RDG 523-Promotion of Literacy 
Through Language Acquisition and Development 
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer 2015

Instructor: Kathryn Dixon, Ph.D.

Office Location: Education South 231

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm via email, eCollege or Google Hangout
Available Monday-Friday via email

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University Email Address: Kathryn.Dixon@tamuc.edu
Course Hour & Classroom: This course is 100% online

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Reading – Instructor-provided readings, Supplementary Readings provided by class members:

Materials – Resources collected and shared by instructor and all class members.

Online Resources:
TEKS for Language Arts and Reading available on-line at
http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/index.html

English Language Arts and Reading Information from the Texas Education Agency available on-line at
http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=4434&menu_id=720

English Language Proficiency Standards available on-line at
http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter074/ch074a.html#74.4

The Dyslexia Handbook
http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/professionals/dyslexia-school/strategies-for-teachers

Course Description:
Promoting Literacy Through Language Acquisition and Development. Three semester hours. Students in this 
course will gain knowledge and skills in primary and secondary language acquisition, including the relationship of 
these languages, to facilitate and promote literacy. Other skills include: conducting appropriate reading 
assessments on an ongoing basis; designing and implementing effective reading instruction that reflects state 
content and performance standards addressing the needs of all learners; applying knowledge of reading 
difficulties, dyslexia, and reading disabilities to facilitate and promote literacy; and using research-based reading 
instruction that is collaborative and consultative with colleagues, mentoring, coaching, and providing professional 
development.
Goals and Purpose of Course:
This course is required in the TAMU-Commerce graduate reading curriculum and is designed to prepare teachers who wish to acquire the Texas Master Reading Teacher Certificate and/or to include this course as part of the required course sequence for the 36 semester hour master’s degree with a major or minor in reading. More specifically, this course focuses on the knowledge and application competencies addressed in Standards I, II, III, IV, V and VI of the Texas Master Reading Teacher Program which are assessed in the TeXes exam for the Master Reading Teacher Certificate.

Standard I states: "The Master Reading Teacher applies knowledge of the interrelated components of reading across developmental stages, including oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, word analysis, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, written language, and concepts of print, and has expertise in reading instruction at the primary, intermediate/middle, or high school level."

Standard II states: "The Master Reading Teacher selects and administers appropriate reading assessments on an ongoing basis and uses the results to design, inform, and adjust instruction to promote literacy."

Standard III states: "The Master Reading Teacher Designs and implements reading instruction that reflects state content and performance standards and addresses the varied learning needs of all students."

Standard IV states: "The Master Reading Teacher applies knowledge of primary and secondary language acquisition, including the relationship between the development of these languages, to facilitate and promote literacy."

Standard V states: "The Master Reading Teacher applies knowledge of reading difficulties, dyslexia, and reading disabilities to facilitate and promote literacy."

Standard VI states: "The Master Reading Teacher facilitates appropriate, research-based reading instruction by communicating and collaborating with educational stakeholders; mentoring, coaching, and consulting with colleagues; providing professional development for faculty; and making decisions based on converging evidence from research."

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Expectations: Students in this course are exposed to diverse perspectives in the context of educational research that will stretch your thoughts and perceptions beyond your present experiences and knowledge. This action will occur while encouraging depth of knowledge through online discussions and activities as well as online interaction with the professor and peers.

1. Critical Issues (300 points total) Due Date To Be Assigned: At the beginning of the semester, we will identify critical issues in language and literacy development. I will provide a list of topics, but the class will be encouraged to add topics of interest to the list. Issues/topics will be selected during the first week and will be scheduled for discussion throughout the five (5) weeks of the course.

A. Resource Contribution (75 points): Readings will be assigned for each topic selected. Additionally, each student will find at least one additional resource about each topic to share with the class. We will have ten “Critical Issues (CI)” sessions. For one of these sessions, you will sign up to be the Discussion Leader along with one of your classmates. For the other sessions (the ones for which you are not the leader), find a resource related to the topic: one web site, one professional organization, one research article, one blog, one app, or one resource of your choice. These resources may be presented in any order over the sessions (in other words, you may only share a web site twice, an article twice, etc.). You will also add your resource to a class-shared LiveBinder.) Be prepared to discuss your resource to add to our discussion/activities.

B. Critical Issues Discussion Leader (150 points): You will choose one of the critical issues identified by the class and do additional research on the topic so you can (1) provide a common reading for the class and (2) lead a class discussion and/or experience. Typical expectations of a discussion leader include your
thorough review of the issue, including the ability to argue either pro or con about the topic. You will work with a classmate to select the reading and to plan the presentation, discussion and/or experience.

Each leader pair should upload a common reading to the Doc Sharing folder on eCollege for the class two days prior to your designated presentation/discussion date and meet with the instructor online (via email or Google Hangout) at least two days before you present to discuss your plan. Your common reading MUST be from a peer-reviewed journal or another approved reading such as a NAEYC position statement (no ERIC documents or conference papers, etc.). You may choose how to lead the class discussion or experience, such as creating a prezi with a voiceover, creating a screencast or presentation through Google Air, creating a presentation video (can be uploaded to YouTube). You will also plan for a way all students can contribute to a collaborative product as a result of watching your presentation and reading the article. This can be something like a shared graphic organizer in a Google Doc, a collaborative summary using Google Slides, a discussion thread, etc.

C. Reflective Journal (75 points): After each of the critical issues presentations/experiences, you will post a short response about the issue on Threaded Discussions (eCollege). Posts should be no more than 150 words in length, and they should address the topic, not the presenter. Your post may be original, or you may respond to a classmate’s post. Possible questions to address are: What did you learn about the issue? What surprised you? What questions do you have about this issue now, and how could you find an answer?

2. Contribution to the Class Blog (200 points total): I have created a class blog using Kid Blog. The purpose of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to become familiar using a popular blog platform for classroom use. The blog will be private (only accessible to the members of our class).

Blog Entry Author (150 points): You will sign up to author one blog post during the semester. Blog entries should be based on inquiry or an “I wonder…” statement. You may choose to write about a lingering question you may have as a result of reading and hearing about one of the topics your classmates presented on. You may choose to write about a topic that related to something we are discussing in the course. You may choose to expand on your short reflection you wrote in the discussion thread. In your blog entry, be able to back up your claims with links to resources, research, data, etc. For example, if you make a claim or state your viewpoint, provide a link to a resource or research that supports your position and cite your sources using APA guidelines.

Commenting on Blog Entries (50 points): You are expected to read the blog entries authored by your classmates and respond in a professional manner.

Grading:
500-450 points = A
449-400 points = B
399-350 points = C
349-300 points = D
<300 points = F

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This entire course is online. You understand the importance of your having an internet connection all the time. All our communications will be web-based.
Contact eCollege for Technical Support:

The following support options are available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week:

- **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...)
- **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.
- **Contact Your Instructor:** If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course (e.g., questions about an exam, course due dates, grades, etc.), please contact your instructor via email or through the "Virtual Office."

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**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

**Interaction with Instructor Statement:**
E-mail is preferred as this is an online course. Students are encouraged to inform the instructor of concerns they may have pertaining to the course immediately.

**Access and Navigation:**
eCollege (online format) will be used for this course. You get to eCollege through your MyLeo account. As a student, your email account is through MyLeo. Please check the status of your accounts as this is the only way the university and I have on contacting you and informing you of important information. It is available to you 24/7 at https://leo.tamuc.edu/Login.aspx

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**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

Course Specific Procedures:

1. **Attendance and Participation, including Professional Attitude:** Students must attend online classes (based on how they are set up by the professor) and participate in online class activities, including ALL readings, assignments, and online discussions based on these readings, assignments. Students should be prompt and ready to contribute. Participation in online class discussions, on assigned readings and related material, and contributions to class or group tasks are expected. Students will receive a grade based on this active participation and attendance for each online class (based on how they are set up by the professor).

2. **Written Assignments:** All written assignments are expected to exhibit professional quality. You should demonstrate mastery of organizing, structuring, and editing in your writing. Letters/materials written by you as a professional and sent to parents/administrators MUST BE PERFECT. Begin that practice now! Therefore, if you need extra help, the Writing Center can assist you. See http://web.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/

   a. Written Assignments should be:
      *double spaced
      *1” top and left side margins, 1” bottom and right side margins
      *12 point font size
      *revised for clarity and meaning
b. Academic Integrity/Honesty Statement:
This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person’s work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an F in the course, or will be brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

Department Statement:
The Department of Curriculum and Instruction believes that students with dyslexia and other language disorders deserve the right to proper identification and educational intervention. These students should have access to evidenced-based instruction that meets their educational needs. To that end, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction prepares teachers to identify, assess, and provide multisensory instruction for students with these difficulties. Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Texas Law (38.003 Screening and Treatment for Dyslexia and Related Disorders, §74.28. Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders) the Department of Curriculum and Instruction supports the learning and teaching of instruction that assists all students including those with dyslexia and other language disorders.

University Specific Procedures:
1. ADA Statement: 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 132  
   Phone 903-886-5150  
   Fax (903) 468-8148  
   StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

2. 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). If you display disruptive behavior, you may be asked to leave class and/or drop the class.

3. Financial Aid Support: You will be dropped from class if you have not paid the balance due on their accounts. If you need assistance to pay your balance, please contact the Loan Office (903-886-5051). There are also forgivable loans. You may want to check in to this by contacting the Bursar’s Office for more details.

4. MyLeo: As a student, your email account is through MyLeo. Please check the status of your accounts as this is the only way the university has on contacting you and informing you of important information. It is available to you 24/7 at https://leo.tamuc.edu/
5. eCollege: eCollege will be used for this course. It is accessed through your MyLeo account. [https://leo.tamuc.edu/](https://leo.tamuc.edu/)

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.