Course Description

The purpose of this course is to prepare prospective middle and high school English teachers to teach reading within the context of an English/Language Arts classroom. The instructional methods included will be applicable to teaching students of all ability levels but particular attention will be given to students who are reading below grade level or those students who are “resistant” readers. With its emphasis on effective reading instruction and expanded definitions of literacy, this course presents an overview of the language and cognitive development in adolescent learners. Students in EDCI 4215 will explore the practical applications of current theories of integrated learning (i.e. the reading – writing – thinking connection), student-centered and cooperative classrooms, methods and challenges of strategic reading instruction, habits of literate thinking, assessment and achievement issues, the needs of diverse learners, and the use of information-communication technology. Finally, the course will encourage students to take an active role in examining literacy and language arts research, how it impacts the profession of teaching, and the degree to which it illuminates or informs educational policy and practice.

Course Objectives: Students will be able to-

- Examine and reflect upon their beliefs about adolescent literacy as they relate to subskill and constructivist models of reading through discussion and writing
- Develop and participate in a variety of before, during, after reading strategies/activities
- Describe the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension
- Describe the relationship between reading fluency and comprehension
- Create lessons that promote literal, inferential and critical comprehension
- Teach metacognition as it relates to reading
- Assess “readability” of texts and develop instructional supports for required texts within a curriculum
- Review professional literature to describe a critical approach to literacy instruction
- Identify factors related to reading disability as well as develop age-appropriate strategies/lesson plans for struggling readers in the classroom that contain options for differentiated instruction and flexible grouping
- Develop strategies to support the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in English Language Learners
- Investigate issues related to informal and formal reading assessment
- Integrate all of this knowledge into a coherent semester plan for a basic level English class focusing specifically on developing a student's reading abilities.
Required Texts


Selected articles as assigned (see links or download from Husky CT)

Supplemental Texts (one is required)


Other course materials

- fiction or nonfiction selection that is typical of texts assigned to students in English/Language Arts (MS or HS)
- self-selected text (includes film, television, music, etc.) that you might recommend to students or one that you believe would supplement or enrich your teaching but would not necessarily be read by students

Course Assessments

Student progress will be evaluated through several projects and class participation.

1. Strategy Development Activity and Small Group Presentation (4) – 40%
2. Group Project (Marking Period Plan) – 15%
3. Review of Professional Literature – 10%
4. Text Evaluation – 10%
5. On-line Discussion of Selected Reading Topics – 5%
6. Course Exam (Statement on Insights, Concerns, and Competencies) -- 10%
7. Class Participation and Attendance, 10%

1. Strategy Development Activity and Presentation

Prepare a lesson/class activity that includes a measurable literacy objective and options for adaptation when working with students who have limited English proficiency. These lessons will pertain to the use of before, during, or after comprehension strategies, vocabulary development, and writing. You will present one lesson (10-15 minutes) to either the whole class or a smaller group. You can ask us to take on certain “roles” such as a heterogeneous or homogenous ability group, a mixed grade group, or a group with several students who are developing their English language skills. You will turn in a one-page outline for each lesson on the day of the presentation (guidelines to be provided). See syllabus for dates.

2. Group Project

- Map out a English/Language Arts plan of study for one grade and ability level over the course of a marking period (e.g. 10th mixed ability; 11th basic/remedial; 7th advanced). Using the
Connecticut English/Language Arts Framework, decide upon the appropriate information or concepts you might emphasize.

- Create a student study plan and calendar around specific texts with activities that engage students, provide opportunities for cooperative learning, and appropriately address essential vocabulary, promote comprehension and inquiry, integrate writing/performance/media activities, and foster critical thinking.

3. **Review of Professional Literature** (2 pages)

   Read and review an article from a *peer-reviewed journal* that is related to a topic within the course outline and specific to English/Language Arts instruction. The review should contain:

   - Bibliographic information and brief summary of article content
   - Analysis of the strengths and limits of the study/issue being discussed
   - Discussion of how you would apply the content to a middle/secondary classroom
   - Turn in a copy of your annotated article with the review

4. **Text Evaluation (fiction or nonfiction)**

   Read a young adult novel, trade book, or reference related to your interests and suitable to supplement your work with students in the **middle or high school** classroom. Write a **Book Evaluation** (3-4 pages) that incorporates the following elements as appropriate:

   - Include complete bibliographic reference, # of pages, genre, approximate level of difficulty
   - Briefly summarize content and/or literary elements; note any text features (graphics, organization, etc) that help or challenge readers
   - Comment on the main idea/theme as well as other issues in the “book” that support or challenge our comprehension of a particular issue/topic
   - Discuss options for interdisciplinary teaching
   - Consider author’s credibility, questions of bias, and/or awareness of audience (nonfiction)
   - Include an on-line or media source that relates to this selection in some way (How can it be integrated with the reading?) as well as suggestions for related reading or continued study.

5. **Quick Writes/On-line discussion**

   We will use a blog or in-class “quick writes” as an organizer to prep for our book discussions in class; depending upon the venue, brief comments (3-7 sentences) on the readings will be posted or written in a personal journal. Your journal is not limited to questions posed by the instructor; consider including observations on internships, other educational experiences, what you see on the news, etc. If we post on-line, however, all entries should be posted by Sunday night (11:59 PM) and all entries need to be read *before* we meet that week.

6. **Course Exam**

   Compose a 3-5 page reflection describing how the approaches to reading instruction covered in this class can enhance learning and strengthen achievement for all students. What competencies and insights did you gain over the semester? How do you think these insights and competencies will impact your teaching? Finally, what do you think are the greatest challenges facing teachers who provide reading instruction in the secondary classroom?
7. Class Attendance, Preparation, and Participation

Class attendance and punctuality are required. Any student missing more than one class session will need to complete a written review of professional literature to compensate for the content of the missed class (see instructor for details). All work is due on the date assigned, regardless of whether you are present for class, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor – no exceptions. You will be expected to participate (regularly and thoughtfully) in class.

**Integrity and Academic Honesty**: Integrity is a crucial part of the academic experience. I expect you to be honest with me in all conversations and discussions and to treat fellow students and me with respect. You must always do your own work, and you may never plagiarize or cheat on tests or papers. Follow the guidelines attached to this syllabus and any others handed out during the semester.

**Note:**
- *The course syllabus is subject to change.* When possible, I will make every effort to inform you as to the nature of any changes. Check web posts and/or e-mail before class.

**Course Outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>DISCUSSION</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments Due*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>NCTE Position Statement</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Adolescent Learner and Reading Instruction in the English/LA Classroom</td>
<td>Beers, Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Gallagher, <em>Readicide</em>, Chapters 1, 2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Engaging Students: Effective Use of Comprehension Strategies Before Reading</td>
<td>Beers, Chapter 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review of a Professional Literature</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge and Comprehension</td>
<td>Beers, Chapter 9</td>
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| 5    | Workshop: Pre-Reading and Vocabulary | **Strategy Lesson Presentations**  
|      |            | **Lesson Outline(s)** |
| 6    | Engaging Students: Effective Use of Comprehension Strategies During Reading | Beers, Chapters 5 & 7 |
|      |            | Gallagher, *Readicide*, Chapter 3 |
|      | midterm    | |
| 6    | Engaging Students: Effective Use of Comprehension Strategies After Reading | Beers, Chapter 8 |
|      |            | Gallagher, *Readicide*, Chapter 4 |
| 5    | Workshop: During Reading | **Strategy Lesson Presentations**  
<p>|      |            | <strong>Lesson Outline</strong> |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text or Material</th>
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| 7 10/27/10| A Writer’s Life: Helping Students Develop Thoughtful Responses (Analysis, Research, Essay, Narrative, and ….) | Gallagher, *Teaching Adolescent Writers*  
Guest Author: Nora Raleigh Baskin (tentative) |
| 8 11/3/10 | Writing Workshop: MLISS                                             |  
Kaufman, “Living a Literate Life, Revisited”  
Strategy Lesson Outline(s) Due Presentations (optional) |
| 9 11/10/10| Considering the Relationship between Reading Fluency and Comprehension  
Reading Disability, Remediation, and Older Students |  
Beers, Chapter 10, 11 |
| 10 11/17/10| Managing the CAPT and CMT: “If the test measures what students should know and be able to do, is “teaching to the test” really a problem?” | Text Evaluation  
Book Share  
Group Work (Project) |
| 11 11/24/10| No class                                                            |                                                                                   |
| 11 12/1/10| Wrangling: Instructional Approaches to Better Manage “Inconsiderate” Textbooks  
Readability Assessment | Gallagher, *Readicide*, Chapter 5  
Group Work (Project) |
| 12 12/8/10| Culturally Responsive Instruction and English Language Acquisition | Group Project  
Presentations |
| 13 12/15/10| Course Exam (in class)                                              |                                                                                   |
Selected Bibliography


Burke, J. (2001). *Illuminating Texts: How to teach students to read the world*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann


