

COURSE SYLLABUS
RDG 3413 Middle Level Literacy I

Catalog Description:

RDG 3413 Middle Level Literacy I (Prerequisites RDG 3113 and 3123; corequisites RDG 3423 and EDE 3223). 2 hours lecture and 2 hours lab. Concepts, methods, and materials for literacy teaching and learning for upper elementary and middle school will be covered. An emphasis will be on reading instruction; strategy instruction; and assessment specific to grades 4 - 8.

Objectives:

1. Teacher candidates will understand and apply theories about and research on literacy processes, with an emphasis on the components of reading. **(INTASC 1) (CFPO 1,2,7,8)**
2. Teacher candidates will apply understanding of appropriate curriculum options and instructional practices for diverse groups of middle grades learners. **(INTASC 1, 3) (CFPO 3,5,7,9)**
3. Teacher candidates will be able to select and implement a variety of appropriate curriculum options to teach reading. **(INTASC 4) (CFPO 4,5,6,7,9,10)**
4. Teacher candidates will explore and understand the impact of diversity, including cultural and linguistic diversity and ability, on children's learning and adapt curriculum in appropriate ways. **(INTASC 1, 3) (CFPO 2,8,9)**
5. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of methods and resources for teaching literacy within the context of an integrated curriculum. **(INTASC 1, 2, 4, 7)**
6. Teacher candidates will develop strategies for communicating with and collaborating with families to enhance children's literacy learning. **(INTASC 10) (CFPO 7,8)**
7. Teacher candidates will develop a repertoire of strategies (including technology) for teaching comprehension, vocabulary, fluency. **(INTASC 1, 4) (CFPO 3,4,7,9,10)**
8. Teacher candidates will understand and be able to adapt and implement a variety of literacy instructional programs and methods (i.e. literature focus units, literature circles, etc.) **(INTASC 1, 4, 7) (CFPO 3,5,6,7)**
9. Teacher candidates will know how to assess middle grades' children's literacy, and use results of assessments for planning instruction and communicating with families. **(INTASC 8) (CFPO 3,4,5,9)**
10. Teacher candidates will demonstrate the ability to adapt/differentiate instruction for diverse student needs, and develop a repertoire of strategies for accommodating differences. **(INTASC 3) (CFPO 3,4,5,6,7,9)**
11. Teacher candidates will interact with children in a school setting and engage in small group and/or individual literacy instruction to assess, plan, and implement instruction. **(INTASC 1, 2, 8, 9, 10) (CFPO 4,5,6,7,10)**
12. Teacher candidates will reflect on and improve their own teaching performance. **(INTASC 9) (CFPO 1,3)**
13. Teacher candidates will critique reading programs and curriculum marketed for middle grades classrooms. (including technology programs/Internet sites appropriate for the middle grades student) **(INTASC 9, 10) (CFPO 3,4,9,10)**
14. Teacher candidates will become familiar with professional organizations in the field of literacy (i.e. National Council of Teachers of English, International Reading Association, etc.) **(INTASC 9, 10)**

Topics to be covered:

1. Appropriate literacy practices in the middle grades classroom (3 hours) (on-going)
 - Language rich classrooms
 - Organizing and managing the literacy classroom
 - Motivating middle years students

- Providing authentic reading and writing opportunities
 - Student-centered reading strategies
2. Organizing for reading instruction (6 hours)
 - The call for reform in middle grades literacy programs
 - Major approaches and materials for reading instruction (e.g. published reading series, literature based approaches, computer applications for reading instruction, etc.)
 - Integrating speaking and listening in the middle grades classroom
 - Review appropriate technology programs, Internet sites, and other sources
 - Analysis of successful literacy programs
 - Critique of commercially marketed literacy programs
 3. Fluency (6 hours)
 - Importance of fluency (rate, expression, tone) for comprehension
 - Instructional strategies for teaching fluency (i.e. repeated reading, readers' theater, radio reading)
 - Relationship of various genre in developing fluency (i.e. predictable books, poetry, theme songs)
 - Fluency and text difficulty
 - Assessing fluency
 4. Understanding reading comprehension (3 hrs)
 - Factors that affect reading comprehension (e.g. text structures, interest levels, readers' background knowledge, context and purpose for reading, etc.)
 - Comprehension process – predict to assess prior knowledge, read, retell, respond to questions, summarize
 5. Teaching reading comprehension (6 hrs)
 - Instructional strategies for teaching comprehension including prereading, during-reading, and postreading strategies and activities (e.g. QAR's, graphic organizer development, chunking, E-T-R, read aloud)
 - Comprehending during reading,(e.g. inferring, self-questioning, determining importance, summarizing)
 - Teaching methods such as think-alouds, modeling, making comprehension explicit
 - Higher order comprehension and thoughtful literacy
 - Assessing comprehension
 - Comprehension and ELL learners
 - Teaching methods such as teacher think-alouds, modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and independent application of strategies
 - Metacognition
 - Comprehension interactive computer software
 6. Vocabulary and word study (9 hrs)
 - Principles of vocabulary development
 - Levels of word knowledge – unknown, initial, partial, full
 - Types of vocabulary – listening, speaking, reading, writing
 - Instructional strategies to promote word knowledge (i.e. word sorts, types of context clues, word banks, dictionary/reference aids, semantic feature analysis)

- Syllabic patterns, compound words, contractions, word roots/etymologies, figurative meanings
 - Morphemic analysis of words
 - Assessing vocabulary and word knowledge
 - Vocabulary instruction and ELL learners
 - Technology and vocabulary development
7. Media/visual/critical literacy (6 hrs)
- National and state standards regarding media/visual literacy
 - Understanding how texts (including print and visual, technological, and other non-print texts) are constructed to impact readers and how readers construct meaning from a variety of texts
 - Teaching children to be critical and thoughtful readers
 - Analyzing a variety of print and non-print texts
 - Analyzing texts around issues of race, class, gender, etc.
8. Assessment in the middle grades literacy classroom (6hrs)
- Informal assessment procedures (e.g. observation, assessing student work)
 - Formal assessment procedures (e.g. standardized tests, reading inventories, etc.)
 - Use of assessment results to accomplish change in literacy instruction
 - Communicating with families about assessment
8. Knowledge and support offered by professional organizations (1 hr)

Suggested Student Activities:

Field component:

Teacher candidates will interact with middle grades learners in one or more middle grades school settings (10 Hours). Field activities may include observation of literacy instruction, conversations with classroom teachers about literacy instruction, interactions with middle grades learners, completion of lesson plans with a middle level learner, and a case study of a literacy learner. In addition, teacher candidates will write reflections on their observations in the field.

Class component:

1. Literature Circle Planning Project: While you are reading and working with *your chosen book for Literature Circles*, you will study many aspects of literacy teaching and learning in the upper grade classroom. Based on your reading of the novel and your understanding of how to teach comprehension, skills, strategies, response, the reading process, and vocabulary in a literature-based classroom, you will create the Planning Project. (Reading Logs, Assigned Role Reports, Reflections, etc.). You will complete a Showcase Presentation.
2. Evaluation of Middle Grades Curriculum: Teacher candidates will review and analyze prepackaged curricula and educational technology programs developed for and marketed to middle grades literacy learners. Teacher candidates will apply knowledge of appropriate curriculum for middle grades literacy learners, state frameworks, and vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency skill and strategy instruction to evaluate the quality of the curricula. The teacher candidates will write a reflective paper to evaluate how the reviewed curricula and technology programs would meet their needs in the classroom.

3. Vocabulary Lesson Plan: You will work with a partner to write a vocabulary lesson plan to teach using the book “**Words Their Way**”. You will choose an activity from the book to use in the lesson plan. You will “teach” this lesson in class. (The topic will be assigned)
4. Case Study of Middle Grades Learner: Based on interactions in the field placement, including the utilization of a variety of literacy assessments (including observations and field notes), teacher candidates will write a case study of a literacy learner. The case study will include discussion of the strengths, weaknesses, interests, and learning gaps revealed by the implementation of assessments and a proposal for appropriate objectives, curriculum and teaching strategies for this middle grades learner.
5. Comprehension Lesson Plan: Teacher candidates will plan and teach a comprehension lesson plan with a typically achieving middle grades learner, and reflect on that teaching.
6. Comprehension Reflection: Write a reflection on the comprehension lesson planned and taught to a student. Discuss in the reflection: success or failure of lesson, student’s reaction to lesson, your reaction to the teaching process of the lesson, any other information you believe is important to reflect on to help you in teaching future lessons. 1-2 full pages typed.
7. Chapter Quizzes and Final:

Attendance Policy, Late Paper Policy

Instruction will be based on course discussion, group work, group projects, in class writing and reflection, and many other participatory activities. If you are absent you will not be able to learn to teach literacy. You also will not be able to support your peers’ learning. Therefore, only two absences will be allowed. Three percentage point will be deducted from you final grade for each absence over two, (one in the summer session), except in extenuating circumstances. Only death and illness count as excused absences. Please turn in documentation for each absence when you come to class.

If you are absent you are required to consult with another student to find out of the details of readings and assignments due for the next class. You must always come to class prepared, ready to turn in your assignments. Absences do not excuse you from being prepared the next time class meets.

Turning work in – In order for you to receive the feedback that you need and to demonstrate a level of professionalism appropriate for beginning teachers, you must turn in assignments on time. All assignments turned in later than the day they are due will have 10 percent deducted from the grade. There will be no exceptions – even if you were absent the week before. If you are absent the day something is due, email it to me. Papers will not be accepted in class the following week (unless other arrangements have been made due to extenuating circumstances).

Grading Scale

A “C” reflects work that is adequate. A “B” reflects good, strong work. An “A” will only be given for work that is excellent. The numerical grading scale is below:

1000 points total

930 – 1000	A
860 – 929	B
790 – 859	C
720 – 789	D

Grades will be determined based primarily on the criteria established in the General Grading Rubrics for each assignment.

Assignment Point Allocations

Literature Circle P.P.	50 pts
Eval. Middle Grades Curr.	100 pts
“Words Their Way” Vocabulary Lesson Plan	100 pts
Case Study of a Literacy Learner	200 pts
Comprehension Lesson Plan	100 pts
Log/reflection on 10 hrs. Field experience	50 pts
Professionalism (attendance, participation, attitude, etc.)	50 pts
Chapter Quizzes (5 @ 50 pts. Each) (Ch.’s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5&6)	250 pts
Final	100 pts
Total -	<hr/> 1000 Pts

Methods of Instruction:

Methods of instruction will include large group discussions (utilizing multi-media approaches, invited speakers, shared problem solving, etc.) small group assignments, and individual student assignments.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

All work completed for this class must be original. I expect each individual to think, write, reflect, question, and even sometimes struggle through the concepts presented in class. This is the only way you will learn and grow as a reading teacher. Students who commit academic misconduct, including plagiarizing work (copying or borrowing heavily from published materials) or copying or borrowing heavily from another student’s work will fail this class. The university holds Academic Misconduct as a serious and punishable infraction. University Academic Misconduct polices may be found in the Bulldog Handbook, available from the Student Association or at www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1207A.html.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Gunning, T. Creating Literacy Instruction for all students in Grades 4 – 8. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc..

Woods, M.L. & Moe, A.J. (2003). Analytical Reading Inventory (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Frank, C.B., Grossi, J.M. & Stanfield, D.J. Applications of Reading Strategies Within the Classroom. Pearson, Allyn & Bacon.

K-8 Language Arts Frameworks and the K-3 and 4-8 Reading/Writing Instructional Intervention Supplement, available for download at <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/curriculum/>

Words Their Way book (should have from early literacy one and two)

Reading Universe Lessons 28 – 36 (Available on TaskStream Website)

Children's literature selections

Additional children's literature selections will be announced in class.

TaskStream

Bibliography:

- Allington, R.L. (2002). *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*. New York: Longman.
- Ayers, W. (1998). "Teaching as an ethical enterprise." *The Educational Forum*, Vol. 63. pp. 52-57.
- Beers, K. & Samuels, B.G. (Eds.) (1998). *Into focus: Understanding and creating middle school readers*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
- Cunningham, P.M, Moore, S.A., Cunningham, J.W., & Moore, D.W. (2000) *Reading and Writing in Elementary Classrooms*. New York: Longman.
- Edelsky, C. (1999) Making justice our project: Teachers working toward critical whole language practice. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Fu, D., & Townsend, J.S. (1999). "Serious learning: Language lost." *Language arts*, 76(5) pp. 404-411.
- Gillet, J. & Temple, C. (1999). *Understanding Reading Problems: Assessment and Instruction*. 5th Edition. Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn & Bacon.
- Koch, R. & Schwartz-Petterson, J. (2000). *The portfolio guidebook: Implementing quality in an age of standards*. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.
- Kohn A. (2002). Poor teaching for poor kids. *Language Arts* 68 3 251-255.
- Perry, T. & Delpit, L. (Eds.) (1998). *The Real Ebonics Debate*. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Rafael, T. & Heibert, E. (1996). *Creating an integrated approach to literacy instruction*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Scala, M.A. (1993). "What whole language in the mainstream means for children with learning disabilities." *The reading teacher*, 47(3) pp. 222-229
- Taylor, D. & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). *Growing up literate: Learning form inner-city families*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.