

EDUC 783 - Assessing & Supporting Literacy Learning*

Spring 2006

Wednesday, 3:30 -6:30 p.m.

Lynch School Library, Holyoke, MA

Professor Pat Paugh

208 Furcolo Hall

Phone: 413 545-0660

Email: paugh@educ.umass.edu

Office Hours:

Thursday: 2:00-4:00

(and by appt.)

***Class Number: 58648 (This course is currently listed in university catalogue under title: EDUC 783 Diagnosing Reading Difficulties)**

INTRODUCTION

Education 783 is designed for graduate students who are seeking licensure in the LLC Practitioner Concentration, particularly for those seeking Massachusetts certification as a Reading Specialist. This course is designed to prepare course participants for the role of the building literacy specialist who supports classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators in the improvement of reading, writing, and language instruction, including consultation techniques and professional development. It also supports participants in completing requirements for the practicum, EDUC 698R.

IRA Standards for Reading Professionals - Revised 2003

Category III: The Reading Specialist/Literacy Coach

Provides specialized reading and writing instruction, assessment in cooperation with other professionals (special educators, speech and language teachers, school psychologists, etc.), and diagnosis to students at one or more of the following levels: early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary, or adult.

May include the following activities:

- Serves as a resource in the area of reading for paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, and the community.
- Works cooperatively and collaboratively with other professionals in planning programs to meet the needs of diverse populations of learners.
- Provides professional development opportunities at the local and state levels.
- Provides leadership in student advocacy.

Has previous teaching experience.

Has a master's degree with concentration in reading education:

- Includes a minimum of 24 graduate credit hours in reading and language arts and related courses
- Includes a 6-credit-hour supervised practicum experience

COURSE OVERVIEW

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

The LLC practitioner program is based on sociocultural learning theories. That is, literacy is defined as a social process in which reading, writing, and a variety of modes of language are used by people to participate fully as members of society. Academic literacy is key to this process. The program is designed to promote equitable and inclusive academic practices that promote cognitive, social, cultural, and linguistic development for all students. Essential questions asked in all courses include:

What counts as literacy in this academic setting? For whom?

What counts as evidence of literacy learning?

What counts as equitable and inclusive literacy education for all students?

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Education 783 is designed as a culminating course in the ACCELA/LLC practitioner concentration. Building upon the work done in previous courses, participants in this course will:

extend and refine their knowledge of and ability to use instructional strategies and to design effective reading and writing programs to support diverse students' literacy learning;

examine diverse students' literacy learning in relationship to the range of local, state, and federal-level programs in place for developing the literacy abilities of students with reading and writing difficulties;

engage in activities designed to help them assume the role of instructional leader within their school buildings, this includes working with administrators, peer teachers, parents, and community members to fit instructional policies and practices to the local needs of all learners.

COURSE TASKS AND EXPECTATIONS

This course is divided into an introduction and three parts, each connected to but inclusive of the above understandings.

Introduction: The Role of the Reading Specialist

Date: 3/29/06

Part I: Teacher Leadership: Investing in the Reading Specialist as Coach, Community Activist, and District Liason

Dates: 4/5/06 through 4/26/06

Project #1: Assessment of Building Needs for Developing ALL Students as Literacy Learners

Part II: Supporting, Supplementing, and Extending Excellent Classroom Teaching

Dates: 5/3/06 through 5/24/06

Project #2: “Looking at Students’ Work and Students At Work” (Meets Requirements for Meeting 2 on EDUC 698R syllabus)

Part III: Abandoning the Egg Crate: Creating a Setting in Which “Everyone” Learns

Dates: 5/31/06 through 6/28/06

Project #3: Creating a Text for District and School-based Dialogues (Meets requirements for Meeting 3 on EDUC 698R syllabus)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

This class will be conducted as a seminar for teacher leaders with the focus on completing a leadership project based on The Reading Specialist as Teacher Leader.

Successfully passing this course depends upon:

Completing requirements for the three class projects (these are components of the final leadership project and reading portfolio).

Attending and participating in all class discussions and work groups.

Unless requested by the student, this course will be graded pass/fail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Project #1: Assessment of Building Needs for Developing ALL Students as Literacy Learners

The role of the reading specialist requires teachers to be leaders within their buildings and districts. This includes determining:

How contextual factors in the school influence student literacy (e.g. grouping and placement procedures, instructional programs, assessments, family and community participation);

How to engage with federal, state, and local program in ways that contribute to reading and writing development for diverse learners (especially those students not succeeding academically);

What individual and group instructional strategies are needed to improve the learning of students in greatest need or at low proficiency levels.

This also includes sharing professional knowledge with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and families within the school community. The first step in this process is determining what community members need to learn about the above.

For this project, class participants are asked to examine building literacy needs by:

Analyzing school report card as required by NCLB
Locating and analyzing School Improvement Plan
Developing a list of mandated or adopted curriculum, instructional programs, and assessments
Interviewing principal, grade level teacher, or family/community members
Other?
If several class members are teaching in one school – collaborating on this process is recommended.

Project #2: “Looking at Students’ Work and Students At Work”

The reading specialist has specialized knowledge of assessment and instruction for literacy. The reading specialist works with colleagues and administrators and families to understand student learning using multiples sources of formal and informal “evidence.” Classroom-based evidence provides one source of “data” that informs individual and programmatic instructional decisions. Students’ learning may be represented in their work products as well as in their classroom interactions.

For this project, class participants are asked to examine data from their classrooms collected over this academic year and choose sample data from which to construct a “Looking at Student Work” or “Students At Work” session. Here, as reading teacher you will facilitate a process for teachers and/or administrators and/or families to examine student(s) learning in relation to academic expectations. This session should include criteria to help the session participants see students’ growth over time or see specific learning differentials among students. It should also contain a component that examines how instruction presents barriers as well as opportunities for certain types of learning.

General focus:

What counts as literacy learning for this student?
What evidence of learning do you have?
What evidence did you choose for this session? Why?
How is the teacher (you) working with this student?
What insights have you gained into his/her learning and how did you gain these?
What strategies have you tried to support this student’s learning and how has the student responded?
What else do you think might be important to learn about this student?
What changes in the situation do you think might better support this student’s learning?

Project #3: Creating a Text for District and School-based Dialogues

Reading specialists are resources for other educators, parents, and the community. They also aid teachers by suggesting ideas, strategies, or materials that can enhance instruction. They play an essential role in supporting individual teachers (especially new teachers), administrators, and family members in becoming more knowledgeable about the teaching of reading. Reading specialists are also teacher leaders/researchers whose perspectives

are vital in providing contextually-based information that informs university researchers, teacher educators, and policy makers.

For this project, class participants draw upon projects #1 and #2 to determine professional knowledge important to their school community. They will plan and carry out a “dialogue” meeting between a district administrator or principal, a literacy or policy educator from the university, and/or others (see above) that examines evidence of student learning that provides insights into student literacy and connects that need to professional knowledge development.

RESOURCES

Resources are provided to support the project development in this class. They may be used in classes or as resources for project development. All recommended book chapters are available on e-reserves through the UMASS library. All articles are available through the UMASS ERIC or Education Complete databases.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Allen, J. (2006). Ch. 6 Coaching in classrooms. *Becoming a literacy leader* (pp. 93-126). Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

Carini, P. F. (2000). Prospect’s descriptive processes. In M. Himley, & P. F. Carini (Eds.), *From another angle: Children’s strengths and school standards* (pp. 8-22) NY: Teachers College Press.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1993). Teacher research: A way of knowing. *Inside/Outside teacher research and knowledge* (pp. 41-62). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fleischer, C. (2000). Putting it all together: Becoming a teacher-organizer. *Teachers organizing for change* (pp. 167-194). Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Heath, S. B. (2002, 1996). A lot of talk about nothing. In B. M. Power, & R. S. Hubbard (Eds.), *Language development A reader for teachers* (Second ed.) (pp. 74-79). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Hernandez, D., Quatroche, D., Bean, R., Hamilton, R., Babbitt, S., & Byrne, M. (2003). Right 6. In Mason, Pamela A. Schumm, Jeanne Shay (Ed.), *Promising practices for urban reading instruction* (pp. 262-307). Newark, DE: International Reading Association Inc.

Hubbard, R. S., & Power, B. M. (1993, 2003). Perishable art: Writing up research. (pp. 144-167). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kamler, B., & Comber, B. (2005). Designing turn-around pedagogies and contesting deficit assumptions. In B. Kamler, & B. Comber (Eds.), *Turn-around pedagogies* (pp. 1-14). Newton, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.

Langer, J. (2004). Ch 8 – The road to change. *Getting to excellent how to create better schools* (pp. 65-76). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Langer, J. (2002). Teachers' professional lives in effective schools. (pp. 41-65). Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Lazar, A. M. (2004). Continuing to grow as culturally sensitive literacy educators. *Learning to be literacy teachers in urban schools* (pp. 127-151). Newark, DE: International Reading Association Inc.
- Lew, A. (1999). Writing correctness and the second language student. In S. Freedman, E. Simons, J. Kalnin & A. Casareno (Eds.), *Inside city schools* (pp. 165-178). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.
- McDonough, J., & McDonough, S. (1997). Ch. 13. *Research methods for English language teachers* (pp. 203-218). London: Arnold, a member of the Hodder Headline Group.
- Murrell, P. C. (2001). Research in practice- creating communities of inquiry. *The community teacher* (pp. 148-159). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Neito, S. (2003). Introduction, Ch. 9. *What keeps teachers going?* (pp. 1-8-121-129). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Obidah, J. E., & Teel, K. M. (2001). For those who dare: Toward transforming teacher practices. *Because of the kids* (pp. 93-106 116). NY, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Ogle, D., Roach, V., & Roller, C. (2005). The seduction of simple solutions: A response to Douglas Reeves; State Policy and Its Impact on Urban Reading Programs; Delivering Strong Urban Reading Programs in the Current Policy Environment: Reinvent, Circumvent, or Just Plain Vent? A Response to Virginia Roach. In J. Flood, & P. L. Anders (Eds.), *Literacy development of students in urban schools* (pp. 389-448). Newark, DE: International Reading Association Inc.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Recommended is the entire issue of Educational Leadership, March 2006, Vol 63 (6)

Perspectives / What Teachers Want, Marge Scherer

Improving Relationships Within the Schoolhouse, Roland S. Barth

Let's discuss the elephant in the room: the various ways educators compete with and isolate themselves from one another.

From Teacher Quality to Quality Teaching, Mary M. Kennedy

Unpredictable circumstances—from class interruptions to student behavior—influence the quality of teaching.

Ten Promising Trends (and Three Big Worries), Marilyn Cochran-Smith

Although some developments in teacher education programs are promising, several trends are discouraging.

Examining the Teaching Life, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe

How can educators tell whether a teaching practice is worthy?

A Thoughtful Approach to Teacher Evaluation, Jennifer Goldstein and Pedro A.

Noguera

How peer review lessens the tensions between teachers and administrators.
Starting With the Soul , Sam M. Intrator and Robert Kunzman
Rekindling teachers' deep sense of purpose is no luxury.
The Satisfactions of Teaching , Elliot Eisner
An educator reflects on why he teaches.
Great Teachers Remembered: Elie Wiesel , Max Malikow
Great Teachers Remembered: Mamie Till Mobley , Cynthia Dagnal Myron
Transforming Practice in Urban Schools ,Etta R. Hollins
Study groups for teachers in low-achieving schools boosted both teachers' professionalism and students' reading skills.
The Most Important Data , Leslye S. Abrutyn
Student interviews reveal ways to improve practice and engage students.
Teachers as Walk-Through Partners , James Bushman
Why walking through classes is a worthwhile exercise in teacher evaluation.
My Year as a High School Student , Deborah Waldron
A high school physics teacher enrolls in a 9th grade biology class.
What New Teachers Really Need , Scott Mandel
Novice teachers want to know: How do I deal with the daily stress?
How Principals Use Research , Bruce J. Biddle and Lawrence J. Saha
Critics say that practitioners rarely use education research. That's not true, these researchers find.
The Medical Research Model: No Magic Formula , G. Gage Kingsbury
Applying a medical model of research to schools is often a mistake, the author warns.
All About Accountability / Needed: A Dose of Assessment Literacy , W. James Popham
Research Matters / Moving to Evidence-Based Professional Practice , Steve Fleischman
The Principal Connection / Reaching Common Ground , Thomas R. Hoerr

INTERNET RESOURCES

*IRA Website:

<http://www.reading.org>

Teaching All Children to Read: The Roles of the Reading Specialist (IRA Position Statement)

http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/positions_specialist.html

Dole, J.A. (2004, February). The Changing Role of the Reading Specialist in School Reform. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(5), 462–471

<http://www.reading.org/publications/journals/rt/selections/abstracts/RT-57-5-Dole.html>

Moving forward: The reading specialist as literacy coach, by Michael L. Shaw, William E. Smith, Barbara J. Chesler, and Lynn Romeo. (June 2005). *Reading Today*, 22(6), 6.

http://www.reading.org/publications/reading_today/samples/RTY-0506-moving.html

*Websites about Critical Friends Protocols

Coalition for Essential Schools: <http://www.cesnorthwest.org/cfg.php>
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Having another set of eyeballs: Critical Friends Groups
: <http://www.nwrel.org/nwedu/11-01/cfg/>
The Education Alliance, Brown University:
[http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/changing_systems/teach_to_student/Friends Protocol.pdf](http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/changing_systems/teach_to_student/Friends_Protocol.pdf)

ASCD Educational Leadership, Related article: Goldstein, J., & Noguera, P. (2006). A thoughtful approach to teacher evaluation. *Education Leadership*, 63(6), 31 - 37. (On CD)

<http://ascd.org>

*Websites for Looking At Student Work

Looking at Student Work

<http://www.lasw.org/>

Coalition for Essential Schools

http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/56

Exploring Middle School Reform: Middle Web

<http://www.middleweb.com/LASW/LASWmain.html>

ASCD Educational Leadership, Related article: Abrutyn, L. S. (2006). The Most Important Data. *Educational Leadership*, 63(6), 54- 57. (On CD)

<http://ascd.org>

*First Steps on the Web

First Steps Materials – Reading, Writing, and Oral Language, First and Second Editions, Dept.of Education and Training in Western Australia

<http://www.stepspd.org/>

*Literacy Coaching

NCTE Web Resources on Literacy Coaching

<http://www.ncte.org/collections/literacycoach>

Annenberg Challenge

<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/Challenge/pubs/cj/v4n2/pg2.html>

*Teacher Inquiry

CRESS Center, UC Davis

<http://education.ucdavis.edu/cress/tr/>

Networks: An On-line Journal for Teacher Research

<http://education.ucsc.edu/faculty/gwells/networks/links.html>

National Writing Project

<http://www.writingproject.org/cs/nwpp/print/nwppn/4>

COURSE SCHEDULE
(see separate document)