EDCI 734: Teaching English Language Learners: Current and Future Research Directions
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, Fall 2009
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Tuesdays, 12:30-3:15 p.m., Cole Field House 0101

Dr. Megan Madigan Peercy
Email: mpeercy@umd.edu → Best way to contact me
Office: 2231 Benjamin Building
Office phone: (301) 405-0067
Fax: (301) 314-9055
Office hours: By appointment.

Course Description
EDCI 734 Teaching English Language Learners: Current and Future Research Directions. (3 cr). Corequisites: EDCI 780 or EDCI 732; or permission of department.
Research on the preparation of generalists and specialists teaching English Language Learners. Current research and future research directions.

Course Purpose
This course is for doctoral and advanced Master’s students who are interested in the research on teaching English language learners (ELLs). The course explores the research base related to the preparation of all teachers (both ESL specialists and mainstream teachers) of ELLs, examining what we know and where research still needs to be conducted. The course examines various facets of preparing teachers to work with ELLs, including how teacher education programs are organized in ways that do and do not prepare teachers to teach ELLs, the knowledge base for teaching ELLs, paradigmatic shifts in how the teaching of ELLs is viewed, the language demands of various content areas that mainstream teachers of ELLs need to be aware of, and teachers’ perspectives on their preparation to teach ELLs.

Learning Goals or Outcomes
During the course activities, the students will

- examine current research on the preparation of teachers of ELLs.
- become familiar with past and future directions of the research on teaching ELLs.
- explore how they might contribute to future research on teaching ELLs.

Assignments and evaluation

1. **Class participation** (15%): Class meetings will rely heavily upon discussion of the assigned readings. This class is not intended to be a lecture class, and student input and ideas are vital to our learning. Your participation grade will be based on your active contribution to each class discussion. This includes actively engaging the class with interesting questions and ideas. Active participation is very important in this course, and your final grade will be affected if you are absent more than once or by late arrivals/early departures.

2. **Presentation and discussion of related research** (15%): You will be asked to find a current article related to the topics under study in our course and present it to the class. Write an abstract summarizing important points of the piece to distribute to the class. In your discussion, point out connections between the article you found and our readings for the week, and engage our class in an active discussion.
3. **Midterm paper** (25%): Interview a teacher (ESL or mainstream teacher) who teaches ELLs about the challenges and opportunities s/he faces in educating ELLs. What questions would the teacher like to see teacher educators address in preservice and in-service teacher education about working with ELLs? What questions does the teacher have about how to educate ELLs? Use what you learn from this interview to write a paper about what the teacher shared, making connections to relevant readings from our class, as well as to relevant outside research (doctoral students need at least 5 outside sources, Master’s students need at least 3 outside sources). Also include a discussion of what future research directions this might mean we should pursue. Attach your notes from the interview as an appendix to the paper.

**DUE OCTOBER 13, 2009**

4. **Book assessment** (15%): A number of books for teachers have been written recently which address how teachers should work with ELLs. Some examples:

An important part of this course is examining the research base that undergirds teacher education for teaching ELLs. Knowledge of this research base informs us about how ELLs should be taught, and also how teacher educators and teacher education programs should be preparing teachers to work with ELLs. Drawing from our readings and discussion in the course, you will critically examine one of the books above (or another book that you find and I approve). What is the research base for the book, what are its strengths and weaknesses? Why is the book useful/not useful in supporting teachers to work with ELLs in their classrooms? This assignment is an opportunity to reflect on the solidity of the research base of these increasingly popular books. For those of you who are future teacher educators, you will frequently be called upon to provide professional development about effectively teaching ELLs, and often will be asked to provide teachers with useful sources for practice. This assignment provides an opportunity to think carefully about the characteristics of the sources you will provide and suggest to teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, and school districts. It will also inform how you choose the kinds of books you use in your teacher education courses. Students in this course who are teachers of ELLs also will benefit from thinking carefully about what the research basis is for the kinds of practice that these books suggest, in order to reflectively examine your own teaching in an informed way.

**DUE NOVEMBER 10, 2009**

5. **Final paper** (30%): **Literature review.** Using peer-reviewed journal articles (some policy reports and book chapters from reputable sources are also acceptable), develop a literature review on a topic that interests you related to teacher education for teaching ELLs. Master’s students should review at least 10 sources beyond class readings, doctoral students should review at least 15 sources beyond class readings (this total may include the outside sources you included in your midterm paper). You may build on the teacher interview assignment if there were areas that arose that you want to further investigate. Whatever
topic you choose, you should do a thorough examination of previous research on your topic so that you are aware of the existing research base and possible research directions for your own future research.

**DUE DECEMBER 8, 2009**

Evaluation is according to the following scale:

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<th>Grade</th>
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**Honor Code:** Students are required to comply with the University’s Honor Code, which prohibits cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Allegations of academic dishonesty should be reported directly to the Honor Council (314-8450) by any member of the campus community. For a copy of the full text of the Code, please go to [www.jpo.umd.edu](http://www.jpo.umd.edu).

**Course Evaluations:** As a member of our academic community, you as a student have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit your course evaluations each term through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. Please note the dates for *Fall 2009 (Tuesday, December 1 through Sunday, December 13)* and the link at which you can access the submission system ([www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu)). Please go directly to the website ([www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu)) to complete your evaluations starting December 1. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, in Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

**Disability Support Services:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. To coordinate accommodations, students must contact Disability Support Services and submit an accommodations request each semester. Information is available on the web at [http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html).

**Religious Observances:** The University System of Maryland policy provides that students should not be penalized in any way because of observance of religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the students’ responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. Notice should be provided as soon as possible but no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period.

**Schedule of topics, readings and assignments**

**Week 1, September 1:** The impact of teacher education.

Introductions and course overview.


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**Week 2, September 8: How are teachers prepared to work with ELLs?**


*Recommended additional reading:*


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**Week 3, September 15: How are teachers prepared to work with ELLs?**


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**Week 4, September 22: How are teachers prepared to work with ELLs?**


**Week 5, September 29: The knowledge base for teaching ELLs**


**Recommended additional reading:**


**Week 6, October 6: The sociocultural shift in the teaching of language learners**


**Week 7, October 13: The critical/postmodern shift in the teaching of language learners**


**MIDTERM PAPER DUE TODAY**
Recommended additional reading:

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**Week 8, October 20: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


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**Week 9, October 27: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


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**Week 10, November 3: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


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**Week 11, November 10: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


**BOOK ASSESSMENT DUE TODAY**

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**Week 12, November 17: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


*Suggested additional reading:*


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**Week 13, November 24: Preparing all teachers to work with ELLs**


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**Week 14, December 1: Collaboration between ESL and mainstream teachers**


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**Week 15, December 8: Sharing final projects: Where do we go from here?**

Come prepared to share information about the focus of your final paper, and what recommendations you have for future research in the field of preparing all teachers to work with ELLs.

**LITERATURE REVIEW DUE TODAY**