Course Overview

The goal of teacher preparation programs at UMCP is to prepare reflective practitioners for a pluralistic society through research-based inquiry. Students preparing to be reading specialists in the Reading Education Master’s degree program learn to be reflective, to develop a broad repertoire of teaching skills, to develop relationships with culturally and linguistically diverse students, and to base their teaching practice on sound theory and research.

In keeping with these goals, the purpose of this course is to promote the concept of diagnostic teaching: the type of teaching that is informed by (1) knowledge of learners, (2) knowledge of educational goals and assessment, (3) knowledge of pedagogy, (4) knowledge of subject matter, (5) knowledge of curriculum, and (6) knowledge of the social/cultural context of learning. This knowledge base reflects the College of Education Conceptual Framework that forms the basis of all courses within the College. This course in particular emphasizes current thinking concerning approaches and materials of use to reading specialists in planning programs of individual and small group instruction. A primary focus is on theory-based decision-making and teachers will be guided to inquire into their own practice and encouraged to make teaching decisions based on what they learn.

This course will provide opportunities to study relationships between diagnostic assessment and diagnostic teaching and will stress the importance of using assessment to inform instruction. Throughout the semester, students will be guided in identifying children’s literacy needs, literacy strengths, and interests. Additionally, students will become skilled in designing instruction that utilizes learners’ strengths to meet their needs. Students will be given opportunities to practice approaches to literacy instruction that have proven helpful for students in need of special help.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Each objective is followed by the appropriate Standard or Standards developed by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association (2003). Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate understanding of
   1. relationships between diagnostic assessment and instruction (3.3)
   2. motivational, academic, and social issues related to instruction for struggling readers (1.1)
   3. theory-based and research-based methods, strategies and practices in reading and literacy instruction (1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3)
   4. instructional challenges for ethnically and linguistically diverse learners (1.1)
5. importance of reflective teaching practice

demonstrate competency in
6. planning and practicing student-centered, integrated literacy activities (2.2)
7. administering informal and formal assessments (3.1)
8. conducting individual diagnostic screenings to identify literacy strengths and needs (3.2)
9. report writing based on assessment findings from diagnostic screenings (3.4)
10. demonstrating research-based instructional techniques to colleagues for professional development purposes (2.2, 5.3)

Course Grading

Class Participation (10%)
You should come to each class prepared to become involved and discuss the assigned readings. Discussion leaders will be assigned for selected readings. Individual and small group in-class activities cannot be made up in the event of absence. Necessary absences should be discussed with the instructor as soon as possible.

Word Study Unit (15%)
Based on class discussions and readings in Words Their Way (Bear et. al 2008), you will plan and prepare the materials for a word study unit for students at a developmental level that you select.

Writer’s Workshop Plan (10%)
Based on class discussions and readings, you will select an age level and develop a plan for a sustained Writer’s Workshop in a classroom setting.

Strategy Presentations (20%).
You will select a strategy, review the available research on the strategy, and plan a presentation. The presentation should be designed as an in-service type workshop to demonstrate for classroom teachers how to use the strategy.

Diagnostic Screenings & Reports (45%).
Students will conduct diagnostic screenings of children who will be attending the Summer Reading Program. The screenings are conducted on selected Saturday mornings from February to May. Various assessments are administered and the findings are reported in a detailed written report that is sent to parents and filed for use by Summer Reading Program teachers.

Required Texts

isbn: 1-57230-806-0

Supplemental Texts


Tentative Schedule

See attachment.

Please Note:

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please see me immediately.

Late assignments will be subject to a grading penalty.

Additional readings may be assigned as the semester progresses.

Code of Academic Integrity

"The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html."

The University of Maryland Honor Pledge, proposed by the Student Honor Council and approved by the University Senate, reads:
“I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.”

Unless you are specifically advised to the contrary, the Pledge statement should be handwritten and signed on the front cover of all major papers, projects, or other academic assignments submitted for evaluation in this course. Students who fail to write and sign the Pledge will be asked to confer with the instructor. Failure to adhere to the code may result in the grade of XF – failure due to academic dishonesty.

Required & Supplemental Reading List


