EDCI 769: Seminar on Theory and Research in Reading

This semester’s seminar will focus on theory and research relating to reading comprehension instruction. Participants will study theory, models, research reviews, and primary research reports relevant to reading comprehension instruction. Participants will also conduct a review of research on an issue related to reading comprehension instruction.

By the end of the course, students will have demonstrated:

• their knowledge of the range of theoretical concerns as well as research topics and methods relevant to reading comprehension instruction.

• their ability to read, understand, and evaluate a variety of research reports relevant to reading comprehension instruction.

• their in-depth understanding of a focused area of research relevant to reading, writing, and using reading comprehension instruction.

• their insight into important research questions relating to reading comprehension instruction.

REQUIRED READING

See also the tutorial on APA style at http://www.apastyle.org/.

See citations listed by date below, and summarized in alphabetical order at the end of this syllabus. In addition, other resources will be distributed or announced in class. Most items are posted on the course ELMS site at https://elms.umd.edu or can be downloaded at the site indicated.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

RESOURCES

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All assignments are to be typed. Correct spelling and standard English grammatical usage are required. Include page numbers on any material longer than one page.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Portion of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership/Participation</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Final Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scale

99-100 A+  93-98 A  90-92 A-
87-89 B+  83-86 B  80-82 B-
77-79 C+  73-76 C  70-72 C-
60-69 D  59 and below F

*Please note:* "Incomplete" grades are rare, given only in extenuating circumstances such as major illness. They require a written contract signed by both the student and the professor. The forms are available online at the Student Services web site at http://www.education.umd.edu/studentinfo/graduate_info/FormsExplanGrad.html. This form specifies what is to be completed if a graduate student is to be awarded an incomplete grade in courses numbered 600 level and above (excluding 799 thesis credit, and 899 dissertation credit).

Research Paper

For this course, you will read, critique, and write about 8 primary research reports on a focused topic related to reading comprehension instruction. These reports must be new research reports that you have not previously reviewed in other course papers. In addition to the 8 primary research reports, you will include other citations (at least 5 references), as needed, to provide background, clarify discussion, etc.
This research paper may or may not be related in some way to your eventual dissertation. The length of your paper will depend on the topic and how you approach it, but most papers will be somewhere around 15-25 pages plus references. Your paper’s overall organization will consist of (a) an introduction, (b) a review of literature, and (c) a conclusion. Note that

- You should include a **table of contents**
- Your **purpose** should be explicitly and clearly stated.
- Your **plan of organization** should be explicitly and clearly stated. This plan should match what you actually do in the body of the paper.
- Your paper should be subdivided with **headings**.
- Your **review of the literature** section should include not just summaries of studies but analysis and critique.
- Your **discussion** section should begin with a summary of your findings, followed by your conclusions about your topic and your recommendations for research and instruction. (Don’t forget to acknowledge the limitations of your review.)
- You should include the **honor pledge** on your cover sheet.

You must carefully edit and proofread your paper. Your writing should be clear and well-organized. Your paper should reflect professionalism and attention to detail. You should review the chapter in the APA manual on writing style, my writing tip sheet on ELMs, and the Klingner, Scanlon and Pressley (2005) article. You may also want to refer to the Becker (2007) book for help.

Note that during the course of the semester, you will receive feedback from me and your classmates as you draft your paper. But any draft you share should be edited and proofread before you share it.

You are required to follow APA conventions. (But no abstract is needed). Among other things, please note that everything in APA format is double-spaced, and that all sources used for your paper must be listed in a reference section and credited in the text of the paper. You should also note University regulations related to plagiarism.

In addition, you will present an overview of your research paper to the class. Because your overview will be limited to 10 minutes, you will need to be concise, well organized, and clear. It is your responsibility to adhere to this time limit. You will provide each class member a 1-page summary and your complete list of references. Your presentation and handout will count as part of your leadership/participation grade.

**Leadership/Participation**

EDCI 769 is a seminar in which active and timely involvement in class activities is expected. Your presence at class meetings is a critically important part of leadership/participation. It is also critically important that you read assigned material and complete other assignments in a timely fashion. You should come to each class session with written notes, questions, insights and critiques about the assigned readings. It should be clear throughout this course that you are actively relating content, themes, and issues across the various assigned readings, as well as linking the assigned material to other sources.
You are expected to read all material assigned to everyone in class. Beginning September 14th, you will distribute a written discussion question to each class member about each assigned reading. (See the Tentative Schedule for specific dates).

In addition, you will critique other class members’ work. Your comments should be constructive and show evidence of careful consideration of your classmates' ideas. Your leadership/participation also includes bringing your own drafts to class on time.

You will also be the discussion leader twice for specific readings (see below), and a third instance in which you will select the course reading, subject to approval. Finally, you will present a summary of your research paper findings to the class. (See Research Paper description.)

Note that no later than October 5th, you will need to identify a research study for class readings. Submit your choice to me for approval and posting on ELMS.

**Discussion Leadership:** All class members are expected to read all assigned material. However, individuals will have discussion leader responsibilities for specific readings twice during the semester. Each time you are a leader, you will prepare a discussion on the assigned reading lasting about 30 minutes. It should be evident that you are well prepared and organized. Plan to incorporate into your leadership the questions (one each per assigned reading) that your classmates distribute in class.

Your purpose is to extend your classmates’ thinking about the topics in the chapter or article. You should encourage such processes as elaboration, synthesis, and integration across readings. As discussion leader, you will address two or three critical and significant issues from the readings. Depending on the readings, it may be appropriate to introduce the class to the issues that you are focusing on by engaging us in some kind of “activity” that is interactive. Craft approximately 2 questions related to these significant issues for us to consider as part of your discussion.

Prepare a typed handout for your classmates:
- Include your name, date, and full citation for the assigned material.
- Provide a synopsis of the major points in the assigned material. [The purpose of this synopsis is to serve as a resource for your colleagues to use in reviewing course materials. Do NOT read this synopsis to the class.]
- Provide discussion questions. [The purpose of these questions is to involve your colleagues in carefully considering course material. See specifics above.]
- Edit and proofread your work to ensure correct spelling and grammar. [You must use APA format, except that this paper may be single-spaced.]

**Integrative Final Essay**

This semester focuses on reading comprehension instruction. For this assignment, you will write an essay in which you identify issues that are important in research on reading comprehension instruction based on your integration of ideas reflected in this semester’s readings.
The length of your essay will depend on how you approach it, but most essays will be somewhere between 8-12 pages plus references. Be sure that it is apparent that you have integrated information from multiple sources in this semester’s readings as well as other supporting research and expert opinion.

Careful editing and proofreading are expected. Our writing should be clear and well-organized. You should use subheadings to structure your response. Your paper should reflect professionalism and attention to detail. You should review the chapter in the APA manual on writing style. You may also want to refer to the Becker book for help.

You are required to follow APA conventions. (But no abstract is needed). Your reference list, your citations in your essay, your subheads, and your writing should all reflect APA format. Among other things, please note that everything in APA format is double-spaced and all sources used for your paper must be listed in a reference section and credited in the text of the paper. You should also note University regulations related to plagiarism.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

August 31
Course overview

Sept. 7  LABOR DAY:  No class meeting

Sept. 14
Seminal Studies of Reading Comprehension Instruction


• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.
Sept. 21
What Do We Know About Reading Comprehension Instruction?


• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.
• Distribute to class: 1-page paper progress report: (a) tentative topic, (b) tentative title, (c) brief description of plans, and (c) sample references in APA format.

Sept. 28
What Do We Know About Reading Comprehension Instruction?

We will study Chapter 1 and Chapter 4, so print those out and bring to class.


• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each NRP chapter and for the Klingner et al. article

Oct. 5
What is Reading Comprehension

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). Reading for understanding: Toward an R & D program in reading comprehension. Download at http://www.rand.org/multi/achievementforall/reading/readreport.html Chapters 1, 2, and 3

• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned RAND chapter.
• Distribute draft section of research paper for reaction (likely to be tentative outline, draft of your introduction and the beginning of the main section of your paper).
• No later than today, identify research study for class reading for “selected topics” dates beginning October 26th. Submit your choice to me for approval and posting on ELMS.
Oct. 12
What Should Researchers Study in Order to Improve Reading Comprehension Instruction?


Chapters 4 and 5

**Be prepared to discuss the following:** What comprehension domain addressed by the RAND Reading Study Group (instruction, teacher preparation, professional development, or comprehension assessment) do you believe to be the most important? Why? Identify one problem within the one of these domains that you would like to research. Outline a study that would provided empirically-based knowledge about the problem you have selected.


• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.

Oct. 19
What Is the Current Status of Reading Comprehension Instruction?


• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.

Oct. 26
Reading Comprehension Instruction: Selected Topics

Readings to be determined by October 5th.

• Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.
Nov. 2
Reading Comprehension Instruction: Teachers or Computers?


- Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.
- Distribute draft update of your research paper for reaction.

Nov. 9
Reading Comprehension Instruction: Young Learners (and Selected Topics)


- Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.

Nov. 16
Reading Comprehension Instruction: Young Learners (and Selected Topics)


- Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.
Nov. 23
Reading Comprehension Instruction: Strategies or Content?


- Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.

Nov. 30  National Reading Conference:  No class meeting

Dec. 7
The Future of Literacy Research: What Do We Know and What Do We Need To Know about Reading Comprehension Instruction?


- Distribute a written discussion question for the class for each assigned reading.

- Present research paper findings to class. Limit overview to 10 minutes. Provide 1-page summary and complete list of references

- Research Paper Due: Include self-addressed, stamped envelope large enough to mail research paper back to you.

- Integrative Final Essay: Due by noon on Dec. 10th.

University Policies

Individual Needs Accommodation. The University is legally obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. In order to ascertain what accommodations may need to be provided, students with disabilities should inform the instructors of their needs at the beginning of the semester. The instructor will then consult with Disability Support Services (301-314-7682). DSS will make arrangements with the student to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations. In addition, sometimes students will encounter psychological problems that hamper their life on campus; should that condition pertain you, you are encouraged to consult with the Counseling Center (301-314-7651) for expert help. If you are experiencing difficulties in keeping up with the academic demands of this course, contact the Learning Assistance Service, 2201 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7693. Their educational counselors can help with time management, reading, note-taking, and exam preparation skills.

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. The Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. 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.

Religious Observance. The University System of Maryland policy “Assignments and Attendance on Dates of Religious Observance” provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their 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 student’s 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. Acknowledged religious observances include, but are not limited to: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Good Friday, Passover.

Course Evaluation. Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses between Tuesday, December 1 and Sunday, December 13. You can go directly to the website (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 the summary reports for thousands of courses online at Testudo.