TITLE: Foundations of Literacy

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION: An advanced course in reading and writing instruction designed to enable classroom teachers to model and implement a variety of research-based instructional strategies and activities in an authentic instructional context.

III. PURPOSE: The purpose of REA 612 is to improve literacy instruction by assisting participants in creating supportive environments for diverse language learners; by extending and refining their understanding of reading and writing processes and development; by providing opportunities to implement effective instructional and assessment strategies; and by encouraging participants to become reflective decision-makers in the teaching of literacy.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES: Following each objective are numbers that reference the Kentucky Teacher Standards and the International Reading Association Standards for Reading Professionals. As a result of participation in this course, participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of current theory and research in the areas of learning theory, language and literacy acquisition, reading theory, emergent literacy, writing, and phonics (KTS I; IRA 1).
2. Demonstrate and implement appropriate techniques for teaching and assessing reading and writing (KTS 2, 3, 4, 5; IRA 2, 3).
3. Plan and engage in professional development experiences designed to increase their knowledge of literacy learning (KTS 9; IRA 5).
4. Reflect on their own teaching of literacy (KTS 7; IRA 1, 5).
5. Create a supportive environment for literacy learning (KTS 3, 4; IRA 4).
6. Engage in professional leadership experiences (KTS 8, 10; IRA 5).
7. Use technologies in the teaching of reading and writing (KTS 6, IRA 2).

The COE Theme of Educator as Reflective Decision-Maker is addressed in this course by requiring students to reflect on assignments, by students responding to Discussion Board prompts, by students writing a Reading Autobiography, by students writing a Professional Improvement Plan, and by students reflecting on class discussions and readings. The COE emphasis on constructivism is addressed when discussing literacy development through active involvement in authentic learning experiences. The COE student dispositions are formally assessed during evaluation of students’ assignment reflections.

The theme of Literacy/Reading is stressed throughout every course activity as students learn how to facilitate children’s literacy development. The theme of Assessment is explored through identifying, using, and creating multiple methods of assessing and addressing children’s literacy efforts. The themes of Diversity and Closing the Achievement Gap are addressed through reading and discussing diverse learners and struggling readers.
V. CONTENT OUTLINE:
1. The Literacy Teacher as Reflective Decision-Maker
2. A Constructivist View of Learning – cultural, social and individual differences issues influencing literacy development
   a. Cambourne’s Conditions of Language Learning
   b. Psychosociolinguistic theory
   c. Developmental spelling theory
   d. Schema theory
   e. Louise Rosenblatt’s transactional theory
3. Understanding Reading and Writing – the developmental progression
   a. Emergent Literacy
   b. Developing Readers - The Cueing Systems of Written Language
   c. Fluent Readers
4. Environments that Support Literacy Learning
5. Basic Components of a Comprehensive Literacy Program
6. Technology and the teaching of reading and writing.
7. Current Issues

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES: The MSU graduate program in reading and writing aims to help teachers become reflective professionals. We believe that a teaching professional is a person who is well-informed about theory and practice in the field; who creates his or her own knowledge through informed reflection on his or her teaching; and who shares his or her knowledge with others. The assignments in REA 612 reflect this view. Students will:
   1. Write a literacy autobiography in which they reflect on their own literacy development and draw implications for their teaching (Objectives 2, 4).
   2. Keep a teaching journal in which they reflect on their teaching as they apply new ideas from the class (Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7).
   3. Participate in professional development activities such as choosing professional readings and writing a professional improvement plan (Objectives 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)
   4. Participate in discussions, learning experiences, and readings (Objectives1,4,6,7)
   5. Complete a Midterm Project (Objectives 2,3)
   6. Take a Final Exam (Objectives 1-7)

Use of Technology: Various types of technology will be used/demonstrated throughout the class sessions. All assignments must be word processed (Word 2003 or Richtext) and submitted by Blackboard. ***Each assignment must have a heading in the upper right hand corner of the first page which includes the assignment title, name of student, and date submitted.

Final Exam: The Final Exam is inclusive of all course topics and must be submitted by the final exam deadline (Objectives 1, 2, 4).

VII. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES: Students are required to apply ideas from the class to their teaching.

VIII. RESOURCES: A large number of texts about reading and writing instruction, as well as journals such as The Reading Teacher and Language Arts, are available at Waterfield Library. In addition, a number of readings will be made available online, and many more are available via electronic databases available through Waterfield library. All students are expected to use these resources. Lists of suggested readings will be posted on the Blackboard course site.
## IX. Grading Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Autobiography</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>You will complete Literacy Autobiography making connections to your own teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Improvement Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Submitted on time, all areas correctly addressed. Directions will be given during class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Topics Postings/Replies</td>
<td>14 @ 2</td>
<td>There will be a Discussion Forum where you will be asked to respond to questions about your readings, the class lectures, and your teaching experiences as they relate to our work. Respond to these questions and also read and respond to your classmates’ entries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Article Responses</td>
<td>10 @ 1</td>
<td>You will be asked to respond to assigned articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Projects</td>
<td>2 @ 5</td>
<td>You will be assigned to a group and will participate in a group project two times during the semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Graded Assignments</td>
<td>3 @ 5</td>
<td>You will complete three individual assignments during the semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Exercises/Participation/Timeliness</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>A number of exercises with varying point values will be assigned during the semester; this will also include timeliness – assignments submitted by the next class session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Project</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>DUE 3/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Journal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>You will maintain a journal for this class in which you will keep notes taken during lectures, while reading, and reflections of learning experiences you have tried out with your class. Use these notes when answering questions in the Discussion Board. It will prove invaluable to you as you study for the Final Exam. The instructor will NOT be reviewing these; it is for your personal use only. You will submit a statement during the last class that you have kept this journal as indicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Evaluation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>You will complete a class evaluation online.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>This exam includes several short answer questions and several essay questions on material covered during the semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>175</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Assignments</td>
<td>5 (7)</td>
<td>There will be five opportunities during the semester to complete optional assignments.</td>
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Please note that simply fulfilling all of the requirements of the course does not automatically guarantee a final grade of A. The quality and scope of all course work is evaluated by the instructor.

**Grading scale:** 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69= D; 59 and below=E

**X. ATTENDANCE POLICY:** This course adheres to the policy published in the MSU Graduate Bulletin.

**XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:** This course adheres to the policy published in the MSU Graduate Bulletin.

**XII. TEXTS AND REFERENCES:**

*Routman website* [www.regieroutman.com](http://www.regieroutman.com)

*Articles uploaded to Blackboard*

*Blackboard Course Materials*

**XIII. PREREQUISITES:** Teaching certificate and/or admission to the graduate program.

**XVI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:**

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact Director of Equal Opportunity, 103 Wells Hall. 270-809-3155 (voice), 270-809-3361 (TDD).