



RDG 380.001 COMPREHENSION AND VOCABULARY COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2013

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook(s) Required:

1. Vacca, R., Vacca, J., & Mraz, M. (2013). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum* (11th Edition). Boston: Pearson. ISBN-13: 978-0133066784



2. Johns, J. L., & Roberta, L. (2011). *Strategies for Content Area Learning* (3rd Edition). Kendall Hunt Publishing. ISBN: 978-0-7575-8737-5



- *Textbook Readings.* Given the vast amount of information that is available in the area of content area literacy for teachers, we will not have enough time to “cover” all of the readings in the assigned books and articles—chapter by chapter or article by article. Consequently, we will depend on you to **COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNED READINGS** and be prepared to discuss them in class in a timely manner. Please note that all assigned readings are critically important for successfully completing exams and class projects.

Course Description:

This course builds upon the theoretical foundations of reading and literacy. The preservice teacher will explore ways to integrate school reading and writing instruction. The focus of the course is an examination of the application of learning strategies to various disciplines and grade levels. Attention will be given to the use of textbooks and applicable learning materials. The course deals also with cognition, reading comprehension, comprehension strategies, vocabulary strategies, formal assessments, and informal assessment strategies.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives:

1. Students will understand the rationale behind the integration of reading, writing, listening, and thinking experiences in the school curriculum.
2. Students will become familiar with a variety of philosophical, historical, and implementational differences among the major approaches to teaching reading in content areas and demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts, methods, and issues in content area literacy.
3. Students will be able to articulate their own beliefs and philosophies regarding the teaching of reading in content areas and to understand the importance of peer collaborative interactions in learning.
4. Students will build a repertoire of techniques for instruction in reading and learning activities.
5. Students will learn to use a variety of activities, teaching techniques, and learning strategies.
6. Students will begin to build a portfolio to use as a resource for teaching methods, strategies, and classroom materials.
7. Students will learn and employ a variety of methods for evaluation of student learning and texts.

Attention will also be paid to the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities:

- **Standard I.** The teacher designs instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.
- **Standard II.** The teacher creates a classroom environment of respect and rapport that fosters a positive climate for learning, equity, and excellence.
- **Standard III.** The teacher promotes student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback.

ESL Standards by TExES:

- **Competency 003:** The teacher understands ESL teaching methods and uses this knowledge to plan and implement effective, developmentally appropriate instruction.
- **Competence 005:** The teacher understands how to promote ESL students' literacy development in English.
- **Competence 006:** The teacher understands how to promote ESL students' content-area learning, academic-language development and achievement across the curriculum.
- **Competence 009:** The teacher understands factors that affect ESL students' learning and implements strategies for creating effective multicultural and multilingual learning environment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS**Instructional Methods/Activities/Assessments:**

Various teaching strategies such as lecture, discussion, demonstration, collaborative group discussions, multimedia presentations, and other activities will be used to demonstrate key instructional approaches to reading and writing in the content areas. Students will be able to practice learned strategies and skills with peers in class. This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives. Each week you will work on various combinations of assignments, activities, discussions, readings, presentations, research, etc.

1. **Class Contributions: 50 points (10% of total course grade)**
 - a. **Student Learning Outcomes/objectives #1, #2, #3**
 - b. **Assignment methods:**

Throughout the semester you are expected to participate in individual and/or group activities, which are designed to help you increase your knowledge and experiences concerning content literacy strategies and instruction. Your contributions will consist of taking an active part in in-class activities (e.g., discussion of specific assigned readings). **Please come to class on time**, and be prepared to contribute generously to both in-class and out-of-class discussions.

2. **Literacy History: 30 points (6% of total course grade)**
 - a. **Student Learning Outcomes/Objective #3**
 - b. **Assignment methods:**

This is the first reflection assignments, and it will be longer than the bi-weekly reflections, and so is worth more points. The assignment is described on the handout that includes the prompts.

3. **5 Reflections: 50 points (10 points each): (10% of total course grade):**
 - a. **Student Learning Outcomes/Objective #3:**
 - b. **Assignment methods:**

You will be assigned to write a reflection on a prompt designed to encourage you to think about yourself as a teacher and a learner. The prompts are starting points for considering the educational experience. **Reflections should be narrative essay, typed, double-spaced (no bigger than 12 points), and at least two pages.**

4. **Strategy Notebook and demonstration: 60 points (11.5% of total course grade)**
 - a. **Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives #4, 5, 7, 8**
 - b. **Assignment methods:**

Each student will select **TWO content literacy strategies** from the list of content Literacy strategies provided by the course instructor. Students are required to provide a handout explaining the strategy and demonstrate the strategies to the class with a hands-on activity. The instructor will present numerous strategy demonstrations as well. As each student presents, each student will compile these strategies in a notebook. This will prove to be an extremely useful resource as you student teach and begin your teaching career. Specific directions will be given in class. This consists of a **3-ring binder** and **five dividers** for collecting and organizing literacy strategies.

5. **Unit Lesson Plan: 65 points (12% of total course grade)**
 - a. **Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives #5, #6**
 - b. **Assignment methods:**

Groups of five will have the opportunity to explore integrating the teaching of reading and writing in a content area. Inquiry units will be created that provide authentic learning experiences across the curriculum and address diversity. The final product should consist of:

 - a. A cover page identifying your project and group members
 - b. Lesson plans (aligned with TEKS content objectives) which will include descriptions of the various instructional strategies chosen and culminating projects, book lists, any other pertinent information.
 - c. A 1-2 page individual reflection on the project.
 - d. Units will be shared with fellow classmates via a short oral class presentation. Information on topic and format will be given in class. All lesson plans will be digitized and posted on ECollege.

6. Written Responses to Journal Articles (60 points; 30 points each): (11.5% of total course grade)

a. Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives #1, #2, & #3

b. Assignment methods:

Each student will read and respond to **TWO journal articles**. The articles will be assigned and distributed in class. Students will be responsible for writing a reflection about each article and will come to class ready to share reactions with peers. The reflections must be typewritten and double spaced (no bigger than 12 font) and clearly shows what the writer THINKS (not just summaries). The papers may include **questions, comments, descriptions of relevant personal experiences**, etc... A length of at least two pages is expected.

7. Exams (100 points each: 200 points total) (38% of total course grade)

a. Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives #2:

b. Assignment methods:

Two exams will be given at about 7 weeks and final week. Exams will include multiple choice questions and constructed responses. These exams will attempt to probe your knowledge of content area literacy and instruction issues examined through assigned readings, class discussions, presentations, and assignments. The exams will cover the reading materials and materials presented in lectures.

8. Group Grade: 5 points (1% of total course grade)

a. Student Learning Outcomes/Objective #3:

b. Assignment methods:

You will be assigned to work in a group for certain portions of the class. This group work is very important to the class process, as well as to your learning. Because I consider it so important, you will be given a grade for your group participation. I do not believe in giving one grade to the whole group. However, I have found that if no assessment is made, some students will not do their share and the group as a whole will suffer. Therefore, toward the end of the semester, you will be given assessment sheets on which you will score your group participants. You will be given a sheet to evaluate everyone in your group except yourself. You are encouraged to be as honest as possible. Your individual scores will not determine the grade of any person, but when I average the scores from the whole group, I will have a fair picture of that person's level of participation and contribution. This means that you are encouraged to get along with your group members and to contribute to the group production.

Grading:

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS			
POINTS	PERCENT	GRADE	STANDARD
520-468	100%-90%	A	Superior
467-416	89% - 80%	B	Above Average
415-364	79% - 70%	C	Average Performance
363-312	69% - 60%	D	Below Average
311 and Below	Below 59%	F	Unsatisfactory

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Since RDG 380 is a web-enhanced course and utilizes **eCollege**, intermediate level of experience using a computer is required. This includes the ability to receive and submit electronic course materials; ability to use a word processing program; ability to send and receive e-mail; ability to upload and download files; ability to participate in online exams and discussions.

✓ **Recommended Technical Specifications:**

- You will be able to access the course materials using your campus or home computer as long as you are able to connect to the **Internet** (dial-up is not recommended). I recommended using the latest version of Internet Explorer as your Web browser.
- We will be using some **Adobe portable document format (PDF) files, word processors (Microsoft Office Word, 2003, 2007, or 2010)**. To access these files you must have a free "acrobat" reader on your computer. You can download the reader in either PC or MAC versions from:
www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html
- We will be also using an **e-mail program** as a communication tool.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be also facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:

<https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

- Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).
- Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.
- It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

- You have many different methods to communicate with me and with each other during this semester. Here are my expectations for electronic communication.
 - **E-mail:** Please use university email (kay.hongnam@tamuc.edu). I check my emails daily Monday through Friday.
 - **eCollege:** Please keep your eyes on eCollege Announcements for the latest news for the course.
 - **Phone:** Students may call me at my office number if there is a need to contact me (**903-468-3236**).

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- **University Student Technical Support:**
Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
 - **Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
 - **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
 - **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
 - **Help:** Click on the '*Help*' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:

Course Expectations:

Students enrolled in RDG 380 are expected to meet the following requirements:

1. Attend all classes and arrive on time.
2. Turn in assignments on the dates noted on the class schedule.
3. Exhibit professional behavior.
4. Participate in class discussions, presentations, and group work.
5. Treat instructor and fellow students with respect.

Professionalism:

- An important part of this course is your demonstrated ability to grow as a professional educator. As such, you are expected to submit work that represents your own best effort. You are responsible for turning in all required assignments in a timely manner. Assignments must conform to university policies governing academic dishonesty. In addition, as a professional educator, you are constantly seen as a model for your students; therefore, it is imperative that you strive to communicate well both orally and in writing.
- Demonstrate professionalism by: (a) attending **ALL** classes, (b) paying attention, (c) participating actively and constructively, (d) being responsible and prepared, (e) being an equal partner in group work, (f) showing enthusiasm and interest in being a teacher, and following the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior. Code of student conduct can be found under discipline (pg 38-39) in the student's guidebook. Your grade will be adjusted based upon these criteria (see grading section).
- All students enrolled at the University **WILL** follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct). **If you display disruptive behavior, you may be asked to leave class and/or drop the class.**
- **Cell phones/IPODs** must be turned off during class time. If you are expecting an emergency call, let the teacher know and your group know. Also, the phone must be on vibrate and set on the table. If the phone rings, pick it up and leave the room.

- **Leaving During Class:** This is not acceptable behavior, as you are here to learn. When you are gone from class, you are missing both the lecture and the class discussion. If, for some reason you have an emergency (being sick, phone call or bathroom) your business is expected to be conducted in a timely manner with you returning to class quietly and quickly.

Assignment Guidelines:

- All assignments should be typed, professionally written, and presented (i.e., free of errors in mechanics, grammar, and spelling). **Each assignment should include student's name, the course and section number, the title, and the date.** When citing or quoting an author, include appropriate citation information using **APA style (6th Edition)**. All work submitted should be your own work.
- **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN DURING CLASS ON THE DUE DATE. If you fail to do this, 50% of your points will be deducted from the total points. If it is two days or more late you will receive NO credit. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Class Attendance:

- Each student will be responsible for attending class and turning in required assignments whenever due.
- Class attendance and participation are extremely important. Should absences occur, the student is responsible for obtaining class notes, handouts, and related materials from a classmate.
- Students are expected to attend every class session. **Three absences** will result in a reduction of **ONE grade level for the final grade for the semester.**
- A tardy reduces your participation grade. **THREE tardies** will equal one absence. Please come on time. **THREE leaving early** will also equal one absence.

University Specific Procedures:

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).