TLL 1520: Supporting Literacies in Inclusive Classrooms

Syllabus (Spring 2024)

University of Pittsburgh School of Education

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| **Instructor:** | Emily Rainey, PhD |
| **Email:** | erainey@pitt.edu |
| **Office Hours:** | Sign up here: <https://calendly.com/emilyrainey/office-hours> |
| **Class Meeting Schedule:** | Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00-4:15p |
| **Room:** | Posvar 5108 |

*The syllabus online is the official syllabus for this course. Updated versions will be identified as “Revised Syllabus” with date.*

**Course Description**

Equitable instruction includes recognizing and honoring the literacies of all students while also supporting their development of new literacies. This course is designed to prepare pre-service education professionals to: 1) support the literacies of students with disabilities; and 2) support the disciplinary literacies of all students.

**Learning Goals**

In this course, you will:

* Consider how the teaching and learning of literacies matters for your developing teaching praxis
* Design rich, inquiry-based literacy learning opportunities for a range of student learners
* Create additional literacy and language learning scaffolds for individuals and small groups
* Administer and interpret various literacy assessments and design research-validated instructional plans in the area of literacy for children with disabilities who are included in general education settings.

**Guiding Questions**

As a class, we will examine empirical research, reports, and curricular materials to investigate the following questions:

* What are literacies, and why do we pluralize them? How can we come to know our students as literate beings?What are disciplinary literacies?
* What is the role of reading, writing, and text use in subject area learning, and how can we design for our students’ disciplinary literacies learning as an integrated part of our instruction?
* How do we integrate literacy instructional techniques for students?
* How do we determine reading challenges, assess readability, identify appropriate strategies/resources, and develop reading materials to support instruction?

**Course Readings**

The course is organized into four modules:

* Module 1: concepts underlying disciplinary literacy teaching and learning
* Module 2: literacy practices of focal academic field
* Module 3: designing for disciplinary literacy learning
* Module 4: supporting students with varying needs and exceptionalities

All articles and chapters will be available online. There is no required textbook for this course.

**Course Assignments**

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| **Assignments**  | **Point Value** |
| Quickwrites and responses | 50 |
| Substantial contribution and participation in class activities | 25 |
| Disciplinary practice project and presentation | 25 |
| Mini-unit plan and presentation | 25 |
| Final project | 50 |
| **Total** | **175** |

**Course Policies**

**Preparedness and Professionalism**

You are expected to read all assigned readings and participate in discussions or activities for which the readings serve as a springboard. You will be expected to integrate aspects of readings into your assignments.

Remember, this is a professional course as well as an academic course. As part of course participation you should be demonstrating that you are learning and applying professional standards generally expected of educators in matters of timeliness and professional courtesy. Professionalism includes constructively articulating critical peer feedback.

**Attendance**

Pitt’s Teacher Education Attendance Policy states that to be an active member of our community of practice, it is important to attend face to face courses prepared to engage with the course instructor, course colleagues, and course materials. Since our course meets twice per week, you are permitted two absences. Absences should be reserved for illness or unavoidable personal conflicts.

**Grading**

Grades will be assigned on the basis of both process and product. The grading scale is:

A = 94-100 points A- = 90-93 points B+ = 88-89 points

B = 84-87 points B- = 80-83 points C = 74-79 points

Below 73 = failure

Additionally, the Pitt Teacher Education Course Grade Requirement states that you must earn a minimum of a C in all teacher education major coursework, and you must complete all coursework in order to pass each course.

Pennsylvania Department of Education requires that you must enter a teacher education program with and maintain an overall 3.0 GPA. If you do not maintain a 3.0 GPA, you will be prohibited from student teaching or earning certification.

**G Grades**

I very rarely grant end-of-semester G grades. At Pitt, a G grade can be issued when a student has unfinished course work due to extenuating personal circumstances. G grades are not issued when, in actuality, a student needs to repeat the course. If you wish to request a G grade, then you should contact me as soon as possible, and no later than 2 weeks before the end of the semester, so that we can determine whether this is appropriate and make a contract for you to complete outstanding work.

**Late Assignment Policy**

The nature and pace of this course requires that you do not fall behind in assignments. If an extension is needed for an assignment, this must be arranged before the due date and will be granted for only the most extenuating of circumstances. Otherwise, late work will not be accepted. If lateness results in your inability to complete all coursework, then you will fail the course.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a key component of professionalism. All students are expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity at <http://provost.pitt.edu/faculty-resources/academic-integrity-freedom/academic-integrity-guidelines>.

Learning how to use generative artificial intelligence tools is important. However, the goals of this course are for you to develop the understanding, skill, and expertise to design contextually sensitive, nuanced, and ambitious forms of literacy instruction beyond what is typical in US schools today. Please note that generative AI tools rely on probabilistic or predictive models to generate content. They synthesize available records and so have a higher likelihood of helping you to reproduce *what is* rather than envision *what could be*. Additionally and importantly, the content these tools generate may appear correct but can also be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. For these reasons, you may not use generative AI tools to produce work for course assignments, including first drafts.

**Grievance Policy**

The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. The rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are described in the University’s Academic Integrity Guidelines at:

<http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html>

**Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

I welcome students of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability, and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

**Accommodations**

**For Disability**

If you require special accommodations or classroom modifications, then please notify both me and Disability Resources and Services by the end of the first week of the term. The office of Disability Resources and Services is located in 140 William Pitt Union (412-648-7890 [voice or TDD]), and their website is at: <http://www.drs.pitt.edu>. If you have a physical, learning, or emotional disability, please let me know as early as you can so that I can accommodate you.

**For Religious Observances**

If a due date conflicts with your religious holidays, please notify me of which dates will pose a conflict no later than the second week of class so we can make alternative arrangements.

**For Other Special Circumstances**

If there are extenuating circumstances that impact your success, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule an appointment so that we can discuss them.