Supporting ELLs’ Literacy Development in the High School Years
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Course Description

The Common Core State Standards stress the importance of literacy skills, yet many ELLs struggle to perform well on reading and writing tasks in their content area classrooms at the secondary level. This course will introduce strategies that help ELLs improve their literacy in the content areas. The course will address all content areas, but special attention will be paid to the unique literacy demands of STEM courses. It will also provide insight on differentiating instruction and assessment to support growth in students at different English proficiency levels.

Course Goals and Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to analyze content area texts and identify linguistic and discourse features in those texts that they will teach ELLs.
2. Participants will be able to implement strategies to improve ELL students’ reading and writing in the content areas.
3. Participants will be able to use the WIDA standards and Common Core to differentiate reading and writing instruction for ELLs at different proficiency levels.
4. Participants will be able to use the WIDA standards and Common Core to provide accommodations and/or modifications to reading and writing assessments in such a way that ELLs are challenged appropriately for their proficiency level.

Course Requirements

Online participation 30%
For a successful course and in-depth understanding of the content, this course relies on its members to participate fully in the course and course material, creating a community of learners where collaboration and work in public are the norm. Thoughtful participation online is essential to creating a community of learners. Lack of participation, lack of preparation, and late assignments will have a negative impact on student grades. Please see the rubric for online discussion for specific grading criteria.

Text analysis 20%
In order to assess the linguistic demands of the content area texts students read in your classes, you will be asked to analyze and reflect on a text you have selected. This exercise is designed to help you a) identify language you will teach and practice with ELL students as well as b) determine if the language demands of the reading match ELL students’ language proficiency. Please see the full assignment description and rubric for specific grading criteria.
Curriculum Innovation 50%

As a culminating product of this class, you will write or modify and share a lesson plan from your class that promotes content area literacy skill development for English language learners at two different proficiency levels. The lesson plan should utilize strategies learned in this class and include appropriate differentiation based on the WIDA standards. Please see the full assignment description and rubric for specific grading criteria.

Late Policy

Deadlines for assignments must be adhered to. If an extension is needed for an assignment, please establish a new due date with the instructor prior to the assignment’s due date. No credit will be given for late work if not previously discussed with the instructor.

Attendance Policy:

Online discussions are important for deepening and synthesizing our understanding of the content, as well as fostering a productive learning community. Productive discussion in online discussions will factor in your grade. Please post on time.

Course Texts


(Eds.). *Adolescent Literacy Research and Practice.* (pp. 75-93). New York, NY: Guilford Press.


**Course Agenda**

**Online Session 1: Introductions**


_____ View the online Powerpoint presentation.

_____ Submit an excerpt from a text your ELL students read in your class. If you do not currently work with ELLs, choose something your mainstream students read.

_____ Post an introduction. Include your background and experience with ELLs and your goals in taking this course. Answer the online discussion question about the reading.

**Online Session 2: Reading Academic Text in the Content Areas**

_____ Read the articles for your content area.
   • Social Studies: Stahl & Shanahan (2004)
   • Math: Halladay and Neumann (2012) and Shepherd (2005)
   • Science: Cervetti & Pearson (2012) and Shanahan (2004)
   • ELA: Rubinstein-Avila and Johnson (2008)

_____ View the online PowerPoint presentation and answer the discussion questions.
Collaborate with your content area group to complete the group text analysis. Post your completed response. Respond to one other content area group's post (10%).

Submit your text analysis (20%). See the assignment sheet and rubric for specific requirements and grading criteria.

**Online Session 3: Writing in the Content Areas**

Read Freeman and Freeman (2008) and Templeton, Johnston, Bear and Invernizzi (2009).

View the online PowerPoint presentation and answer the discussion questions.

Collaborate with your content area group to complete the group writing assignment analysis. Post your completed response. Respond to one other content area group's post (10%).

Submit a writing assignment from your class with two versions of a rubric or scoring guide, one for a Level 2 ELL and one for a Level 4 ELL. This will be part of your final curriculum innovation, and you will receive draft feedback on this submission.

**Online Session 4: Differentiating for Proficiency Levels**

Submit your curriculum innovation (50%). See the assignment sheet and rubric for specific requirements and grading criteria.

View the online PowerPoint presentation.

Post two times in response to the discussion questions and respond to your peers at least two times (for a total of four posts) (10%).