

Course Code & No. – Section: READ 3430
Course Title (Credits): Reading Assessment in the Elementary School (3)
Term & Year: Fall 2008

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Office Hours: after class or by appointment

Class Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 8:00-11:45am
Location: Aderhold Hall, Room 317

Course Description – While READ 3420 is a reading *instruction* course, this course, READ 3430, focuses on *assessment* of children’s reading. This course teaches pre-service teachers how to assess K-5 students’ reading using a variety of measures and how to use reading assessment data to plan instruction.

Student Outcomes – Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Develop an understanding of methodological approaches in assessing student reading.
2. Establish a classroom assessment plan that addresses specific areas of reading instruction.
3. Use a variety of formal and informal assessment tools, both summative and formative.
4. Collaborate with other teachers to interpret assessment data.
5. Write an assessment report to communicate student progress to the student, parents, and other school personnel.

Objectives – This course addresses the Assessment domain of the Georgia Framework for Teaching (see <http://www.usg.edu/p16/initiatives/framework.phtml>), which replaced GSTEP in 2007.

Domain 4: Assessment

Teachers understand and use a range of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous development of all learners.

Accomplished teachers:

- 4.1 understand measurement theory and the characteristics, uses, and issues of different types of assessment.
- 4.2 use preassessment data to select or design clear, significant, varied and appropriate student learning goals.
- 4.3 choose, develop, use classroom-based assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.
- 4.4 involve learners in self-assessment, helping them become aware of their strengths and needs and encouraging them to set personal goals for learning.
- 4.5 develop and use valid, equitable grading procedures based on student learning.
- 4.6 use assessment data to communicate student progress knowledgeably and responsibly to students, parents, and other school personnel.
- 4.7 use resources, including available technology, to keep accurate and up-to-date records of student work, behavior, and accomplishments.
- 4.8 are committed to using assessment to identify student strengths and needs and promote student growth.

Instructional Strategies

Instruction in this class will take the form of a combination of whole class lessons, small group and partner work, and individual assignments. You will work both by yourself as well as in collaboration with your classmates and school faculty during the semester. While much of the course content is assigned, there will be room for choice in class projects.

Required Texts and Materials

1. Clay, M. M. (2002). *An observation survey of early literacy achievement*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
2. McKenna, M. C., & Stahl, S. A. (2003). *Assessment for reading instruction*. New York: Guilford.
3. Scanned articles and book chapters available online and in OIT, Aderhold Room 232.
4. Students will also participate in online reflections and discussions using WebCT.

Recommended Texts and Materials

1. American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
2. Suggested additional references and supplies TBA.

Policies and Procedures**Professionalism**

It is important to be aware of the professional nature of the field you are entering. Parents and caregivers entrust to elementary teachers their most precious possession—their children. As a result, teachers have a *tremendous* responsibility involving the care and education of the children in their classes.

During the field experience, you will have opportunities to develop professional behaviors that include: (a) being prepared and timely when fulfilling all instructional responsibilities; (b) interacting with children in a warm, respectful, professional manner; (c) communicating with parents clearly, honestly, and tactfully; (d) maintaining the confidentiality of information about students and families you teach (use first name pseudonyms, not actual names, when referring to students in class or in written materials); (e) cooperating with colleagues through planning and instruction; (f) putting forth the greatest effort possible to enable the children you teach to grow and develop intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

Attendance and Participation

Because many of the topics and considerable content covered in the course are taught and communicated by way of class demonstrations, class activities, and discussions, attendance is crucial for a full understanding of course material. Therefore, attendance will be a factor in computing your grade. Only one absence will be excused this semester, and only for a severe illness or personal/family emergency. For an absence to be considered excused, notify the instructor before class with a valid reason for missing class and be responsible for missed class information. Any unexcused absence will result in half a letter grade deducted. Missing two or more classes may be considered “an excessive number of absences” and may be subject to withdrawal from the class (see the UGA Bulletin). We will begin at 8:00. If you know you will be tardy, I need to know about it. It is best to text my cell phone if you are running late, letting me know the reason for your lateness. I will deduct points from your final grade for tardies.

Attendance and *active* participation are required. While we all have varying comfort levels of class participation, it is expected that everyone will support the class community and their own learning by engaging in class discussions. The class will often follow a workshop structure. The success of the class depends on what each of us brings and the manner in which we bring it. There will be relatively little lecture in this class; therefore, it is essential that you have read, thought, and written about assigned readings *prior* to class. *Active* participation is defined as: (1) providing evidence that you have read the assigned material; (2) engaging in thoughtful and reflective oral and written response to the reading; (3) demonstrating respect for the ideas of others; (4) working productively in small groups.

Cell Phones

Please turn cell phones off when you enter class and place them in a place where you will not be distracted by them.

Preparation of Written Work

Regarding formatting, all written work should be typed and double-spaced with 12-point font (either Times or Times New Roman) and one-inch margins. I have to walk a long way from Aderhold to my car, so please do not weigh me down by using page protectors or submitting work in binders or notebooks. If a paper copy is requested, simply staple pages together and submit. Many assignments will be turned in electronically.

Substance is the primary criterion for evaluating and grading your written products in this course. In other words, *what* you say (its clarity, depth, insight, etc.) is the most important factor in determining your grades on written work. However, *how* you express yourself in writing (i.e., the form of the written work) will also be used to evaluate your products. Therefore, correct grammar, proper punctuation, correct spelling, neatness, and adherence to assignment guidelines will also be part of the grading process. Teachers must be able to express themselves in writing clearly and cogently, so both substance and style will factor into grading your work.

Academic Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. If you are unfamiliar with UGA’s guidelines for academic honesty, read about the policy, particularly section 5, at <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>.

Email

You will need to have a working email account for this class. I expect you to respond to any emails that I send you within two days of the send date. Likewise, I will check my email daily for any messages from you and respond to your email within two days. Please read emails carefully! You are responsible for information sent in emails.

Special Accommodations (ADA)

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If you have a documented disability, please see me the first week of class.

Inclement Weather

Please be aware of the UGA Inclement Weather Policy regarding the possible closings of the university on the main homepage (www.uga.edu) or on the UGA Today news page (<http://www.uga.edu/news>).

Grading

Assignment	Points Possible	Due Date
1. Class participation	30	Weekly
2. WebCT reading responses	30	Weekly
3. Literacy assessment inquiry project	20	October 21
4. Sharing a data set for analysis	20	Ongoing
5. Running record observation	40	October 21
6. Reading assessment case studies	60	December 2
TOTAL	200	

Course grades will be determined by computing a final point total, which will be converted to a course grade as follows:

Points: A = 186-200; A- = 180-185; B+ = 174-179; B = 166-173; B- = 160-165; C+ = 154-159; C = 146-152; C- = 140-145; D = 120-139; F = 0-119

Explanation of Assignments:

1. Class participation: See “Attendance and Participation,” above.
2. WebCT reading responses: Each week, you are responsible for reading the assigned readings as well as posting a written reflection on WebCT. See “Preparation of Written Work,” above. I expect your reading reflection to be thoughtful, synthesizing new material with things you already know.
3. Literacy assessment inquiry project: You will work alone or with a partner to document all of the literacy assessments that are evident in a classroom or school. Similar to a scavenger hunt, you will look around classroom walls, hallways, in folders, in letters written to parents, etc. to find any possible ways that students are being assessed on what they know when it comes to reading writing, spelling, speaking, and any other literacy knowledge or skills. You may document what you find through photographs (with permission), sketches, journals, photocopies, or other creative means of showing our class what you’ve found. You may choose to conduct this project in the class where you will be interning or in completely different class and/or school. I am looking for evidence that you looked really hard as well as creativity in the presentation of your findings. We will share these in class with each other in a museum-style format.
4. Sharing a data set for analysis: You will soon be a classroom teacher responsible for assessing dozens of students multiple times throughout each year. For this assignment, you will obtain a set of reading assessment data to share with the class. Each week, three of you will bring data for us to analyze and interpret as a group. We will look at what the data tell us not about individual students but about the class or small group as a whole—how we might better plan our instruction as a result of knowing what we know about the kids’ reading behaviors. Examples of data sets to share include reading benchmark test scores, standardized reading achievement test data, running record results, fluency test records, phonological awareness assessment results, letter identification records, guided reading group observations, etc. The point is that we get experience looking at lots of students at one time in order to make instructional decisions.
5. Running record observation: Running records tell a teacher more information than many other assessments about an individual child’s reading behaviors. You will pair up with someone in your field placement school, and you will observe each other administering running records with a child or children. You will audio-record the other person and the student in order to have documentation that

each of you may use in a follow up conversation. Before this assignment takes place, we will have practiced lots of running records in class. This assignment gives you an opportunity to practice doing running records on your own with the support of a friendly peer. I will give you more clearly-defined expectations when the time approaches.

6. Reading assessment case studies: This assignment provides an opportunity to try out several different reading assessments with three different students. Depending on the grade level to which you are assigned in your field placement, you will choose several assessments from one of two lists (K-2 and 3-5) to administer to children in your class. Your cooperating teacher will work with you to identify the students. You will administer the assessments as well as compile any previous assessment results on those three children to create a comprehensive picture of them as readers. You will take all the data you collect and write a relatively formal report or case study of each child, something that might be appropriate to share during a student support team meeting, a parent conference, or with special service teachers at the school. In addition to writing about the child, you will record your own feelings and reflections on the process as you go.

Note: This syllabus is a work in progress. While it provides a general plan, deviations and adjustments will be necessary to meet the needs of students and instructor as appropriate.

COURSE TOPIC OVERVIEW

Week	Date	Topic Readings / Assignments Due
1	8/19	Course overview, assessment theory
2	8/26	Reading foundations, cueing systems, assessment types M&S 1-2; Clay 1
3	9/2	Social contexts of literacy Wheeler & Swords, Compton-Lilly, Joseph & Duncan
4	9/9	Informal reading inventories, running records M&S 3; Clay 5
5	9/16	Fluency & comprehension M&S 4, 7; scanned articles
6	9/23	Emergent literacy M&S 5-6; Clay 4,6, skim 2-3
7	9/30	Comprehension strategy use M&S 8-9; scanned articles
8	10/7	Field
9	10/14	Field
10	10/21	Informal assessments Running record observation due Literacy inquiry project due
11	10/28	Field
12	11/4	Field

13	11/11	Summarizing assessment data M&S 10; Clay 7-8
14	11/18	Using assessment to develop instruction Scanned resources
15	11/25	Thanksgiving
16	12/2	Organizing and managing class assessments Case studies due