required texts:

academic texts:

key articles in the field provided by wendy on the topics of:

* literature response theories
* writing workshop
* grammar/punctuation/usage in context
* culturally responsive teaching
* differentiation for english language learners

literature circle texts:

* graceling, kristin cashore
* little brother, cory doctorow
* my most excellent year, steve kluger
* sold, patricia mccormick

whole class reading texts:

* the declaration, gemma malley
* mexican whiteboy. matt de la pena
* after tupac and d foster, jacqueline woodson
* the book thief, markus zusak
**Course Description:**

Course content is aligned with the three components of the Neag School of Education Conceptual Framework. As learners (Strand One), we expect you to gain a strong professional knowledge base and skills for implementing evidence-based professional practice. As leaders (Strand Two), we expect you to develop a commitment to inquiry, transformative leadership, and moral leadership. And, as agents of social change (Strand Three), we expect you to embrace diversity and succeed in meeting the challenges posed by the ever-changing world, to inspire and motivate your students and colleagues in the promotion of equity and human rights.

In this course, in addition to studying the underlying principles and philosophies of several approaches to the teaching of English, we will discuss the practical application of these methods in the real classroom (Conceptual Framework Strand One). An exploration of the larger issue of developing curricular units will be accompanied by a look at the day-to-day plans teachers of English are expected to make. You will have the opportunity to view and create lesson activities and larger units that can be implemented during your upcoming student teaching experience, as well as become more knowledgeable about literature written with your future students, adolescent readers, in mind (Conceptual Framework Strands One and Three). We will also examine both theoretical and practical documents recognized in the field to find both exemplars and offer critique of the English education tradition (Conceptual Framework Strand Two). And, we will explicitly address the needs of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse learners to develop our skills and stance toward culturally responsive teaching (Conceptual Framework Strand Three).

**Essential Questions:**

1) What are the purposes of the English curriculum in the areas of literature, language, writing, and speaking/thinking? What do we hope to achieve with our students in their academic, social, and personal development as a result of their experiences in the English classroom? (Conceptual Framework Strands One and Three)

2) What instructional strategies can be utilized to optimize student learning, interest, and motivation in the teaching of literature, language, writing, and speaking/thinking in the English classroom? (Conceptual Framework Strand One)

3) How can we best construct activities, assignments, assessments, and units to ensure that we are meeting our objectives and the differentiated needs of our students given their diverse backgrounds, races, cultures, languages? (Conceptual Framework Strand Three)

4) How do we develop a reflective stance that serves to guide and support our continued growth as professional educators? (Conceptual Framework Strand Two)
Course Requirements (further clarification of expectations will be provided as needed):

1. Attendance and Active Participation: Your involvement is a key component of this course; your voice is especially important. I value inquiring minds, particularly those that ask critical and tough questions. Show me you have made sense of the material through your thought-provoking comments, well-thought-out agreements, disagreements, etc. Due to the participatory nature of the course, no more than two absences will be permitted without negative grade consequences.

2. Discussion Leader Work: Once during the semester, you will be responsible for facilitating a fifteen-minute class discussion on a literary piece (or other item) of your choosing. The goal is to generate quality conversation by posing questions that encourage higher-level thinking (think Bloom’s taxonomy).

3. Literature Circles: We will explore this instructional method that encourages readers to respond authentically to texts. Within small groups, you will be expected to read and discuss a work of young adult fiction by engaging in a variety of roles. Upon completion of the text, each group will present a creative and engaging project/product that highlights the text and the readers’ experiences.

4. Dialogue Journals: Over the course of the semester, you and I will have the opportunity to learn more about one another as professionals and people as we exchange entries through written conversation. At the start of each Workshop session, I will ask you to compose a reflective journal entry on a variety of social, political, literary, or personal topics. In the interim between Workshop sessions, I will read your insightful words and share my thoughts in response as a means to continue the exchange.

5. Writing Groups: We will work in small groups to engage in the writing process as we think about how to best facilitate the teaching and learning of writing in our own classrooms. You will have the opportunity to draft several pieces of your choosing, share with and receive feedback from peers, and reflect upon the writing workshop model.

6. Class Novels: To broaden your literary background and expose you to the world of books written for teen readers, you will be expected to read four additional young adult titles over the course of the semester. In addition, you will work in small groups to design and teach a series of pre-, during-, and post-reading activities that could be used in the classroom in the teaching of the given text. Written materials will include enduring understandings and essential questions for the novel, three lesson plans that clearly demonstrate the inclusion of culturally- and linguistically-responsive teaching
strategies, and reflection on potential challenges of teaching this text and how you might mediate them.

7. Classroom Unit: You will independently design a two-week unit of instruction that will ideally be implemented during your student teaching experience. You will determine how to organize the unit, what materials to use, what activities students will complete, how to assess their progress, etc. All units must include:

1) A one-page description of the unit and rationale for implementation in the middle/high school English classroom;

2) A list of Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions;

3) An overview calendar of activities;

4) Daily lesson plans, handouts, overheads, assignment sheets, assessment tools, and other materials for each day of the unit;

5) Differentiation for two learners, including an English Language Learner, in each lesson plan; and

6) A one-page reflection on your unit and your satisfaction/dissatisfaction with your product.

Course Grades:

Grades will be based upon the following point distribution:

*Discussion Leader Work 50 points

*Literature Circle Assignments
  Role Assignments 20 points each (x 3)
  Group Presentations 50 points

*Dialogue Journals pass/fail

*Writing Groups 20 points each meeting (x 5)

*Class Novels Activity Assignment 100 points

*Unit 200 points

*Other assignments as they arise points vary
Course Schedule:

8/31  Introduction to the course and one another  
      Review of assignments and expectations  
      Discussion on joining the professional conversation: available resources

9/2   Introduction to culturally responsive teaching  
      Levels of questioning (Bloom’s taxonomy)

9/7   Discussion leader: Sheena  
      Planning for culturally responsive instruction: unit planning

9/9   Discussion leader: Christine  
      Planning for culturally responsive instruction: lesson planning

9/14  Workshop

9/16  Discussion leader: Kerri  
      Why teach literature? (Articles from Wendy)  
      Literature circles meet (first 1/3 of book and role work due)

9/21  Discussion leaders: Alex, Kara  
      Teaching literature: theory into practice  
      Unit Rationale due

9/23  Discussion leader: Marisa  
      Writing groups (2 pages due)  
      Literature circles meet (second 1/3 of book and role work due)

9/28  Workshop

9/30  Discussion leader: Danielle  
      Why teach writing? (Articles from Wendy)  
      Literature circles meet (completed book and role work due)
10/5 Discussion leaders: Melissa L., Jessica
Teaching writing: theory into practice
Unit Enduring Understandings/Essential Questions due

10/7 No Class—Wendy at NNER Conference

10/12 Discussion leaders: Kelsey, Kelly
Writing groups (2 new pages due)

10/14 Discussion leaders: Jillian, Eric
Literature circles presentations

10/19 Discussion leader: Melissa D.
Workshop
Unit Calendar due

10/21 Pre-reading activity for The Declaration:
Why teach language? (Articles from Wendy)

10/26 During-reading activity for The Declaration
Writing groups (2 new pages due)

10/28 Post-reading activity for The Declaration
Teaching language: theory into practice

11/2 Pre-reading activity for Mexican WhiteBoy:
Workshop
Sample Lesson Plan for Unit due

11/4 During-reading activity for Mexican WhiteBoy
Why teach speaking and thinking? (Articles from Wendy)

11/9 Post-reading activity for Mexican WhiteBoy
Writing groups (2 new pages due)
11/11 Pre-reading activity for *After Tupac and D Foster*:
Speaking and thinking: theory into practice

11/16 During-reading activity for *After Tupac and D Foster* 
Workshop

11/18 No class—Wendy at NCTE Convention/ ALAN Workshop

11/23 No class—Thanksgiving Recess

11/25 No class—Thanksgiving

11/30 Post-reading activity for *After Tupac and D Foster* 
Writing Groups (2 new pages due)

12/2 Pre-reading activity for *The Book Thief*:
Writing Group Sharing

12/7 During-reading activity for *The Book Thief* 
Writing Group Sharing

12/9 Post-reading activity for *The Book Thief* 
Writing Group Sharing
Completed Units due
Reflections and good-byes (for now) 😊

I am so looking forward to working with you!

Please remember that I can’t read your mind; let me know how I can help make our experience together meaningful and worthwhile.