date approaches.

Online Discussions 20%
Your participation and collaboration are necessary in the effectiveness of this course. In order to fully develop your understanding of the ideas and concepts reviewed in the modules, you will be participating in online discussions with the members in your small group on a regular basis (typically one discussion per module). In these discussions, you will construct responses to given topics and reply to the posts of the members in your group. These discussion topics will require you to not only demonstrate your understanding of the required readings, but to take that information and reflect on how it relates to your personal experiences with education, as well as the society around you. Although requirements for online discussions may differ per module, the following are the general criteria I will be looking for in your responses:
•Your initial discussion posts should be approximately 250-500 words; responses to the members in your small group should be approximately 100 words.
•Discussion posts should be supported by your readings and properly cited using APA format.
•All posts and responses to posts should be completed by the due dates that appear below in this syllabus.
•All responses should clearly and adequately answer the entire discussion prompt.
•It is not advisable to use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "ditto," etc. These types of responses take up space and do not add anything substantial to the conversation. It is important to know that such responses will not be counted for assignment credit.
•Respect each other's ideas, feelings and experience when posting responses.
•Remember to avoid Internet slang and overly informal language (see course policies).

Nonfiction /Historical Fiction Multi-Media Book Talk 15%
You will read a text appropriate for use in grades 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 and create a multi-media book talk based on the text. The book should be new to you and published within the past 5 years (unless special arrangements have been made). You will then create a multi-media book talk (using VoiceThread, Prezi, Animoto, MovieMaker, PowerPoint, iMovie, etc) of approx 5 – 10 minutes in length that could be used to encourage students in grades 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 to read the book themselves. You will post your multimedia book talk for your classmates to review. You will view the book talks of your classmates and will post feedback for at least three of them.

Lesson Plan 15%
This assignment requires you to develop a lesson that teaches a comprehension strategy. A lesson plan format will be provided along with further instructions.

Documentary Project & Reflection Paper 25%
This assignment will require you to create a video documentary that explores either a content area topic of particular relevance to your teaching (e.g. science or social studies topic) or a "hot" topic related to literacy teaching (e.g. teaching English Language Learners, standardized assessments, digital literacies). More information about this project will be provided.

Professional Development Group Presentation 25%
This assignment will require each of you to select a professional text (from a list of titles supplied by your instructor). Groups will be formed based on interest and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with classmates who are also reading about this aspect of literacy instruction. Towards the end of the semester, you will collaborate with these classmates to create a multi-media webinar to share what you have learned with others. You will view/participate in webinars created by classmates and will provide critiques of the instruction.