Joint Syllabus
RE 319 (1 credit) - Literacy Practicum
RE/SE 320 (3 credits) – Understanding Literacy Processes

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Office Hrs: Thurs. 12:30 – 4:30

Prerequisite: Admission to Division of ED
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Texts: Reading Process & Practice (Weaver), Conversations (Routman), Jamie (Parker)
0-325-00377-7 (Third Ed.)
0-325-00109-X
1-57110-058-x

Notes:
It is always best to make an appointment, since supervision of interns and/or teaching of methods for interns sometimes disrupts my regular schedule. Please do not assume that you have an appointment unless I have confirmed it with you. Email is the best means of contacting me outside of my office hours. My office phone is best during office hours.

Expectations in the area of professionalism are high for these courses. Attendance and appropriate engagement are expected at all times. In the event of an emergency absence, it is important to notify the instructor in advance. This is critical for a practicum session due to the fact that a classroom teacher and elementary school students are counting on you. Dress code for practicum sessions will be discussed in class. No exceptions will be permitted in this area.

It is important to understand that this course and accompanying practicum preceded (in purpose and scope) the ICLA exam. They do help, to some degree, with standard II of that test, but are not intended as a test preparation experience.

Course Purposes
The purpose of the concurrently taken course and practicum is to develop students’ understanding of the nature of the reading and writing processes and the pertinent implications for meaningful instruction for diverse populations, including learners with varying backgrounds and needs. It is expected that all students will gain both competence and confidence in the area of literacy teaching as a result of the academic/theoretical and practical experiences provided.

Course Goals
Preparing Caring Professionals Who Teach for Understanding in Communities of Learning is the encompassing conceptual framework of the program. Course goals have been selected with this in mind and are tied to specific indicators from each of the eight identified program standards. These standards, the indicators that will be formally assessed in this course and practicum, and criteria for assessment of student performance begin on the next page. This syllabus packet will serve as a recording place for students’ work and scores.

In Your Own Words
What seems particularly important so far in this syllabus? (Record your responses below.)
Course Goals (continued)

Standard: Dedicated Professional
Indicator: Shows care and concern for children and learning
Assignment: Demonstrate care and concern in the form of professionalism as evidenced by attendance/punctuality, active engagement with topics of study, compliance with all practicum directions, careful attention to conventions of writing, and general positivity - especially when speaking of children and teachers.

Criteria:

_____ Superior record of attendance and punctuality – unavoidable absence/tardiness only and these are discussed with the instructor and prearranged when possible (Note: The instructor reserves the right to give credit for this in spite of a very limited number of complying absences/instances of tardiness, providing that all other work is exceptional/exemplary.)

_____ Noteworthy engagement – highly consistent in the areas of active and polite listening, thoughtful questions, and thorough attention to reading assignments and related scholarly notes

_____ Practicum performances highly consistent with directions and discussions

_____ Highly consistent record of careful attention to conventions of writing, evidenced by either the absence of errors or an obvious pattern of conscientious growth

_____ Highly consistent positivity and confidentiality in connection with talk about students and teachers

Assessment for this standard:

______ Exceptional/Exemplary (all five criteria checked off by instructor)

______ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (four criteria checked off by instructor)

______ Proficient (at least three criteria checked off by instructor)

In Your Own Words
Practice saying something “delicate” about a student (in a positive way) in the space below.
Standard: Knowledgeable Professional
Indicator: Understands how children learn, develop, etc.
Assignment: Demonstrate, via two positive anecdotal records, your understanding of "stage" theory in terms of both reading and spelling.
(Notes: You will need to rely heavily on handouts and notes taken in class. Remember to maintain confidentiality and phrase things “in the positive.” Be very specific – provide at least two examples or observations for each anecdotal record.)

Reading

Spelling

Criteria:
_____ Both anecdotal records are positive in nature, demonstrating understanding of the notion that children grow in both reading and spelling in fairly predictable ways, over time, given good opportunities and conditions.

_____ Both anecdotal records include the appropriate use of course terminology, demonstrating evidence of interaction with handouts and notes.

_____ Both anecdotal records include at least two specific examples or observations which fit the selected “stage.”

Assessment for this standard:
_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (all three criteria checked off by instructor)
_____ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (at least two criteria checked off )
_____ Proficient (at least one criteria checked off by instructor)

In Your Own Words: How are reading and spelling development alike?
Standard: Content Specialist
Indicator: Understands concepts/tools/structures of the discipline
Assignment: Demonstrate understanding in connection with a variety of course concepts via a series of quizzes.

Criteria:

___ Cueing systems quiz score of at least 90% on at least one occasion

___ Cueing systems quiz score of 100% on dialect/culture items at least once

___ Description of purpose and procedure for obtaining retellings accurate on quiz

___ List/description of components of classroom literacy program accurate on quiz

___ Sample shared reading & instruction lesson accurate on quiz (procedure)

___ Sorting of print-based and meaning-based strategies 100% accurate on quiz

___ Reader 1 and reader 2 assessments 100% accurate on quiz at least once

___ Principles of quality literacy instruction conditions -100% on quiz (matching)

___ List of a minimum of five spelling strategies - 100% accurate on quiz once

___ Analysis of spellings 90% accurate on quiz on at least one occasion

___ (Qualified) ordering of “steps” in writing process 100% accurate at least once

___ Teaching/learning activities - 100% on at least one occasion

Assessment for this standard:

____ Exceptional/Exemplary (all twelve criteria marked off by instructor)

____ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (at least ten criteria marked off)

____ Proficient (at least eight criteria marked off)

In Your Own Words
What do you have to say about everything you know now? What do you still wonder about?
Standard: Educational Designer
Indicator: Plans and creates effective learning experiences
Assignment: Planning a lesson
Procedure
List the steps in your lesson. It might take place in a day or over a longer period.

*  
*  
*  
*  

Best Practice
According to the charts distributed in class, why does this lesson qualify for “best practice” designation?  
*  
*  
*  

Connections to Our Course
What concepts or activities have you built into your lesson that you learned about in our course?  
*  
*  

Criteria:
_____ Lesson is based upon at least one high quality children's literature selection

_____ Lesson is “best practice” in at least three ways

_____ Lesson incorporates at least one course concept

Assessment for this standard:

______ Exceptional/Exemplary (all three criteria are marked by instructor)

______ Proficient (at least two criteria are marked by the instructor)

In Your Own Words
What did you most enjoy about the lesson planning process? What was the biggest challenge?
Standard: Educational Evaluator
Indicator: Utilizes a variety of (informal) assessment strategies
Assignment: Design assessment provisions in connection with the previous lesson plan.  
   Note: Your lesson will be an integrated experience for learners. You will try out several assessment tools. These tools will not be an afterthought; they will be the basis of your lesson.

Reading Objective:

Design a rubric:
   Note: A rubric is used when it is necessary to discriminate between levels of performance.

4 = ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

3 = ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

2 = ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

1 = ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Writing Objective:

Design a checklist:
   Note: A checklist is useful when a simple “yes” or “no” will do – often recorded in a grade book column.
   Check = ______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Third Objective:  Content Area: _____________________________________________

Produce an anecdotal record:
   Note: The words of your record must use the words of the objective. Avoid judgment and stick to the evidence that the objective has been met.
   Your anecdotal record here:

Assessment for this standard:

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (in all three cases, assessment matches objective)

_____ Proficient (in at least two cases, assessment matches objective)

In Your Own Words
Why is it important to be able to use the exact terminology of formal standards in your assessments?
Standard: Educational Facilitator
Indicator: Utilizes effective communication techniques
Assignment: Record examples of your communications with learners.

1. Describe an occasion when you sought information from a child about his/her reading or writing preferences. Explain what you did to accommodate the child’s interest(s).

Why is this important?

2. Provide a specific example of a time when you provided encouragement (as opposed to praise) in connection with a child’s literacy learning. Use quotation marks to show your exact words.

Why is encouragement more powerful, in many cases, than praise?

3. Provide a description of an occasion when you handled a discipline or motivation situation by speaking respectfully to a child or children. Enclose your words in quotation marks. Note: Threats of punishment, no matter how cheerfully stated, are not optimal.

Assessment for this standard:

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (all three responses are in keeping with course concepts)

_____ Proficient (at least two responses are in keeping with course concepts)

In Your Own Words
What have you learned about yourself as a communicator (with learners)?
Standard: Culturally Responsive Educator
Indicator: Is aware of and understands own bias/prejudice; actively engages in personal examination to confront limitations and transform him/herself in the interest of social justice within classroom, school, and community
Assignment: Conduct self-examination and take action.
Considering your awareness of the people who live in our country (likely participants in our educational system), which group most inspires in you some level of doubt or concern?

Why do you believe this is so?

______________________________________________________________________________

Take action/inform yourself: Look for children’s literature selections, credible websites, community events, etc. that might help you to become more informed. List your resources:

1. __________________________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________________________

What do you conclude? Were you surprised by anything you discovered? What do you think You need to do next?

______________________________________________________________________________

Think about your future students. What can you do to both treat them fairly and help them understand the world in an open-minded/open-hearted way/ well-informed way?

______________________________________________________________________________

Assessment for this standard:

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (evidence of highly thoughtful self-examination)

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (evidence of moderately thoughtful self-examination)

_____ Proficient (evidence of the beginning of thoughtful self-examination)
Standard: Reflective Professional
Indicator: Actively seeks opportunities to grow
Assignment: Take a reflective approach to course assignments and, in addition to that, “go the extra mile.”

In Your Own Words
At Midterm:
What would you say about your performance so far during this course? What have been your strengths? On what would you like to expend more effort? Be specific. (cont. on back, if needed)

At Semester's End:
How did you do at making strides toward goals set at midterm? Be specific.

* *

What have you learned about yourself as a literacy teacher? Give examples.

* *

What have you learned about literacy learners? Back up your conclusions with specifics.

* *

What are the most important things you have learned about literacy teaching in general?

* *

What extra efforts have you undertaken to improve your understanding? (answer on back)

Assessment for this standard:

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (evidence of highly thoughtful self-examination/effort)

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (evidence of moderately thoughtful self-examination)

_____ Proficient (evidence of the beginning of thoughtful self-examination/effort)
Standard: All  
Indicators: All  
Assignment: Final Exam  

Notes: Most people would say that taking excellent class notes is the first step toward a successful final examination. Spending considerable time reviewing those notes as the semester progresses is another important step. This allows you to ask questions for clarification on a regular basis. The final exam is designed to assess your understanding of concepts that have been addressed and readdressed. True understanding will be evident. Memorization is not the goal.

Assessment:

_____ Exceptional/Exemplary (score of at least 94%)  
_____ Exceptional/Exemplary Minus (score of at least 88%)  
_____ Proficient (score of at least 80%)

Grading  
Our program is based upon a four point grading/scoring scale.

4 = Exceptional/Exemplary (thorough, & thoughtful work, professional quality, clear and convincing evidence of understanding and application)  
3 = Proficient (meets most expectations/all with help, evidence of understanding)  
2 = Developing (meets some expectations, some evidence of understanding)  
1 = Inadequate/Not Yet Observed (meets few expectations, little understanding evident)

In this course, as in other program courses, the expectation is that all standards will be met at a proficient level or above. Students must earn a rating of “Exceptional” or “Proficient “ on all tasks in order to successfully complete the requirements for a grade of “B” or better. Without a grade of “B” or better, students must repeat the course successfully in order to proceed with the program. Since the performance in the practicum is based upon theoretical understandings from the course, the grade for the course and the practicum will be the same unless there is a discrepancy between the performances in the two areas. One common reason for this is a problem with writing conventions in the course. (This doesn’t always appear in the practicum activities.) On assignments where there is often”gray area,” criteria for a rating of “E-“ has been described. Two ratings of “E-“ add up to one rating of “E.”

Providing that all assignment ratings are at least “Proficient,” course (and practicum) grades will be as follows:

9 Ratings of “Exemplary” = A  
8 Ratings of “Exemplary” = A-  
7 Ratings of “Exemplary” = B+  
5 Ratings of “Exemplary” = B  
3 Ratings of “Exemplary” = B-  

Grades ____/____
Note: This syllabus, when distributed to students, contained (verbatim) the document titled “Syllabus Addendum,” as distributed to faculty members before the start of the 2011-2012 school year.

A Final Note (regarding the schedule for course activities): There is a “normal” order of events and activities for the course and practicum. In general, we do several sessions of building background knowledge on campus before going out into the schools for practicum experiences. This period includes several reading assignments to be completed outside of class. We will begin to take quizzes on course concepts as we are ready.

Once we are well enough equipped with a beginning understanding of several important course concepts, we start meeting in various school settings to try out what we have learned. (If the school has a classroom where we can meet, the 3:00 session is held at the school after the elementary students have departed.) We continue to read pertinent chapters from our texts during this period and also begin to regularly submit written work in the syllabus packet. Quizzes will be given regularly (and re-given as needed). Students will be given practicum opportunities in a variety of grade levels and in more than one school setting.

As the semester proceeds - questions from students, persistent areas of misunderstanding, or interesting practicum site opportunities often necessitate the revision of the schedule. This is a good thing! It is important to me to be able to spend more time on topics as needed and to take advantage of opportunities that arise. The bottom line is that students will ALWAYS be given ample notice about due dates and will NEVER be rushed at the end of the semester with a collection of assignments. I conduct this course and practicum in much the same way that I would conduct an elementary classroom – with a high degree of flexibility in terms of schedule and maximum concern for student learning.