

**READ 4030/6030**  
**Course Framework**  
**Teaching Reading in Secondary Schools**  
**Spring 2003**  
**Aderhold Rooms 417 & 319**

**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**

This course meets from 3:35: to 6:35 PM in Room 417 on Mondays & Wednesdays and Room 319 on Thursdays & Fridays on the following dates:

January 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29

March 10

April 14 & 16

**Course Description**

This course will investigate the theories, research, practices, pedagogies, issues, perspectives and complexities of teaching secondary school literacy. 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 secondary school reading, 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 teaching and learning literacy and should be able to document the ways that this course has changed, expanded, or deepened those beliefs.

**Course Cautions**

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.

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.

Also, 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 each 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.

To do so, 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.

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 and just refresh yourself with the readings if we get behind.

### **The Importance of Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening**

The course will make a better case for what I will mention here, but it is important from the onset that we all understand how these literacy components play out in the course and why. Because this course is about literacy and we expect teachers to take larger professional roles in the academic community, I expect to see sophistication and growth in these literacy components. To put this in perspective, I believe there are no perfect writers. Toni Morrison has a Nobel Prize, but she will be the first to tell you that she works to improve her writing. Unless we can interpret our own experience and that of others through the reading of various texts and then synthesize those interpretations into our own theory of education, we who teach will be unable to take control of our own classrooms and will not be able to help others do that for themselves. I will do all we can in the various assessment activities to give you feedback that will help you to further develop your ability to use these literacy components. All I ask is that you come with a willingness to learn, to interrogate your own beliefs, and to interrogate the beliefs of others.

### Course Expectations

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

- to express their theories regarding secondary literacy pedagogy, to call upon substantive personal experience and educational literature to support those theories and to access a repertoire of generic activities that grow from and transact with those theories.
- to sketch the major issues in secondary literacy pedagogy and to air their views on the topics with substance and depth.
- to coordinate an integrative plan for secondary literacy curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- to reflect upon their own practice through systematic and intentional inquiry and to think and act more like teachers who take an inquiry stance on their classrooms.

### Course Questions

Overarching Question

**What are your beliefs and how do you substantiate them in terms of teaching and using reading with adolescents in language arts classrooms?**

Group Focus Questions

- What does it mean to motivate & engage students as readers?
- In what ways does reading outside school transact with reading inside school and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?
- What happens when curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment transact in the language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?
- What happens when cognitive, affective, and sociocultural domains transact in a language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?
- What happens when a range of learning agendas and abilities transact in a language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?

### Core Readings

Commeyras, M. (2002). Provocative questions that animate my thinking about teaching. *Language Arts*, 80 (2), 129-133.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Literacy and intrinsic motivation. *Daedalus*, 119, 115-140.

Fecho, B. (1998a). Learning with April. *The Quarterly of the National Writing Project*, 20 (1), 18-19.

Fecho, B. (1998b) Chalkdust. *PhilWP Update*, 11(2), 2, 6.

Fecho, B. (2000). Critical inquiries into language in an urban classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 34, 354-381.

- Fecho, B. (2001). "Why are you doing this?": Acknowledging and transcending threat in critical inquiry classrooms. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 39(1), 9-37.
- Fecho, B. & Green, A. (2002). "Madaz publications: Polyphonic identity and existential literacy transactions. *Harvard Educational Review*. 72 (1), 93-119.
- Freire, P. (1983). The importance of the act of reading. *Journal of Education*, 165, 1, 5-11.
- Greenleaf, C., Schoenbach, R., Cziko, C., & Muellor, F. (2001). Apprenticing academic readers to academic literacy. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(1), 79-129.
- hooks, b. (1994a). Teaching to transgress. In *Teaching to transgress*(pp. 1-12). New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (1994a). Engaged pedagogy. In *Teaching to transgress*(pp. 12-22). New York: Routledge.
- Hull, G. & Schultz, K. (2002). Connecting schools with out-of-school worlds: Insights from recent research on literacy in non-school settings. In *School's Out!: Bridging out of school literacies with classroom practice* (pp 32-57). New York: Teachers College Press
- Langer, J. with Close, E., Angelis, J. & Preller, P. (2000, May). *Guidelines for teaching middle and high school students to read and write well: Six features of effective instruction*. Albany, NY: National Research Center on English Learning & Achievement.
- The New London Group. (2000). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing of social futures. In B. Cope & M Kalantzis (Eds.). *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 9-37). London: Routledge.
- Tomlinson, C. A. Invitations to learn. *Educational Leadership*, 60 (1), 6-10.
- Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (1998). Thinking like an assessor. In *Understanding by design* (pp. 63-84). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

**Project 2 must contain references to two readings that pertain to your work other than these cited above. Those readings can be articles, chapters, or whole books. You can find them on your own either online or at the library, but you can also visit my office and access my files. If looking for articles, I prefer you use educational literacy journals like *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Language Arts*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *English Journal*, and *The Reading Teacher* or more general educational journals like *Harvard Educational Review*, *Educational Leadership*, or *Teachers College Record*.**

### **Literacy Domains**

These domains will act as a frame for the course, providing you with lenses with which to view readings, discussions, and your own experience. We believe that any substantial look at literacy needs to involve all six domains. They are not discrete and do transact with each other. They also tie in with two of the focus questions directly and are background for all of the questions.

Sociocultural (What are T & S bringing & encountering?)

What do issues of culture, context, politics, & identity have to do with reading?

Curricular (What are T & S reading?)

What counts as useful and substantive material for reading?

Cognitive (What and how are T & S thinking?)

What and how are readers thinking when they read?

Affective (What are T & S feeling?)

What motivates students to see the worth of reading and what discourages students from reading?

Pedagogic (What are T & S doing?)

What can we do within & without classrooms to help students become more thoughtful and critical readers?

Assessment (What are T & S coming to understand?)

What is it we can do within & without classrooms to understand how our students achieve and struggle as readers and to help them to better facilitate their own reading?

### **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 secondary school reading
- 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 many times in the past
- about merely replicating the way you've probably taught in the past

### 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 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.

The intent of these projects is to help you gather data that will inform you about your focus question. Largely, the work in January will enable you to explore your past experiences and discussions in the educational literature. Then, during your student teaching, you will focus on the learning of one student as well as your own teaching in order to add that data to your understandings. Eventually all this information will be synthesized into two reports and a presentation.

#### Process Requirements (40% of the final grade)

##### 1) Attendance (10% of final grade)

- Being present at 13-14 sessions = a grade of 4
- Being present at 12 sessions = a grade of 3
- Being present at 11 sessions = a grade of 2
- Being present at 10 sessions = a grade of 1
- Being present at fewer than 10 sessions = a grade of 0

##### 2) Data Gathering Processes( 30% of final grade)

A critical inquiry class requires a good deal of support because it generates a multiplicity of texts and ideas. We need ways to manage the many threads of learning that emerge, to remain connected as a community, and to develop a range of perspectives. Therefore the following three processes are designed to help you learn as well as to give us feedback about what you are coming to know.

Process A: By Monday, January 13 create a chart that details the following:

- Your focus question
- Your rationale for focusing on this question
- Sub-questions (questions you generate that will help you get at the larger question)
- What your current understanding of this focus question seems to be

Process B: Keeping your focus question in mind, look closely at one student and report weekly online to your focus group listserv

- By February 7<sup>th</sup>, describe your student physically, how s/he behaves in class, and how s/he behaves among peers outside of formal school settings
- By February 14<sup>th</sup>, describe how your student relates to formal education and how your student relates to literacy and learning in and out of school
- By February 21<sup>st</sup>, describe your student's family background
- By February 28<sup>th</sup>, describe an event involving your student that gives us insight into your focus question
- By March 7<sup>h</sup>, describe a second event involving your student that gives us insight into your focus question
- On March 10<sup>th</sup>, bring your data to class and participate in interpretation activities

Process C: On April 14 & 16, present a 30-45 minute focus group presentation that allows the rest of the class to interact with your key understandings of your focus question based upon your January work, Process B, and your additional readings. **This presentation will help the rest of the class do the final project.**

The following rubric will be used to grade these three processes:

- 4 = All deadlines were met and work showed serious purpose and thought
- 3 = Only one or two deadlines were missed, but serious purpose and thought went into the work
- 2 = Many deadlines were missed or little serious purpose or thought went into the work
- 1 = Many deadlines were missed and little serious purpose and thought went into the work
- 0 = One, two or all three processes went undone

### Product Requirements (60% of the final grade)

1) Project #1 (Due January 29, 30% of the final grade.)

Based upon our first 10 sessions, what is the status of your understanding about your focus question? Using whatever format proves useful, provide evidence of the following:

- What were your thoughts on your focus question at the start of this course?
- What is the emerging working theory you have in response to this question?
- What might your understanding of this question mean for your student teaching and future classrooms?
- What specific kinds of activities will manifest this theory in your classroom & why?
- What key questions and/or concerns have been raised for you on this question & why

- What personal experiences have influenced your understanding of the implications of this question? Why?
- What readings have influenced your understanding of the implications of this question? Why?

2) Project #2 (Due May 5, 30% of the final grade.)

Based upon our January work, your data gathering and reading during student teaching, and the group presentations, develop a means for expressing the following evidence:

- summary connection to Project 1
- what insights, concerns, and questions you are developing into deeper and broader understandings of your focus question, concerns, and/or issues
- what bibliographic support from and beyond our January readings you have for these insights, concerns, and questions
- what support from your close looking at one student do you have for these insights, concerns, and questions
- how your question transacts with the other five questions
- what directions these insights seem to be taking you

### 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. Individual rubrics will be provided for each assignment at appropriate times prior to that assignment. Averages will be computed based on the percentages assigned above. Due to the limited scale, all averages are rounded DOWN to the nearest tenth. Letter grades will be assigned by the following scale:

3.5—4.0	A	3.0—3.4	B	2.5—2.9	C
2.0—2.4	D	0—1.9	F		

### General Rubric

- Depth and Organization of Thought and Expression      20 %  
Includes the specificity with which arguments are supported, the logical flow of the language and ideas, the sequencing of details, and the aptness of the detail.  
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 asserts and deepens perspectives through clear and useful anecdotal and referenced support.
- Originality of Thought & Expression 20 %  
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.
  - Synthesis of Ideas 20 %  
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.
  - Mechanics 20 %  
Includes spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, 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. We're looking for work that shows a professional's care for all aspects of a final product.
  - Connection to Expectations 20 %  
Includes the depth that the work provides testimony for the evidence expected as well as energy and seriousness of effort that was brought to execution of the work. We're looking for work that completes what it sets out to do with vigor and engagement.

### **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

### **Submission of Work**

**Hard Copies** of work should be turned in during class or in the reading department offices during normal working hours (8 AM – 5 PM, M-F). In class, give the work directly to me. In the department offices (Suite 309), give the work to a secretary or you can give it to me if I'm in my office and not occupied with colleagues or other students. Don't just put it in my mailbox or slide it under the door after hours. The chances of it getting lost are too great if those two methods are taken.

**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
- The work arrives by midnight of the deadline

### **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.

### **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 across the dinner hour, feel free to bring food and drink with you and to eat it in class. All I ask is that we deal with any mess we make. I personally find breaks counterproductive because they destroy momentum and flow, so we will run two hours and thirty minutes

straight and end each session thirty 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. Finally, I do all I can to start and end on time. It is rare that I will run past our end time and equally rare that class doesn't begin within five minutes of our start time.

### **Notes**

### 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.

<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Focus Question</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Processes</b>
January 9	What do we understand about ourselves and our relationships with the focus questions?	Focus Question Discussion	Commeyras	
January 10	What happens when we call basic assumptions about school into question?	Unpack the course framework; share readings	Course framework, Fecho 1998 a & b	
January 13	What does it mean to motivate & engage students as readers?		Csikszentmihalyi	Process A
January 15			Tomlinson; hooks a & b	
January 16	In what ways does reading outside school transact with reading inside school and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?		Hull & Schultz; Fecho w/ Green	
January 17	What happens when cognitive, affective, and sociocultural domains transact in a language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?		Freire; Fecho 2000	

<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Access Question</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Projects &amp; Processes</b>
January 22				
January 23	What happens when a range of learning agendas and abilities transact in a language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?		Greenleaf et al; Fecho, 2001	
January 24	What happens when curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment transact in the language arts classroom and what does that mean for you as a teacher of adolescent readers?		Langer; Wiggins & McTighe	
January 27		Jigsaw Reading	New London Group	
January 29	What does it mean to take an inquiry stance on classroom practice?			<b>Project 1</b>
March 10	What do we learn about literacy teaching and learning through systematic interpretation of data?	Data Analysis Activities		Process B (also Feb 7, 14, 21, 28, & Mar 7)
April 14	What do we learn from each other?	Presentations		Process C
April 16	What directions do our future inquiries point?	Presentations & course discussion		Process C
May 5 (NO CLASS)				<b>Project 2</b>