

**READ 3530
Course Framework
Literacy in Content Areas
Spring 2006**

Contact Information

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Consultation Hours: The hour before and the hour after class are the best bets for scheduling appointments to talk, although other times can be scheduled.

Session Dates, Times, & Place

January 9, 23, 30	Room 319
February 6, 13, 20, 27	1:25 – 4:25
March 6, 20, 27	
April 3, 10, 17, 24	
May 1	

Course Description

This course will investigate the importance of using reading, writing, speaking, and listening in all content area classrooms not only to further help students become fluent in those skills, but, more importantly, to further learning the material and concepts in those content areas. In doing so, course members will take inquiry stances on the subject and develop personal understandings of the material. The classwork will call upon student personal experience, expectations, research and theories about the subject matter as well as upon the experiences, expectations, research, and theories of those working in the field. These efforts will culminate in projects that will expand our individual and collective knowledge base of the subject matter. Although effort will be made to give a broad sense of content area literacy, this course will encourage depth of focus and personal investment. At base, the more you put into this course, the more you will get out. In addition, all participants will be encouraged to interrogate their current beliefs about literacy pedagogy, professional learning, policy, and research and should be able to document the ways that this course has transacted with at least some of those beliefs.

Course Cautions

Doing Inquiry. Because I advocate an inquiry-based pedagogy and because I intend to practice what I preach, the course framework that follows is just that—a framework. The work of our collective inquiry will flesh out and extend this skeleton in ways that reflect our individual and mutual interests. **The framework we start with will not be the framework we end up with.** Therefore, understand that anything written here could change as the course progresses, knowing that such change would come only as the result of class negotiation and, hopefully, with adequate warning.

Dealing with Uncertainty. Because parts of this course are left open for negotiation, you need to become comfortable with uncertainty. In some ways, this framework is very explicit, but at other times it remains open for possibility. The positive side of this openness is that the course builds from our needs and reflects the vision of all the stakeholders. The down side is that we enter the course with a few more question marks than many students are used to or are comfortable with. My request is to trust the process. I feel it's worth sacrificing some up front specificity in order to construct a course that more nearly fits the needs of its participants.

Dialogue. An inquiry-based course is built upon questioning, honesty, and trust. I value discussions where people disagree, but listen to what others say and grow from the difference. A key concept of this course is the need for people to self and other interrogate. **What I mean by that is all of us should not only call into question the stances of the texts we read and those of our fellow learners, but also our own stances.** Therefore nothing should be taken at face value, not even our own beliefs. We should see this course as an opportunity for making the familiar strange and the strange familiar.

Honesty. We need to take honest stances and to say what we believe and not what we think others want us to say. However, we also have to consider the values, concerns, and time of others. **Therefore critique should be issue-oriented and not personal in intent.** Responders should feel free to make sense as they speak, but to not monopolize the time of the group. On the other hand, we all need to be able to hear critique as an enabler of change and not as personal attacks. I promise to reward quality of argument and not how much the argument agrees with my perspective. I also promise to respect a learner's need to remain out of the dialogue from time to time, as long as the learner makes honest efforts at other times to enter the dialogue.

The Schedule. Finally I tend to fall behind schedule. I could keep up with the schedule as announced, but that would mean cutting short interesting and useful discussions, as well as ignoring ideas that get generated by the class. So I prefer allowing for depth, breadth, and student input rather than just covering a plan. **My advice is to stay up with the schedule.** If we get behind, you can always quickly refresh your understanding of the literature.

Course Expectations

After taking this course, students should be better able to . . .

- express and discuss key theories, research, and strategies about using literacy to teach content area materials and concepts
- apply those theories, research works, and strategies to issues that we might see in our future classrooms
- construct stances and plans for implementing these ideas in our classrooms
- enjoy trying to reimagine their practices.

General Educational Philosophy

- Everyone has a right to an education
- No one has a right to deny anyone an education
- Each class member has a responsibility for his or her own education
- Each class member has a responsibility for the education of all others in the class
- Depth and breadth of understanding generally supercede coverage of material
- What one believes is fairly useless unless we understand why and how also

What This Course Isn't

This course IS NOT . . .

- a place where you will learn all there is to know about using literacy as a way to teach content area material and concepts
- a hodge-podge of teaching gadgets, props, and gee-whiz activities
- consumed with coverage
- about leaving thoughts uninterrogated, stances unchallenged, and lives unexamined
- a place where we will tell you what to think and know
- about merely replicating the way you've probably been taught and learned many times in the past
- about merely replicating the way you've probably taught and learned in the past

Course Question

What does it mean to use using literacy as a way to teach content area material and concepts, and what might that mean for my content area classroom?

Core Readings

- Cunningham, A & Stanovich, K. (1998, spring/summer). What reading does for the mind. *American Educator*, 8-15.
- Fecho, B. Price, K. & Reed, C. (2004). From Tununak to Beaufort: Taking a critical inquiry stance as a first year teacher. *English Education*, 36 (4), 263-288.
- Freire, P. (1983). The importance of the act of reading. *Journal of Education*, 165, 1, 5-11.
- Kirk, L. (2001). Learning to read: Painful mystery or joyful success. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44 (5), 420-431.
- Nieto, S. (1999). Culture and learning. In *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural communities*, (pp. 47-71). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Smith, F. (1997). Learning to become a reader. In *Reading without nonsense* (3rd edition). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Tchudi, S. (1986). The hidden agendas in writing across the curriculum. *English Journal*, 22-25.
- Topping, D. & McManus, R. (2002). Making reading happen: Before. In *Real reading, real writing: Content area strategies* (pp. 35 – 53.) Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Topping, D. & McManus, R. (2002). Making reading happen: During. In *Real reading, real writing: Content area strategies* (pp. 54 - 72.) Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Topping, D. & McManus, R. (2002). Making reading happen: After. In *Real reading, real writing: Content area strategies* (pp. 73 - 91.) Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Unsworth, L. (2001). Changing dimensions of school literacies. In *Teaching multiliteracies across the curriculum: Changing contexts of text and image in classroom practice* (pp. 7 – 20). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Wiggins, G. (1989, Nov.). The futility of trying to teach everything of importance. *Educational Leadership*, 44-59.
- Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (1998). What the facets imply for unit design. In *Understanding by design* (pp. 115 – 133). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

The Importance of Dialogue

In order for us to learn, we need to look at the material of this course from a variety of perspectives and engage it through a range of modes. **Therefore, this course puts a premium on your active involvement through writing, reading, speaking, and listening.** In order to see and unpack the complexity behind these ideas, we need to remain in constant and substantive dialogue about what these ideas mean to us. Accordingly, the coursework of this class will immerse you in literacy in an attempt to help us all get the most from our collaboration, as well as to support your efforts to better articulate your ideas.

Requirements

The work you do in this class is divided into two categories for evaluation: process and product. The **Process Requirements** are those on-going types of activities that help you make daily or weekly meaning of the course. For the most part, your grade is determined here by your participation. In other words, if you do these activities with a serious effort to learn from them, then you will receive full credit. I feel that doing these types of activities helps you to learn more, so I reward you for doing them with serious effort behind them.

Product Requirements, on the other hand, not only must be done, but also are held to a higher standard of evaluation. These are performance assessments that grow out of your ongoing process and give us some idea of how well you are coming to grasp the material of the course and how well you express yourself about your growing knowledge base. These projects are both educative and auditive, meaning they will help you to learn, but will also help you to self-evaluate. In addition, merely trying hard is not enough here. The quality of your expression of your knowledge will also be evaluated.

Process Requirements (30% of the final grade: Attendance & Data Gathering Processes)

1) Attendance (10% of final grade)

Being present at 14-15 sessions = a grade of 4

Being present at 13 sessions = a grade of 3

Being present at 12 sessions = a grade of 2

Being present at 11 sessions = a grade of 1

Being present at fewer than 10 sessions = a grade of 0

2) Data Gathering Process (20% of final grade)

In order to sustain dialogue between and during class sessions, we will implement online dialogue groups.

WebCT Dialogue Groups. On the first day of class, we will create dialogue groups across content areas. These groups will function as online sounding boards as you tentatively construct ideas and theories based on your readings. In addition, discussions started on the web will carry over into class. My hope is that you will not only post but also respond to each other. The bottom line is that **each week** everyone needs to put up at least one post between class and the following Thursday at midnight. **This deadline exists so that all group members will have time to read the posts and so the instructors of the two sections can use these responses when they co-plan on Friday mornings.**

As to the content of these posts, you have three options: (1) a reflection on the last class, (2) a reaction to the following week's reading, or (3) a combination of 1 & 2. These posts can be you at your most tentative, pointing out something to the group and trying to make sense of it. If you're struggling with some idea, most likely many of us are. I also urge that each group have a designated starter on a rotating basis, someone whose job it is to get something up online early that others can respond to.

The following rubric will be used to grade these processes.

4 = All deadlines were met and work showed serious purpose and thought

3 = One deadline was missed, but serious purpose and thought went into the work

2 = Two deadlines were missed or little serious purpose or thought went into the work

1 = All deadlines were missed and little serious purpose and thought evidenced

0 = One, some or all processes went undone

Product Requirements (70% of the final grade: Issues Paper, 20%; Handbook Entry, 20%; Course Reflection, 30%)

Issues Paper (20% of your final grade. Length: 4-6 **double-spaced** pages, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins. **DUE: February 6**). In this paper I want you to discuss those key ideas that intrigue you about using literacy to support the learning of content material and what deep and real concerns you have about doing so. Use detailed and specific experiences from your life and from source material to explain why these issues are important to you.

Handbook Entry: (20% of your final grade. Length: 1-2 **single-spaced** pages, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins. **DUE: April 17**). I want you to go away from class having some resources that you can access when you student teach and when you eventually teach in your own classroom. However, rather than me giving these resources to you, we are going to co-construct them. Reflecting our focus on BDA activities, each of you will be asked to develop (1) a BDA lesson plan along with (2) a rationale for that plan and (3) an indication of how that plan would fit into a larger unit. **These entries will be compiled and sent electronically to everyone in both sections of READ 3530.** Closer to the due date, we'll develop a common format for submitting our plans. **The rationale should be supported by references to the literature.**

Course Reflection: (30% of your final grade. Length: 7-10 **double-spaced** pages, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins. **DUE: May 1**). In this paper, I want you to reflect on the attitudes, perspectives, and beliefs you brought with you to this course, how our readings and discussions further informed those attitudes, perspectives, and beliefs, and how you see yourself further considering these ideas. **You will base this paper on at least one of the key questions we will develop together as a study group.** This paper should be a balanced combination of your ideas and experience coupled to ideas generated from the readings of this course as well as other readings you may have encountered.

Grading

It is important to understand that although completing all the work is both useful and necessary, such completion alone does not necessarily qualify anyone for an A. It is necessary to satisfy the quantity requirements of this course, but it is equally important to satisfy the quality requirements also. Work that merits a grade of A must be pushed to levels of excellence. Work that is good merits a grade of B and so on down the line. When you complete work, you need to take that work to task. Is it original in thought? Does it develop ideas with depth? Does it use language with facility? Does it make unique, interesting, and practical assertions that are backed by substantive and thoughtful research? Does it have potential to be published outside the confines of this course? Does it have impact? Does it make the reader take notice? If so, then your work is in the ballpark of excellence.

All work in this class will be graded on a 0-4 scale with 0 representing little or no effort and 4 representing excellent effort. A general rubric is provided below. **Please see this rubric as a revising and editing checklist, something to which you should refer before turning in your work.** Averages will be computed based on the percentages assigned above. **Due to the limited scale, all averages remain as computed and are not rounded.**

Rubric

Proj 1	Proj 2	Proj 3	Criteria	%
			<p>Detail of Thought and Expression</p> <p>Includes the specificity with which arguments are supported and the use of details in ways that are apt and help the reader to more clearly see the author's perspective. We're looking for work that brings out the individual nature of the work through vivid use of detail as well as connects that work to other works.</p>	20%
			<p>Organization of Thought and Expression</p> <p>Includes the logical flow of the language and ideas, as well as the sequencing of details and understanding of paragraphing. The detail is organized in such a way that it deepens the grasp of the subject matter and delves beneath the surface. We're looking for work that feels cohesive in construction and helps the reader know what to expect.</p>	20%
			<p>Originality of Thought & Expression</p> <p>Includes deft and interesting use of language, deft and interesting insight into matters discussed, deft and interesting connections, and deft and interesting patterns of thought. We're looking for work that feels original in thought and execution.</p>	20%
			<p>Synthesis of Ideas</p> <p>Includes the way the ideas in the text come together as a whole, the way the text includes and rethinks the work of the class, and the way the text includes and rethinks the readings, assigned and otherwise, of the class. We're looking for writing that takes the ideas of the class and makes new meaning rather than merely rehashing.</p>	20%
			<p>Conventions & Expectations</p> <p>Includes spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, writing conventions such as title pages and page numbers, physical presentation, pronunciation, presence, correctness of detail, completion of all tasks, and use of APA formatting where applicable. The category also includes meeting all expectations and requirements of the assignment. We're looking for work that shows a professional's care for all aspects of a final product and completes what it sets out to do with vigor and engagement.</p>	20%

Grading Scale

Each component of the rubric counts as an equal fraction of the total grade for that project and will be assessed on a 4-0 scale as follows:

4 = Superior Evidence Shown

The work shows clear evidence that the writer went beyond the expectation of competent effort by taking the care and effort to distinguish the work as an original, complex, and vigorous example of that criterion. It fulfills its potential given the limits of production and has impact.

3 = Useful Evidence Shown

The work is useful and clearly reflects an ethos of care and concern in terms of fulfilling the needs of the criterion, but doesn't necessarily distinguish itself beyond the expectations of a competently crafted piece. It shows good intention and effort, but lacks impact.

2 = Adequate Evidence Shown

The work fulfills minimum quality standards for the criterion, but shows little enthusiasm or intention to do more. It promises more than it delivers.

1 = Little Evidence Shown

The work does little to fulfill minimum quality standards for the criterion.

0 = No Evidence Shown

The work shows no evidence of any effort to fulfill the criterion

Course Grade

Final letter grades will be assigned by the following scale. **Due to the short range of the scale, no averages will be rounded.**

3.60—4.00	A
3.20—3.59	B
2.80—3.19	C
2.40—2.79	D
0.00—2.39	F

Submission of Work

Hard Copies of work should be turned in during class or in the reading program offices during normal working hours (8 AM – 5 PM, M-F). In class, give the work directly to me. In the program offices (Suite 309), give the work to a secretary or directly to me if I'm not occupied with colleagues or other students. If you place it in my mailbox, either tell a secretary it's there or send me an e-mail indicating such. **Never slide it under the door after hours;** the chances of it getting lost are too great.

Electronic copies are fine with me as long as the following criteria are adhered to:

- The work is sent as a **Microsoft Word or Power Point attachment to me**
- The work arrives by midnight of the deadline

When submitting electronically, please label your file in the following manner:

3530 Sp05 P[project number] [your last name]

For example, if Lenetra Green were submitting her first project to me, she would call the file **3530 Sp05 P1 Green**

Taking Notes

There is little lecture format in this class. Therefore you will need to take notes differently. Here are our suggestions.

- Keep a Generic Activities section in your notebook, so when different activities are demonstrated, you can note how they were done and have all these notes in one place.
- Keep a Running Questions section in your notebook. Many ideas will get started during sessions, but not brought to resolution. As we continue to discuss these ideas, you can keep running questions, comments, and other notes centralized in one place.
- Have your notebook out at all times.
- Take notes on things that your peers say.
- Take notes whenever we do an activity that pulls broad discussions together.
- Make a point of going back over your notes and other class writings routinely and considering what is being said about practice and theory. In short, do your own pulling together. A split-page format facilitates this.
- Either print out or routinely make notes on online discussions

Notification of Teacher Research

As a Teacher Researcher, Dr. Fecho routinely collects, analyzes, interprets and reports on data as it concerns his courses. This allows him to improve the way he teaches as well as to add to the body of knowledge we know about critical inquiry pedagogy. Normal observation, recording of sessions and teacher/student exchanges, teacher-initiated journals and field notes, and samples of student work are all within the realm of access by the teacher for research purposes, since they constitute accepted practice for understanding the nature of pedagogy. Any students who prefer that their work in this class not be considered for purposes of research should indicate so in writing to Dr. Fecho, who is also available and willing to answer all questions about such research.

Course Protocol

This course brings certain unique considerations. Since we run three-hour sessions feel free to bring food and drink with you and to eat it in class. All I ask is that you deal with any mess you make. I find breaks counterproductive because they destroy momentum and flow, so I will run two hours and thirty minutes straight and end each session fifteen minutes early. If you need to visit the restroom, smoke a cigarette or just get some distance from a discussion, take a few minutes to do so. However please try to limit these moments when you leave the room to transitions in the class, of which there should be several, and try to return as quickly as possible. For those of you who find these chairs uncomfortable and need to stretch, stand, pace the back of the room, or even lie on the floor, feel free to do so.

Also, due to the intense nature of the course, absences and lateness will prove problematic for both you and the dynamics of discussion. Try to be present and on time so we can get the most out of our group inquiry in the limited time we have. **If lateness becomes a problem, I will address it with you and we'll negotiate potential consequences if the activity continues.** Finally, we do all we can to start and end on time. It is rare that we will run past our end time and equally rare that class doesn't begin within five minutes of our start time.

Instructor's Note

I have slight hearing loss and places with much ambient noise, like classrooms and restaurants, are places where I struggle to hear normal conversational tones. **Please speak loudly and clearly when addressing the class and, if I ask you more than once what you said, it's more than likely my inability to hear than your inability to speak with clarity.**

General Course Framework

This framework is a tool and is in no way definitive. It is intended to provide a sense of the scope of the course as it was originally conceived. However, any course based upon critical inquiry principles should be responsive to the needs of the participants and is, therefore, subject to change, which is also why some cells below have been left empty.

Week & Frames	Focus Questions	Class Activities	Readings	Projects & Processes
January 9 Before	What is the focus of this course and what is our connection to that focus?			
January 23 Before	What is the focus of this course and what is our connection to that focus?		Freire, Importance;	
January 30 Before	What is the focus of this course and what is our connection to that focus?		Wiggins, Futility; Tchudi, Hidden Agenda	
February 6 During	What counts as text and reading		Unsworth, Multiliteracies	Issues Paper
February 13 During	What is BDA and what might it mean for content area teaching	BDA Run Through		
February 20 During	What can be done before students read to help them engage in and get more from a text?		Topping & McManus, Chapter 5	
February 27 During	What can be done during reading to help students engage in and get more from a text?		Topping & MacManus, Chapter 6	
March 6 During	What can be done after students read to help them engage in and get more from a text?		Topping & McManus, Chapter 7	

Week & Frames	Access Question	Class Activities	Readings	Projects & Processes
March 20 During	When we construct BDA, how do we need to consider sociocultural & sociopolitical issues?		Nieto, Chapter 3; Kirk	
March 27 During	When we construct BDA, how do we need to consider types of readers?		Cunningham & Stanovich, Mind; Smith, Becoming a Reader	
April 3 During	When we construct BDA, how do we deal with the other realities of school?		Fecho, Price, & Read, Tununak	
April 10 During	When we construct BDA, how do we need to consider embedding it in a larger framework?		Wiggins & McTighe, Chapter 8	
April 17 After	Where are you now & where do you see yourself going with these ideas?			Handbook Entry
April 24 After	Where are you now & where do you see yourself going with these ideas?			
May 1 After	Where are you now & where do you see yourself going with these ideas?			Course Reflection