

# WEBSTER UNIVERSITY

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**COMM 5840.01**

COURSE NUMBER AND SECTION

**Dr. Dick Koblitz**

INSTRUCTOR

**Reading and Writing as  
Cognitive Processes**

COURSE TITLE

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**TERM:** Spring II 2003

**SITE:** 50

### **1. Course Description (student focus, rationale, scope, prerequisites)**

This course is designed for teachers who wish to explore the learning of written literacy (reading and writing) as cognitive processes and experience the reading/writing connection. Reading and writing are interrelated processes that rely on a language knowledge, interest, and use to construct meaning. A study of the “authoring, or inquiry, cycle” includes reading professional materials and participating in the writing process. The workshop format provides teachers with the opportunity to study, experience, and develop effective strategies for their classrooms. Emphasis is given to early reading instruction, but an integrated focus includes the literacy needs for students of all ages and abilities. This course counts for reading methods, elementary, early childhood certification, and reading specialists.

**Prerequisite:** A course in “Methods of Teaching Reading” (EDUC 352, COMM 591, etc.)

## **2. Learning Outcomes (goals, objectives, course outcomes, etc.)**

Students are expected to:

- a) read and discuss the research and writings of various theories of language development and learning
- b) read current professional articles on the connections between reading, writing, and thinking
- c) translate theory and research into practical classroom applications
- d) develop practical theory by designing a curriculum plan that incorporates reading, writing, and thinking

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## **3. Schedule of required readings, class preparations and assignments, lectures, discussions/dialogues, and student presentations**

### **WEEK 1 - March 17**

Introductions/Getting Acquainted/Administrivia

Overview of Course

Opposing Theoretical Paradigms of Literacy Instruction

In-Class Article: "Learning To Read: The Neverending Debate" by Frank Smith

Group Dialogue

Assignment for Week 2: Chapter 1 (pgs. 3-62); Teacher Article 1 (pgs. 63-79)

Handout - *Theories of Cognitive Development and Learning*

### **WEEK 2 - March 24**

Theories of Cognitive Development and Learning - An Historical Perspective

The Authoring/Inquiry Cycle: A Theoretical and Practical Overview

Learning summary recorded in log and shared with partner

Assignment for Week 3: Chapter 3 (pgs. 169-227); Teacher Article 3 (pgs. 229-249)

### **WEEK 3 - March 31**

Reading as a Cognitive Process

Comprehension Before, During, and After Reading

First draft of personal writing due (read to and orally responded to in small groups)

Assignment for Week 4: Read books/articles on phonics, phonology, phonemic awareness

### **WEEK 4 - April 7**

Developmental Learning Model

Literacy Workshops in the Classroom (reading)

Phonics in Proper Perspective

Learning summary recorded in log

Second draft of personal writing due (written responses by class members)

Assignment for Week 5: Chapter 2 (pgs. 81-149); Teacher Article 2 (pgs. 151-167)

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### **WEEK 5 - April 14**

Writing as a Cognitive Process

Literacy Workshops in the Classroom (writing)

Share articles/books on phonics

Read *All Children Can Write* by D. Graves/*Writing* by J. Hansen/Dialogue

Curricular Engagements (select three for class presentation)

Annotated bibliography for position paper due (1-2 pages)

Turn in final draft of personal writing for class book - group discussion of personal

writing process

Assignment for Week 6: Read books/articles on spelling

WEEK 6 - April 21

Spelling As A Process Of Inquiry

Curricular Engagements (select three for class presentation)

Learning summary recorded in log

Position paper drafts read by class members

Assignment for Week 7: Chapter 4 (pgs. 251-299); Teacher Article 4 (pgs. 301-315)

WEEK 7 - April 28

Literacy Instruction Across The curriculum

Presentations: Integrated Reading/Writing/Thinking Projects

Final position paper due

Assignment for Week 8: Self-selected readings

WEEK 8

Presentations: Integrated Reading/Writing/Thinking Projects

Written assessment of current thinking/understandings

Evaluations

4. Resources

Creating Classrooms For Authors and Inquirers (2nd ed.) by Short, Harste, and Burke

Supplemental Readings:

Additional books/articles provided in class

Recommended authors: Louise Rosenblatt, Connie Weaver, Donald Graves,  
Lucy Calkins, Donald Murray, Dorothy Watson, Jane Hansen, Emilie  
Ferrerio, Shirley Heath, M.K. Halliday, Don Holdaway, Shelley  
Harwayne, Marie Clay, Ken Goodman, Yetta Goodman, Frank  
Smith, Regie Routman, Stephen Krashen, Gerald Coles, Sharon  
Taberski, Jeff McQuillan, Michael Opitz, Dorothy Watson, Sandra Wilde, Ellin Keene

5. Evaluation:

- |    |  |           |
|----|--|-----------|
| a) | Learning Logs/Q Cards and Group Work                 | 10 points |
| b) | Writing for Publication (one article for class book) | 10 points |
| c) | Position Paper with Annotated Bibliography           | 15 points |
| d) | Reading/Writing/Thinking Project                     | 25 points |
| e) | Written Assessment                                   | 25 points |
| f) | Attendance/Participation                             | 15 points |

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

### Additional Information

**Academic Honesty:** The policies as stated in the current Webster University catalog applying to academic dishonesty are strictly enforced. Students are welcome to schedule individual conferences to clarify course expectations.

**Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend every class and participate in all activities. Preparing for class includes reading, thinking, and responding to assignments and activities. Active oral participation is expected. Unexcused absences will result in letter grade penalties.

**Learning Logs:** A learning log is a collection of ideas and questions related to reading, discussing, thinking, and reflecting on understanding the issues related to reading and writing. The reflection may answer the question ‘What have I learned?’ Double page note taking is encouraged.

**Q Cards:** A Q card represents questions, quotes, or quibbles related to assigned readings and class discussions. After reading the assigned texts and responding in the Learning Log, students have the opportunity to reflect on their understanding of the issues and ideas presented. Given the scope and nature of the course, many questions should arise and interesting quotes may pique attention. Sometimes it is appropriate to disagree with the authors or other members of the learning community. Each Q card should include a thoughtful question, but quotes and quibbles

are acceptable if they are supported by a rationale. If a quote is shared, please give a reason for choosing it. If there is a quibble with authors, concepts, or persons, please state the basis for the opposing view. The Q cards identify what is most important to individual students in the learning process.

**Presentations:** We all learn more when we share our understandings and try out new ideas with supportive colleagues. Students will have opportunities to share their personal writing, position paper, curricular engagements, and reading-writing-thinking project with class members.

**Personal Writing:** To understand the writing process, one must become engaged in it. Each student has the opportunity to develop as an author.

**Reading-Writing-Thinking Project:** A curriculum inquiry project is the result of reflection on understanding and thinking about what one would like to do to develop some aspect of the literacy curriculum with children. This involves some research and may include participation of students in the classroom.