Course Description and Performance Objectives

EDCI 740 provides students in English Education with a critical survey of the research literature (disciplined inquiry) in the field, an examination of research methods (with a focus on validity and reliability), a consideration of relevant theory, and a consideration of current trends in teaching and learning.

Students in this course will be able to 1) read critically and analyze current research studies in English Education, 2) understand the range of research methods (qualitative and quantitative) available with a focus on validity and reliability, 3) articulate current and relevant theoretical perspectives, 4) understand current trends in teaching and learning and 5) prepare a draft research proposal or a review of the literature.

Core Texts for EDCI 740

Below I have included a list of core texts we will be using extensively in this course. You are not required to purchase them. However, in previous 740 sections, students insisted that I order copies for everyone. If you wish to share texts or borrow texts to save money, of course, that's fine with me. At the same time, if you are planning to build a professional library in theory and research in English Education, the texts listed are the most frequently used and cited in the research literature. The purchase decision is yours.


Supporting Core Texts for EDCI 740


**Documentation Resources for EDCI 740**


**Highly Recommended Texts**


Other Recommended Texts


RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). Reading for understanding: Toward an R & D program in reading comprehension. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.


More Recommended Texts


**National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas. Assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. Since NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test booklets across the nation, NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts. The assessment stays essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. This permits NAEP to provide a clear picture of student academic progress over time. Website: [http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/](http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/)

**Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI)**

Mission Statement: The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

Note: The Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) is being revised during the 2010 – 2011 academic year to incorporate the Common Core State Standards.

Website: [http://www.corestandards.org/](http://www.corestandards.org/)

**Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)**

Website: [http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE)

**Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC)**

Refer to Reading/English Language Arts (Pre-K – Grade 8).

Website: [http://mdk12.org/assessments/vsc/index.html](http://mdk12.org/assessments/vsc/index.html)
Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) Toolkit

Provides additional resources for understanding and teaching the content standards.

Website: http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/toolkit/index.html

Maryland Common Core Curriculum Frameworks

Presented to the Maryland State Board of Education in June 2011. The completed curriculum will be implemented in Maryland schools in the 2013 - 2014 school year.

Website: http://mdk12.org/instruction/commoncore/index.html

Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Framework: Reading/English Language Arts (ELA)

Website: http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/reading/index.html

Maryland Report Card

Provides performance reports by Maryland school districts and by individual schools in those districts.

Website: http://www.msp.msde.state.md.us/

Major Papers

All major papers must be typed and prepared on standard size (8 1/2 x 11) white paper. Papers should be double-spaced with 1 1/2 inch (4 cm) margins at the top, bottom, and sides. All outside sources used for any paper or project must be listed in a reference section and noted in the text of the paper or project according to an APA (see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition) format.

Keep backup file copies of all submitted work.

Grading

All major papers and shorter papers will be graded on an A-F basis. Some of the shorter exercises will be graded on a P-F basis. Incompletes will not be given unless you make specific arrangements (in writing) with me before the final grade sheets are due. A written contract signed by both the student and the professor is required. You may obtain a contract form from the College of Education Access Center (1204 Benjamin Bldg.). The incomplete contract form used by undergraduates is adequate for this purpose.

Final Grades

All work will be taken into account in determining your final grade. Major papers and examinations will be given greater weight. Attendance and class participation will also be determining factors.

The breakdown is as follows: draft research proposal or review of the literature: 90%
class participation: 10%.

If you wish to check your final grade, go to the View Your Grades website.

Website: http://www.testudo.umd.edu/apps/grades/
Mandatory CITI Human Subjects Training Requirement in the Dept. of Teaching, Learning, Policy and Leadership (TLPL)

All students in TLPL programs (B.A., B.S., M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D., Ed.D. and all graduate certificate programs) involved in human subject research are required to complete CITI Human Subjects Training. By completing this requirement, students will be allowed to fully participate in individual, class and team research initiatives in the Department.

To complete the CITI Human Subjects Training requirement, go to the CITI Training Website at https://www.citiprogram.org, fill in the required information, select University of Maryland College Park from the college/university drop down menu, and complete the Social & Behavioral Research – Basic/Refresher, Basic Course module.

Students should complete the CITI Human Subjects Training requirement during the first course in their program. Keep in mind that CITI Human Subjects Training is valid for three years and must be renewed for each additional three-year period.

If faculty or students have completed CITI Human Subjects Training (again, Maryland requires the Social & Behavioral Research – Basic/Refresher, Basic Course module) before accepting a position at Maryland or entering a program Maryland, go to your CITI Training Website home page at https://www.citiprogram.org, find the college/university drop down menu, and change your previous college or university to University of Maryland College Park.

University Honor Code

The University has a nationally recognized Honor Code, administered by the Student Honor Council. The Student Honor Council proposed and the University Senate approved an Honor Pledge. The University of Maryland Honor Pledge 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 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.

Course Evaluation (CourseEvalUM)

The Course Evaluation (CourseEvalUM) system will be open for Fall Semester 2010 on Tuesday, December 7. Students may complete their Fall Semester evaluations at that time. The website (www) is as follows: https://www.courseevalum.umd.edu/

Attendance

Please note the attendance policies for the University of Maryland found at the following website: http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html.

Religious Observances

The University System of Maryland policy on religious observances states that students should not be penalized for participation in religious observances and that, whenever feasible, they should be allowed to make up academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. This policy states that students are responsible to, within the first two weeks of the semester, hand submit notification of the projected absence(s). This is especially important for final examinations. I take the validity of these requests at face value. An extensive list of religious holidays can be found at http://www.interfaithcalendar.org. Tests and the due dates of other significant assessment must not be scheduled during:

It is the student’s responsibility to inform me of any intended absences for religious observances in advance and that prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before the conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester. This problem is especially likely to arise when final exams are scheduled on Saturdays. I understand and adhere to this policy making every feasible effort to accommodate students’ requests based on attendance of religious observances.

Grading

All major papers and shorter papers will be graded on an A - F basis. Some of the shorter exercises will be graded on a P - F basis. In the rare instance when it is necessary for me to give an Incomplete (I), undergraduates are required to complete the standard UMCP Incomplete Contract form available in the College of Education Access Center, 1204 Benjamin Building.

The university uses the following grading system: A, B, C, D, F, XF, I, P, S, and W. These marks remain as part of the student’s permanent record and may be changed only by the original instructor on certification, approved by the department chair and the dean, that an actual mistake was made in determining or recording the grade: A+, A, A- denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship. In computations of grade point averages, these grades are assigned 4 quality points per credit hour; B+, B, B- denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship. Marks of B+, B, B- are assigned 3 quality points per credit hour; C+, C, C- denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected. These grades are assigned 2 quality points per credit hour; D+, D, D- denotes borderline understanding of the subject. These grades denote marginal performance, and they do not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree. These grades are assigned a value of 1 quality point per credit hour; F denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance. F grades are assigned 0 quality points per credit hour; XF denotes failure due to academic dishonesty; S is used to denote satisfactory performance by a student in progressing thesis projects, orientation courses, practice teaching etc. S grades are not included in computation of cumulative averages; W indicates withdrawal from a course in which the student was enrolled at the end of the schedule adjustment period. This mark is not used in any computation of quality points or cumulative average totals at the end of the semester; and Pass-Fail - See a description of the grade and the University’s policy.

Attendance

Please note the attendance policies for the University of Maryland found at the following website: http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html.

Major Course Requirement

Draft Research Proposal

First, I recommend that you contact your adviser to request a copy of a successful research proposal. Some advisers require a three to five page proposal while others require a draft of Chapters 1 – 3 to serve as the research proposal.

Then you will construct a draft research proposal in which you state your research problem; construct a review of the literature; rehearse theory or theories; develop a research design; select measures and/or design data collection procedures; and rehearse validity and reliability issues relevant to your design and measures and/or analyses.

Length will vary according to the expectations of your adviser. At your earliest convenience, make an appointment with me to discuss your topic.

Expectations for the paper will be discussed in class. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) (6th ed.) conventions should be followed.
Review of the Literature

Writers of literature reviews seek to evaluate and integrate the body of research relevant to a question or proposition. Typically, this is a conceptual process resulting in a summary of selected studies from respected journals (Research in the Teaching of English, Written Communication, Journal of Educational Psychology, Reading Research Quarterly, etc.). The reviewer estimates the contribution of a given study to the synthesis being constructed by weighting such characteristics as centrality to the research topic or question, sample representativeness and size, validity of research design, control of important moderating conditions such as socioeconomic class, time on task, and validity of instrumentation. Next the reviewer assesses the combined nature and direction of the studies, bearing in mind the appropriate weighting for the above characteristics. This large set of characteristics immediately suggests a very difficult task, further complicated when there are conflicting results. Reviews differ because reviewers may have found different pools of studies, used various research methods, or were interpreted differently by reviewers who used varied criteria for inclusion and/or analysis. Particularly with conflicting results, this has resulted in a call for more research because there is insufficient evidence for a conclusion.

Expectations for the paper will be discussed in class. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) (6th ed.) conventions should be followed.

Summary of Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td>Tentative topic due.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 13</td>
<td>Draft research proposal or review of the literature is due.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online Writing Centers

Below, I have included information on three online writing centers.

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**
Cambridge, Massachusetts

http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY**
West Lafayette, Indiana

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

**RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE**
Troy, New York

http://www.rpi.edu/web/writingcenter/handouts.html

Course Readings

Many of the course readings will be provided for you in class in photocopy format. I will post others in the Content Documents section of ELMS/Blackboard as PDF files.

Cell Phones

Please turn off cell phones during class.
Recording of Class Lectures

All rights reserved. No part of any lecture may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any informational storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the professor.

Letters of Recommendation

One of my most important responsibilities is to write excellent letters of recommendations in which I fully support colleagues and students in their professional endeavors. In order to write an effective letter, I need a copy of your current resume; and the full name, professional title, department or unit (with room number, if available), street address, city, state, and zip code of the person to whom I am sending your recommendation. In addition, if you are required to provide me with an evaluation form to accompany the letter, make sure that you complete (type) all of the required information on the form before you give it to me.

I do not write open letters of recommendation (refer to the Buckley Amendment). That is, I do not write public letters for inclusion in professional portfolios, websites, or other published venues. I am always willing to provide you with a copy of the letter that I write for you, but the contents of that letter are between you and me.

Questions or Problems

If you have any questions or problems regarding assignments, papers, or tests, please see me about them. By working together, we can resolve any difficulties. Do not hesitate to stop by during my office hours or to make an appointment for some other convenient time.
Tentative Syllabus and Class Schedule

Tues., September 6, 2011

Introductions

Course overview and requirements

The Nature of Disciplined Inquiry

Tues., Sept. 13

David Krathwohl, *How to Prepare a Dissertation Proposal*, Chapters 1 - 3

Michael Graves, “Theories and Constructs That Have Made a Significant Difference in Adolescent Literacy – But Have the Potential to Produce Still More Positive Benefits”

Rumelhart, “Schemata: The Building Blocks of Cognition”

Research Articles: tba

Tues., Sept. 20

Krathwohl, Chapters 4 - 6

Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*

Research Articles: tba

Tentative paper topic is due.

Tues., Sept. 27

Krathwohl, Chapters 7 - 9


Research Articles: tba

Tues., Oct. 4

Krathwohl, Chapters 10 – 13


Individual conferences focused on your DRAFT Level A Proposal.

Research Articles: tba
Tues., Oct. 11
Guerin et al., *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Oct. 18
Guerin et al., *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Oct. 25
Herrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Nov. 1
Herrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Nov. 8
Lyons, *A History of Reading and Writing: In the Western World*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Nov. 15
Lyons, *A History of Reading and Writing: In the Western World*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Nov. 22
*Gee, Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses*
Research Articles: tba

Tues., Nov. 29
*Gee, Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses*
Research Articles: tba
Tues., Dec. 6

*Gee, Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses

Research Articles: tba

Tues. Dec. 13

Paper presentations

Final paper (draft research proposal or review of the literature) is due.
LITERATURE REVIEW

What is a review of the literature? A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by respected scholars and researchers. In writing the literature review, your purpose is to convey to your reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. As a piece of writing, the literature review must be defined by a guiding concept (e.g., your research objective, the problem or issue you are discussing, or your argumentative thesis). It is not just a descriptive list of the material available or a set of summaries.

Besides enlarging your knowledge about the topic, writing a literature review allows you to gain and demonstrate skills in two areas:

1. **information search**: the ability to scan the research literature efficiently, using manual or computerized methods, to identify a set of useful articles and books;
2. **critical evaluation**: the ability to apply principles of analysis to identify unbiased and valid studies.

A literature review must do these things:

a) be organized around and related directly to the thesis or research question you are developing;
b) synthesize results into a summary of what is and is not known;
c) identify areas of controversy in the literature;
d) formulate questions that need further research.

Ask yourself questions like these:

1. What is the **specific thesis, problem, or research question** that my literature review helps to define?
2. What **type** of literature review am I conducting? Am I examining issues of theory? methodology? policy? quantitative research (e.g., on the effectiveness of a teaching strategy)? qualitative research (e.g., case studies)?
3. What is the **scope** of my literature review? What types of publications am I using (e.g., journals, books, government documents, popular media)? What discipline am I working in (e.g., writing research, psychology, sociology, education policy)?
4. How good was my **information search**? Has my search been wide enough to ensure I have found all the relevant material? Has it been narrow enough to exclude irrelevant material? Is the number of sources I have used appropriate for the length of my paper?
5. Have I critically analyzed the literature I use? Do I follow through on a set of claims and questions, comparing them to each other and the ways scholars articulate them? Instead of just listing and summarizing claims, do I evaluate them, discussing strengths and limitations?
6. Have I cited and discussed studies contrary to my perspective?
7. Will the reader find my literature review relevant, appropriate, and useful?

Ask yourself questions like these about each book or article you include:

1. Has the author formulated a problem/issue?
2. Is it clearly defined? Is its significance (scope, severity, relevance) clearly established?
3. Could the problem have been approached more effectively from another perspective?
4. What is the author’s research orientation (e.g., interpretive, critical inquiry, combination)?
5. What is the author’s theoretical framework (e.g., psychological, developmental, feminist)?
6. What is the relationship between the theoretical and research perspectives?
7. Has the author evaluated the literature relevant to the problem/issue? Does the author include literature that takes positions she or he does not agree with?
8. In a research study, how valid are the basic components of the study design (e.g., sample, intervention, outcome)? How valid and reliable are the measurements? Is the analysis of the data accurate and relevant to the research questions? Are the conclusions derived in a valid and reliable manner from the data and analyses?
9. In material written for a popular readership, does the author use appeals to emotion, one-sided examples, or rhetorically charged language and tone? Is there an objective basis to the reasoning, or is the author merely rehearsing what he or she already believes?
10. How does the author structure the argument? Can you deconstruct the flow of the argument to see whether or where it breaks down logically (e.g., in establishing cause-effect relationships)?
11. In what ways does this book or article contribute to our understanding of the problem under study, and in what ways is it useful for instructional practice? What are the strengths and limitations?
12. How does this book or article relate to the specific thesis or question I am developing?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justified criteria for inclusion and exclusion from review.</td>
<td>Did not discuss the criteria for inclusion or exclusion</td>
<td>Discussed the literature included and excluded</td>
<td>Justified literature included and excluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified what has been done from what needs to be done.</td>
<td>Did not identify what has and has not been done</td>
<td>Discussed what has and has not been done</td>
<td>Critically examined the state of the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed the topic or problem in the broader scholarly literature (context)</td>
<td>Topic not placed in broader scholarly literature (context)</td>
<td>Some discussion of broader scholarly literature (context)</td>
<td>Topic clearly situated in broader scholarly literature (context)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed the research in historical context of the field.</td>
<td>History of topic not discussed</td>
<td>Some mention of historical literature</td>
<td>Critical examination of history of topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired and enhanced the subject vocabulary.</td>
<td>Key vocabulary not discussed</td>
<td>Key vocabulary defined</td>
<td>Ambiguities in definitions discussed and resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulated important variables and phenomena relevant to the topic.</td>
<td>Key variables and phenomena not discussed</td>
<td>Reviewed relationships among key variables and phenomena</td>
<td>Notes ambiguities in literature and proposes new relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesized and gained new perspective on literature.</td>
<td>Accepts literature at face value</td>
<td>Some critique of literature</td>
<td>Offered new perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified the main methodologies and research techniques that have been used in the field; and their advantages and limitations.</td>
<td>Research methods not discussed</td>
<td>Research methods used to produce claims discussed</td>
<td>Research methods critiqued or new methods proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related ideas and theories to research methodology.</td>
<td>Research methods not discussed</td>
<td>Discussed appropriateness of research methods to warrant claims</td>
<td>Critiqued appropriateness of research methods to warrant claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulated the practical significance of the research problem.</td>
<td>Practical significance of research not discussed</td>
<td>Practical significance discussed</td>
<td>Practical significance of research critiqued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulated the scholarly significance of the research problem.</td>
<td>Scholarly significance of research not discussed</td>
<td>Scholarly significance discussed</td>
<td>Scholarly significance of research critiqued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written with a coherent, clear structure that supports review.</td>
<td>Poorly conceptualized, haphazard</td>
<td>Some coherent structure</td>
<td>Well developed, coherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used standard and accepted documentation and reference format (APA or MLA).</td>
<td>Incorrect use of documentation and reference format</td>
<td>Some appropriate use of documentation and reference format</td>
<td>Appropriate use of documentation and reference format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated mastery of edited Academic English.</td>
<td>Significant problems with English usage, word choice, spelling</td>
<td>Some problems with English usage, word choice, spelling</td>
<td>Paper reflects mastery of edited Academic English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criteria for Level A Proposals

The Level A proposal is a one-page prospectus for the study, which is presented to the seminar. The purpose of the Level A proposal is to present the basic outline of a research problem to obtain reactions to the ideas and to develop details for the research proposal. The Level A proposal should include:

1. A one-sentence statement that identifies the research problem.

2. A rationale or the fundamental reasons for doing the study. Key support (several citations) from the research literature should be included. Brief statements summarizing related research and/or the theoretical base might be included.

3. The significance or the importance or anticipated consequences for doing the study, with appropriate citations, should also be a part of the Level A proposal.

4. The key questions or expressions of inquiry to which the study seeks to find answers should be included. Hypotheses may be stated (see Gall, Gall, & Borg, *Educational research: An introduction, 2007* or Krathwohl, *Methods of educational and social science research: The logic of methods, 2009* or Schensul & LeCompte, *Ethnographer’s toolkit, 1999*).

5. The key terms (variables) within the questions should also be defined.

6. A brief statement of how the study might be implemented should be included.

Due Date: tba
Level B Research Proposal

The Level B proposal is a six-to-ten page expansion of the dissertation research project. The purpose of a Level B proposal is to present a more detailed outline of the research problem to determine how the research questions may be answered within a realistic framework. At Level B the student is expected to defend the ideas presented but is not necessarily committed to the exact details being proposed. The expansion should clarify intent and begin to specify in detail the methodology.

Elements to be included in a Level B proposal are listed below.

Introduction/Problem

1. An introduction/context statement.
2. An expanded rationale related to the purpose and research questions.
3. A statement of the general problem and its significance.
4. A purpose statement and list of research questions.
5. Definitions of key terms including operationalized variables.
6. A list of limitations of the proposed study.
7. A list of basic assumptions underlying the study.

Procedures

1. A description of the setting, research questions, and description of the overall design of the study. This should include identification of the methodology that will be used.
2. A description of the target population (sample) (i.e., students, teachers).
3. A brief description of the procedures to be followed in implementing the design. Included are procedures for gathering information, preparation of materials, training of teachers, etc., as applicable.
4. A brief statement of how tests (if they are to be used) will provide answers to one or more of the research questions. Information on validity and reliability of the instrument(s) should be provided. For qualitative studies explain how your study might include such ideas as cogency, efficacy, potency, dependability, triangulation, member checking, or robustness.
5. A chart specifying your research question(s) and the measure(s) used to answer the question(s).
6. A projection of how data are to be analyzed and reported should also be included. Account for each question.
7. An outline of the review of literature.
8. A projected time schedule.

Due Date: December 13, 2011