

EDLA 531 Literacy in the Community & Family Arenas
Eastern Mennonite University at Lancaster
Master of Arts in Education
Winter/Spring 2012

Credit Hours: 3 semester hours
Instructor: Susan Finn Miller, Ph.D.
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Total Class time: 42 hours.
Office Hours: By appointment
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Class Schedule: Saturdays from 8:30 to 3:30 Jan. 7 & 14 and March 10, 2012
Wednesday evenings from 5:30 to 8:30, Jan. 18 & 25, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and March 7, 2012

Prerequisites: None. This course is required for Reading Specialist certification in PA.

Conceptual Framework: “Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for a Changing World”

The EMU Teacher Education Program has chosen the theme *Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for a Changing World*” as the conceptual framework from which its beliefs and outcomes are based. The Teacher Education Program envisions preparing informed lifelong leaders and learners who value the dignity of all persons and are ready and willing to share a pilgrimage of openness and continuous growth as they invite others to join them. These caring, reflective educators will offer healing and hope in a diverse world. Six performance outcomes focus all course and candidate outcomes.

M.A. in Education Program Outcomes:

Scholarship: to acquire advanced knowledge through core curriculum and specialty area courses and to organize and integrate that knowledge into professional practice. **(S)**

Inquiry: to generate questions and to use critical thinking to self-assess, to view problems from multiple perspectives, to make informed decisions and to engage in action research for educational change. **(I)**

Professional Knowledge: to acquire advanced pedagogical and specialty area knowledge in order to create cultures of change and manage environments conducive to learning, setting high expectations and implementing appropriate instructional and assessment practices. **(PK)**

Communication: to develop communication strategies (verbal, nonverbal, and technological) which support collaboration and resourcefulness to empower self and others. **(C)**

Caring: to develop a nurturing spirit that advocates for students, encourages social and ethical responsibility, and promotes peacebuilding in diverse settings. **(Ca)**

Leadership: to act as social change agents by working collaboratively to bring about fair and just systemic change within educational contexts. **(L)**

Course Outcomes:

(Note: EMU M.A. in Education Program – Literacy Track outcomes are listed in parentheses following each course outcome.)

1. Recognize that literacy can be an act of empowerment and as such be able to clearly analyze dynamics of power in workplace, adult and family literacy programming. (S.2, I.1, I.2, I.7, PK.3, CR.2, SE.7, L.1)
2. Recognize that literacy is embedded in a cultural discourse and be able to clearly articulate the purpose and goals, as well as the particular challenges, of workplace, adult and family literacy programs. (PK.5, C.2, CR.3, CR.4, L.5)
3. Identify the political, social and cultural environments of literacy programs and be able to suggest ways in which the goals and outcomes of workplace, adult and family literacy programs can be negotiated in order to maximize learning for various stakeholders. (SE.3, SE.7, SE.8, SE.9)
4. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between adult literacy learning and child literacy learning. (S.2, S.6, I.2, C.3, SE.8)
5. Analyze how the goals of participation in workplace, adult and family literacy programs affect the teaching techniques and outcomes of the specific program. (SE.8, SE.9, L.1, T.3)

Course Description:

This course addresses workplace literacy, family literacy, adult literacy and literacy advocacy. The course is designed for graduate students to explore current theories, trends and issues in the field of adult and family literacy. Among our guiding questions for the course will be: What is literacy? How is it achieved? What do we mean when we use terms like “co-learner” and “student-centered?” Whose interests are served by the various answers we might provide? In addition, since the majority of the students in the course are practicing teachers, there will be an explicit emphasis on intergenerational literacy, parent/family involvement, and the critical role parents and families play in their children’s language and literacy development. The course will include a focus on the many ways teachers can work effectively with students’ families.

We will investigate various theories and practices of teaching literacy, paying particular attention to the relationships of race and class to literacy. Our lens will focus as much on ourselves as teachers and adult learners as on the students in adult literacy classes. Readings “from the field” will include a look at workplace literacy, community-based programs, family literacy, and adult English as a Second Language (ESL). As adults learning together, we will gain a deeper understanding of the culture of the field of adult and family literacy through bringing our own experiences and perspectives to the discussion. Participants will engage in reading and writing activities that will immerse us in the content of the course and which can also be used as teaching techniques in adult and family literacy classrooms.

Required texts:

- Purcell-Gates, V. (1997). *Other people's words* (Reprint Edition). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Reprint edition. ISBN: 0674645111
- Various articles provided on the course Moodle site.

Assignments:

1) Comparison and Contrast Essay (2 pages): Due at the first class meeting

2) Discussion Facilitation

Course participants will sign up to facilitate discussion of the course readings.

3) Reflective Literacy Autobiography: Due Wednesday, February 1

You will write a 4-6-page literacy autobiography that is a reflection on your experiences as a reader and a writer.

4) Reflective paper on field observation of adult literacy class: Due Wednesday, February 22

As part of our class, you will visit an adult literacy class. You will write a 4-6-page reflection paper that highlights what you learned from your observations. In the paper it will be important for you to reflect on how this experience affects your work as a literacy educator.

5) Personal Project and Presentation: You will turn in your project and make a presentation on the last day of class, Saturday, March 10. Choose from the following options for your project.

A) Write a 4-6-page paper that addresses a question you have about the similarities and differences between the learning of adults and children. In the paper, you will refer to the course readings and discussions and possibly the observations of adult literacy classrooms as well your own experiences. You might also want to include additional resources. Be sure to include a personal reflection on the impact on your own work as a literacy educator.

B) Write a 4-6-page paper that addresses a question you have about intergenerational aspects of literacy. For example, you might explore what the research has to say about a parent’s role in children’s literacy development or how to preserve heritage languages to ensure children become profitably bilingual. In the paper, you will refer to the course readings and discussions and possibly your own experiences. You might also want to include

additional resources. Be sure to include a personal reflection on the impact on your own work as a literacy educator.

C) Design a process or project to assist you to connect home and school and that will enable you to work more effectively with your students' families. You should design something that you will actually use in your work. What you hand in should be detailed and complete enough to enable immediate implementation into your practice. The course readings offer several excellent examples.

D) Interview an adult literacy learner to deepen your understanding of an individual's circumstances and motivations. Write a 4-6-page paper summarizing the interview and your learning. Include a personal reflection on the impact on your own work as a literacy educator. Please submit your interview protocol for my feedback before the interview.

E) A project of your choosing that is related to the course content. You must get approval from the instructor.

6) Final Reflection Paper: Due on the last day of class Saturday, March 10

On the last day of class, please submit a 2-3-page reflection paper highlighting your learning in the course. You should include reflection on your leadership and participation in discussion, the course readings, the course writing assignments and the field observations. You are encouraged to include future plans for teaching and/or research. Please also indicate the grade you believe you have earned based on your learning and performance in the course and measured according to the course evaluation criteria.

Evaluation:

Because the assignments are an integral part of the course, all participants should plan to complete the course requirements on time. No late work will be accepted. Incompletes will only be given under extenuating circumstances. Evaluation will be based on participation and completion of all assignments with criteria developed within the context of the course.

Some recommended background reading on issues in adult literacy education in the U.S.

Krudenier, J. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Wrigley, H. S. (2010). Adult education literacy instruction: A review of the research. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/adult_ed_2010.pdf Update on reading research

Lesgold, A. M. & Welch-Ross, M. (Eds.) (n.d.) Improving adult literacy instruction: Options for research and practice. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

English as a Second Language

Chisman, F. P. & Crandall, J. A. (2006). *Passing the torch: Strategies for innovation in community College ESL*. [online] www.caalusa.org

Condelli, L., Wrigley, H.S., Yoon, K., Cronen, S., & Seburn, M. (2003). *What works study for adult ESL literacy students: Final report*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

Hector-Mason, A. et al. (2009). *Transitioning English language learners*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Retrieved from www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/.../tell-fs-080812.pdf

Statistics on adult English language learners <http://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/adultELLs/overview.html>
(CAELA website includes many resources for adult ESOL practitioners.)
<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/faqs/view/3>

Tarone, E., Bigelow, M., & Hansen, K. (2009). *Literacy and second language oracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Math/Numeracy

Gal, I., Coben, D., & Safford, K. (2006). *Literature in adult numeracy: Research and conceptual issues*. [online] http://www.air.org/projects/projects_ehd_adult_ed.aspx

Ginsburg, L., Manley, M., & Schmitt, M. J. (2006). *The components of numeracy*. [online] <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=26#numeracy>

History, Policy & Advocacy

Belzer, A. & St. Clair, R. (2003). *Opportunities and limits: An update on adult literacy education*. Columbus, OH: Center on Education and Training. Available at www.tcall.tamu.edu/erica/docs/mr45.pdf

Fingeret, A. (1989). The social and historical context of participatory literacy education. In A. Fingeret & P. Jurmo (Eds.) *Participatory literacy education*. (pp. 6-15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Belzer, A. (2003). *Living with it: Federal policy implementation in adult basic education: The cases of the Workforce Investment Act and Welfare Reform*. Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. NCSALL Reports No. 24. gseweb.harvard.edu/~ncsall/research/report24.pdf

Merrifield, J. (1998). *Contested ground: Performance accountability in adult basic education*. Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. NCSALL Report No.1

National Assessment of Adult Literacy (2003). Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006471>

National Coalition for Literacy <http://blog.ncladvocacy.org/> for details about advocacy and policy related to the Workforce Investment Act.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (1998). Federal legislation that funds adult literacy education and workforce training. Rep. Hinajosa from Texas has introduced a recent iteration in HR2226 the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act of 2011 <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Thomas>. Other legislators are working on different versions of the reauthorization of WIA.

Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy <http://www.caalusa.org/publications.html>. Many other relevant policy-related reports on this website as well as at <http://www.nationalcommissiononadultliteracy.org/>

Recommended books:

Bigelow, M. (2010). *Mogadishu on the Mississippi: Language, racialized identity, and education in a new land*. Wiley-Blackwell. West Sussex, United Kingdom.

Demetron, G. (2005). *Conflicting paradigms in adult literacy education: In quest of a US democratic politics of literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Ferlazzo, L. & Hammond, L. (2009) *Building parent engagement in schools*. Santa Barbara, CA: Linworth

Gowen, S. G. (1992). *The politics of workplace literacy: A case study*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Henderson, A. T., Mapp, K. L., Johnson, V. R., & Davies, D. (2007). *Beyond the bake sale: The essential guide to family-school partnerships*. New York: The New Press.

Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Martin, R. (2001). *Listening up: Reinventing ourselves as teachers and students*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Purcell-Gates, V., Jacobson, E., & Degener, S. (2006). *Print literacy development: Uniting cognitive and social practice theories*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rivera, L. (2008). *Laboring to learn: Women's literacy and poverty in the post-welfare era*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Rogers, R. (2003). *A critical discourse analysis of family literacy practices: Power in and out of print*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tarone, E., Bigelow, M., & Hansen, K. (2009). *Literacy and second language oracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Class Schedule: Topics for Discussion and Readings

Saturday, January 7 Getting started, Overview of the course: *Encounters in the field*

Assignment Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the teacher in the Traub article with the teacher in the Power article. Write a two-page essay comparing the two teachers and come to class prepared to discuss your ideas with others.

Power, K. (1998). No little I's and no little you's -- Language and equality in an adult literacy community. In W. Ayers, J. A. Hunt, & T. Quinn (Eds.) *Teaching for social justice*. (pp. 102-123). New York: The Teachers College Press.

Traub, J. (1994). Class struggle. *The New Yorker*. September 19, 76-90.

Saturday, January 14 *What is literacy?: Evolving theories on literacy/literacies*

Cook-Gumperz, J. (1986). Literacy and schooling. In J. Cook-Gumperz (Ed.) *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gee, J. P. (1991). What is literacy? In C. Mitchell & K. Weiler, (Eds.). *Rewriting literacy: Culture and the discourse of the other*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Purcell-Gates, V. (2007). Complicating the complex. In V. Purcell-Gates (Ed.) *Cultural practices of literacy: Case studies of language, literacy, social practice and power*. (pp. 1-23). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Weinstein, G. (1997). From problem-solving to celebration: Discovering and creating meanings through literacy. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 54(1), 28-47.

Problematizing causal explanations for low literacy

Ladson-Billings, G. (2007). Pushing past the achievement gap: An essay on the language of deficit. *Journal of Negro Education*, 76(3), 316-323. EBSCO MegaFILE, EBSCOhost (accessed September 12, 2010).

Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. (pp. 31, 233-257, 279), Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Wednesday, January 18 *Critical pedagogy: Critical literacy*

Freire, P. & Macedo (1987). The importance of the act of reading. In *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*. (pp. 1-4). South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey.

Houp, W. (2009). Lana's story: Re-storying adult literacy education. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. 52(8), 698-707.

Spener, D. (1992). *The Freirian approach to adult literacy education*. Washington, DC: CAELA. Available at http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/FREIREQA.html

Wednesday, January 25 *Discourse & power*

Ballenger, C. (1992). Because you like us: The language of control. *Harvard Educational Review*. 62(2), 199-208.

Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*. 58(3), 280-298.

Jordan, J. (1988). Nobody mean more to me than you and the future of Willie Jordon. *Harvard Educational Review*. 58(3), 363-374.

Wednesday, February 1 LITERACY AUTOBIOGRAPHY DUE *Comparing learning for children & adults*

Jenkins, C. (1995). Reflective practice: Blurring the boundaries between child and adult literacy. *Adult Basic Education*. 5(2), 63-81.

Snow, C. & Strucker, J. (1999). Lessons from *Preventing reading difficulties in young children* for adult learning and literacy. In J. Comings, C. Smith, & B. Garner (Eds.) *The annual review of adult learning and literacy*, Volume 1. (pp. 25-71). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wednesday, February 8 Visit Adult Literacy Classes

Wednesday, February 15 Visit Adult Literacy Classes

Wednesday, February 22 *Understanding families* REFLECTIVE PAPER ON CLASS OBSERVATIONS DUE

Magro, K. (2008). Exploring the experiences and challenges of adults from war-affected backgrounds: New directions for literacy educators. *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal*. 2(1), 24-33.

Mui, S. & Anderson, J. (2008). At home with the Johars: Another look at family literacy. *The Reading Teacher*. 62(3), 234-243.

Wednesday, February 29 *Intergenerational factors in literacy*

Purcell-Gates, V. (1995). *Other people's words: The cycle of low literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.

Wednesday, March 7 *Parent/Family engagement: Family literacy*

Doorn, D. (1995). Family collaboration in children's literacy: When journals travel home. In G. Weinstein-Shr & E. Quintero (Eds.) *Immigrant learners and their families: Literacy to connect the generations*. (pp. 43-56). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Ferlazzo, L. (2011). Involvement or engagement? *Educational Leadership*, 68(8), 10-14. Available at <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may11/vol68/num08/Involvement-or-Engage>

Smith, M. C. & Elish-Piper, L. (2002). Primary-grade educators and adult literacy: Some strategies for assisting low-literate parents. *The Reading Teacher* 56, 156-165.

Weinstein-Shr, G. (1995). Learning from uprooted families. In G. Weinstein-Shr & E. Quintero (Eds.) *Immigrant learners and their families: Literacy to connect the generations*. (pp. 113-133). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Saturday, March 14 PROJECTS, PRESENTATIONS, FINAL REFLECTION PAPER DUE

Literacy in the workplace

Hull, G. (2000). Critical literacy at work. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 43(7), 648-652.

Nash, A. (2001). Participatory workplace education: Resisting fear-driven models. In P. Campbell & B. Burnaby *Participatory practices in adult education*. (pp. 185-195). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Attendance Expectations: As stated in the EMU Graduate Catalog: “Because of the interactive nature of graduate classes at EMU, we believe that students who miss class for the equivalent of six 50-minute periods or four 75 minute periods (300 minutes) in a three semester hour course . . . have not fulfilled necessary requirements to receive an “A” in the graduate class. Grades may be lowered for absences of less time at the instructor's discretion.”

Academic Integrity Policy (AIP): EMU faculty and staff care about the integrity of their own work and the work of their students. They create assignments that promote interpretative thinking and work intentionally with students during the learning process. Honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility are characteristics of a community that is active in loving mercy, doing justice, and walking humbly before God. EMU defines plagiarism as occurring when a person presents as one’s own someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. (Adapted from the Council of Writing Program Administrators.) [Taken from “Academic Integrity,” 2011-12 Undergraduate Catalog.] This course will apply EMU’s AIP to any events of academic dishonesty.

Special Accommodations Statement: If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, or has emergency medical information to share, please contact the instructor personally as soon as possible to discuss any accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate equal educational opportunity. All information and documentation of the disability is confidential and will not be released without permission.

Use of Graduate Level Writing Standards and American Psychological Association (APA) Writing Style
Students are expected to use *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6th Edition* for written assignments including annotated bibliographies and references. Candidates citing references in Power Point references are also expected to use APA style. Instructors may exclude short personal narratives, essays, lesson plans, or some project work if APA writing style is inappropriate.

Appendix A
Writing Standards – Graduate Level (Grid Version) (*piloted 2011*)

Criteria	A excellent	B good	C minimal expectations	Comments
Content (<i>quality of the information, ideas and supporting details.</i>)	- shows clarity of purpose - offers depth of content - applies insight and represents original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose - offers substantial information and sufficient support - represents some original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose - lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - represents little original thinking	
Structure (<i>logical order or sequence of the writing</i>)	- is coherent and logically developed - uses very effective transitions	- is coherent and logically developed - uses smooth transitions	- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed - has some awkward transitions	
Rhetoric and Style (<i>appropriate attention to audience</i>)	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective - uses varied sentence structure - is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression - uses some variation in sentence structure - may be wordy in places	- displays some originality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted - uses little varied sentence structure - frequently uses jargon and clichés - uses generally clear but frequently wordy prose	
Information Literacy (<i>locating, evaluating, and using effectively the needed information as appropriate to assignment</i>)	- uses high-quality and reliable sources - chooses sources from many types of resources - chooses timely resources for the topic - integrates references and quotations to support ideas fully	- uses mostly high-quality and reliable sources - chooses sources from a moderate variety of types of resources - chooses resources with mostly appropriate dates - integrates references and quotations to provide some support for ideas	- uses a few poor-quality or unreliable sources - chooses sources from a few types of resources - chooses a few resources with inappropriate dates - integrates references or quotations that are loosely linked to the ideas of the paper	
Source Integrity (<i>appropriate acknowledgment of sources used in research</i>)	- cites sources for all quotations - cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes virtually no errors in documentation style	- cites sources for all quotations - usually cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes minimal errors in documentation style	- has sources for all quotations - has mostly credible paraphrases, sometimes cited correctly - includes reference page with several errors - makes several errors in documentation style.	
Conventions (<i>adherence to grammar rules: usage, mechanics</i>)	- uses well-constructed sentences - makes virtually no errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- almost always uses well-constructed sentences - makes minimal errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- usually uses well-constructed sentences - makes several errors - makes word choices that distract the reader	
The weighting of each of the six areas is dependent on the specific written assignment and the teacher's preference. Plagiarism occurs when one presents as one's own "someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators).				Grade

