

**EDIS 7710 Reading in the Content Areas** 3 Credit Hours

Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education Spring 2014

Students enrolled in this course must have completed an undergraduate degree.

January 20- May 5, 2014

Online

Final Exam: May 8-11, 2014

Spring Break: March 10-15

**Instructor**

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**Description**

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|  | Reading in the Content Areas is a course that explores how students comprehend and learn through nonfiction text and how teachers assist them in these processes. The focus is on students in the upper elementary grades and higher. Participants will explore the nature and meaning of comprehension, strategic teaching and learning, and what it means to learn through texts. The emphasis in the class will be on practical ways by which teachers can use content reading strategies to facilitate comprehension and technical vocabulary acquisition. Theoretical and foundational considerations will help frame the exploration, modeling, and practice of a range of strategies.  |

**Learning Objectives**

This course will: enable you to

* Develop an understanding of student-centered comprehension instruction and what it means to learn through text
* Learn to activate and assess students’ prior knowledge, actively engage them with text, and promote student reflection on learning
* Evaluate a textbook and determine what makes it easy or difficult to comprehend
* Construct a text set to support a specific lesson topic
* Evaluate the objectives and outcomes of instruction before selecting comprehension strategies
* Design a lesson built on the before, during, and after reading model
* Learn techniques for promoting student discussion, questioning, writing, and vocabulary acquisition
* Learn techniques for helping students consolidate and study what they have read
* Learn instructional techniques for guiding students’ thinking through a text and helping them become independent learners
* Examine practices that employ social interaction among students
* Consider nonfiction read-alouds as a means of launching content literacy in the primary grades
* Reflectively examine, as a professional, your own practice.

**Instructional Methods**

We will use the University’s platform for courses called Collab (https://collab.itc.virginia.edu/portal).

Students are expected to activate their UVa ID and use it for access to the class site. Assignments will be submitted there; the gradebook will allow individual students to keep track of their performance in the course. All course materials and readings with the exception of textbooks will be available on the Collab site as downloadable documents.

**Course Texts**

*Required*

McKenna, M. C., & Robinson, R. D. (2014). *Teaching through text: Reading and writing in the content areas (2nd ed.).* Pearson. **ISBN-10:** 0-13-268572-8

**Grading**

Students in EDIS 7710 Reading in the Content Areas are expected to complete all assignments and will be graded according to the following scale:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+     100 | B+   87-89 | C+   77-79 | D 60-67 |
| A       95-99 | B     83-86 | C     73-76 | F     Below 60 |
| A-     90-94 | B-    80-82 | C-    70-72 |  |
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**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Please note that simply fulfilling all of the requirements of the course does not automatically guarantee a final grade of A. The instructor evaluates the quality and scope of all coursework. All assignments must be submitted on the specified due date. Assignments turned in late are subject to point reductions. All assignments must be word-processed in 12 pt. font and submitted to the class website on Collab.

**Grade Reports:** You can obtain your grade at the end of the course by going to the Registrar’s website. <http://www.virginia.edu/registrar/>

## Course Assessments:

1. **Forum exercises**

All students are expected to contribute to this community of learners by being a positive participant in forum discussions.

Forum participation is worth 3 points each week. Three points will be earned when the required participation is met (this includes the quality of the postings); .5-2.5 point will be earned based on the quality and amount of postings if the full requirement is not met. 0 points will be earned if nothing is posted for the week. Late postings will not earn credit. The number of posts required per week may vary. Please pay careful attention to weekly announcements for specific forum directions.

*Attendance, Participation, and Readings, are collectively worth* ***10%*** *of your grade.*

1. **Textbook Assessment**

You will conduct a thorough analysis of a science or social studies textbook. This analysis will be based on criteria to be discussed in class and will include:

* Estimating the readability level of the text
* Describing its format and layout (sidebars, graphics, and other features)
* Evaluating the writing style
* Judging how “considerate” the text is in terms of the author’s assumptions about prior knowledge.

A complete description of this task will be discussed in class 2 and the assignment is due at the end of Class 3. This paper should not exceed 2-3 pages in length.

*The textbook assessment is worth* ***15%*** *of your grade and* ***is due at the end of Class 3****.*

1. **Text Set**

A text set is a collection of trade books centered on a theme (e.g., habitats, the Civil War, the Civil Rights movement, frogs, planets, etc.) and that reflect a wide range of reading levels. Making a text set available to your students helps ensure that every student in your class can be part of the learning community. To that end, you will be required to create a list of 12 books associated with a single broad topic and representing three broad reading levels: near grade level, below grade level, and above grade level. Four books should be included in each of these reading levels. Each book in your list should be accompanied by a brief annotation of about 100 words and an estimate of its readability in the form of a Lexile level or the result of the application of a readability formula. Please use APA format for all book citations.

*The Text Set is worth* ***20%*** *of your grade.*

 **4. Lesson Plan Design**

Throughout the semester, you will draft the components of a content area lesson that you will submit the last week of class. In Class 4, there is a complete description of this assignment.

You will start thinking about this assignment in Class 2, will choose a topic for your lesson, and create a text set assignment for Class 5. Your text set should be constructed to support your lesson topic. Your text set assignment is due at the end of Class 5.

In Class 3 you will consider what kinds of diversity you see in your classroom and how you will meet those needs in your lesson. In particular, how will you meet the needs of your English Language Learners? You may only have general thoughts about this at first; you may want to wait until you design your *before, during, and after* reading portions of the lesson to flesh your paper out.

In Class 4, you will write the learning objectives for your lesson and consider ideas of how to increase student motivation to engage with your lesson. In Class 5, you will identify and describe activities to assess, elicit, and build prior knowledge (*before-reading)* of your students before they start reading on the lesson topic. You will also pick six Tier 3 words that you think are essential to the comprehension of the topic and describe how you will teach them.

In Class 7, you will design either a Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) or a read-aloud that constitute the *during-reading* portion of your lesson plan. You will also write a brief description of an *after-reading* activity based on questioning and/or writing that you would use with this lesson.

You will consider your learning objectives for the lesson and draft a brief description of the assessment that you intend to use that matches the learning objectives. At this stage, you will want to review the content of the lesson to make certain you provided the information and practice opportunities to prepare them for the assessment items you design.

In Class 9, you’ll complete your draft with a description of how you will provide for review of vocabulary for this lesson over time. Describe how you will connect the topic of this lesson to new material. How can you provide guided practice and then independent practice on the content of this lesson over time? Please remember to use APA style for book citations.

 *The Lesson Plan is worth* ***35%*** *of your grade.*

**5***.* **Final Exam**

The final exam will consist of an objective section and several short essay questions.

*The final exam is worth* ***20%*** *of your grade.*

Please note: Assignments may not be redone and submitted for additional consideration. Fairness prevents offering that option to one student and not all. Further, as graduate students, you are expected to submit your best work *first*.

**Summary**

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| **Task** | **Value** |
| 1. Attendance, Participation, and Readings | 10 points |
| 2. Textbook Assessment | 15 points |
| 3. Text Set | 20 points |
| 4. Lesson Plan | 35 points |
| 5. Objective Quizzes throughout the course | 0 points |
| 6. Final Exam  | 20 points |