Course Description
This course is designed to familiarize students with (a) historical avenues of literacy research, (b) current trends in literacy research, and (c) procedures for conducting personal research leading to a doctoral dissertation in some aspect of literacy education.

Learning Objectives
For you, as a graduate student taking the course,
1. To have a fuller understanding of the ways of being, knowing, doing, and speaking in your chosen profession.
2. To give attention to the social identities you are constructing for yourself and make choices based on knowledge of your disciplinary community as well as your own career goals.
3. To know the “ancestors” you share with all of us in literacy education, and to choose some particular ancestors of your own to get to know.
4. To learn more about the development of particular traditions and customs by studying the history of the field.
5. To develop metaknowledge about research paradigms so that you can see beyond and rise above simple “either/or” arguments.

Major Course Requirements
Attendance and Participation 10%
This course is conducted as a seminar. It is important that you do all assigned readings before class, that you be present at each class meeting, and that you contribute to discussions. (See “Policies” below.)

Five Special Contributions (oral and written) 20%
1. Forum Analysis (15%)
2. Research Analysis and Critique of Research Studies (25%)
3. Conference Proposal (5%)
4. Intellectual Biography of an “Important” Individual based on the person’s corpus of writing (15%)
   Note: One of these projects may be collaborative (with two co-authors). If you choose that option, I’d like you also to conduct a little study tracing the nature of your collaboration and give a report on that process to the class. See: Reither, J. A., & Vipond, D. (1989). Writing as collaboration. *College English, 51*, 855-867.
5. “Projected” Curriculum Vitae (5%)
Final Project Relevant to Your Emergent Identity 20%
oral and written—together count as final exam
You should decide on an issue or question of much interest to you that is relevant to the identity you are constructing in your field. Get started on the project by the second half of the course, and present your plan to me and to the class as soon as you can. As you work on the project—investing your time and energy—keep us updated; use this class as a response group. The final product can take the form of an article, novel, hypertext, or another genre,

Descriptions of Assignments.

Forum Analysis

In his article on “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community,” Porter (1986) discusses the nature of communication associated with disciplinary discourse communities. He defines a discourse community as “a group of individuals bound by a common interest who communicate through approved channels and whose discourse is regulated” (pp. 38-39), and he explains that the approved channels, which are called forums, have histories and also have “rules” (sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes not) that members follow when they make their contributions. These forums reflect the assumptions of the community regarding what topics are appropriate, what sorts of arguments are convincing, and how communications should be written.

For your first project in this course, I want you to examine a major forum in reading education. This will probably be a journal, preferably a scholarly journal considered to be “first rate” by people in your field.

You’ll need to limit your investigation to an issue that is particularly interesting to you. It won’t be possible for you to address all the questions that Porter lists at the end of his article (pp. 46-47), but the questions he poses there might help you decide how to focus your examination. At the second class meeting bring a brief proposal in which you identify the forum you have selected, tell why it interests you, state your question(s), and explain how you would like to go about your analysis. We’ll discuss these plans in class.

The next week, bring a written report to class and be prepared to present an oral report (5 minutes) to the class. I’d like the written report (in APA format) to be about six pages typed. In the report, you should make the following moves: setting up the issue (in which you might use some of your readings) and stating your purpose, specifying and describing the forum, explaining your method of analysis, presenting your “findings” (perhaps with some kind of graphic), and stating what sort of contribution your analysis makes. Be sure to give your paper a good title, number the pages, and include a reference page.

Research Analysis and Critique of Research Studies

Everyone thinks. It is within our nature to think. However much of our thinking is biased distorted, partial, uninformed or prejudiced. Yet the quality of our life and that of what we produce, make or build depends on the quality of our thought. Critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it. Throughout the course of the semester I’d like you to analyze, deconstruct and critique a variety of research studies.

You will each be asked to locate and post a research study on Blackboard. As a class we will have read the study prior to class. In class we will analyze, deconstruct and critique the study. Discussions will center around significance of the study, research design, what would the study look like utilizing a different methodological design, as well as tracing the historical context of the study.

Conference Proposal
For another course assignment, you’ll prepare a draft of a conference proposal. It’s possible that you will continue to work on this and eventually submit it for consideration for an actual conference. To begin, spend some time finding a conference that interests you and learning what the organization requires in a proposal. The Chronicle of Higher Education lists upcoming conferences, and many of the organizations have the proposal form on their web page.

In proposing a conference paper, you’ll make moves that are similar to those you make in some of the other projects for this course. You’ll need to set up your issue (contextualizing it in the literature), describe your approach, present your own findings (or theoretical contribution), and explain the significance of contribution you’re making.

When you prepare a “real” conference proposal, it’s a good idea to get people to read it and make suggestions for improving it. Your respondent might be your faculty advisor, or you might ask other graduate students. It’s best to have respondents who know the “discourse” and “ethos” of the group putting on the conference and who, ideally, participate in that forum. For this “pretend” conference proposal, the other class members and I will be respondents, but you may want to talk with others too.

**Intellectual Biography**

You will also write an intellectual biography of a scholarly “ancestor”—one of your scholarly ancestors. Decide on an individual in reading education with whom you identify in some way. Do a library search, locate some of that person’s publications, and backtrack through references (and other sources you can find) to learn about that person’s total body of work, or as much of that totality as you can, given the time limitations you have. Consider the following sorts of things as you examine the work: What kinds of writing did the person do initially and how has his or her work developed over time? Has he or she consistently pursued certain themes or issues? Have there been major shifts in topics or methods? Who are the other scholars that have been important in this person’s work?

After doing some of this research, decide on the particular question that you want to answer for this project and also on the particular approach that you will take in your inquiry. Since time won’t allow you to do everything you might, you’ll need to limit yourself to answering a specific, focused question about that person’s intellectual work. Keep in mind that this is to be an intellectual biography, not simply a biography. Like any biography, it can present a chronology but it doesn’t have to do that. This paper will not have the research-report organizational pattern that you used for the forum analysis and the discourse analysis.

If the individual is still living, you might be able to locate a web page at a university to get a curriculum vitae. You might also be able to reach the person by email, but, if you do use email, be sure to know a good bit about the person’s work beforehand and have a small number of very good questions to ask (or perhaps only one question). I want the biography to emphasize what you discern yourself from reading the person’s published work; it shouldn’t be simply a report of an interview.

Bring a written report to class and be prepared to present an oral report (5 minutes) to the class.

**Curriculum Vitae**

The curriculum vitae that you prepare for this class will be a “projected cv”—the sort of cv that you hope to have four years from now. You’ll need to think about the kind of dissertation you’ll write, the conference papers you’ll give, the publications you’ll have, the positions you will have held, and so on. I’ll provide a form for you to use with suggested sections. The “projected” cv is required for class, but you might also want to prepare an actual cv and keep it in a file on your computer so that you can continually add to it.
**Final Project**

You should decide on an issue or question that is of much interest to you and that is relevant to your emergent identity. Present your plan to me and then to the class as soon as you can. As you work on the project—investing your time and energy—keep us updated; use this class or individuals in it as respondents. The final product can take the form of an article, novel, hypertext, or another genre, but, whatever genre you produce, be sure to make the connections to the scholarly literature that I’ve been encouraging throughout the course.

This project can build on one of the smaller inquiries you’ve already conducted: your forum analysis, discourse analysis, conference proposal draft, or intellectual biography. But it may also be on a totally different topic or issue that is relevant to the class.

Your oral presentation will be 20 minutes, and it will be followed by a discussion.

**Required Readings**

*Textbook:*


*Recommended or Supplemental Reading:*

research on writing (pp. ). New York: Erlbaum.


### Articles from Educational Researcher: The ER Argument (organized chronologically)

Note: We will select from these.


### State Adopted Proficiencies/TExES competencies (COE)

N/A
Course Policies

Attendance/tardiness
This class will be conducted as a seminar to which all class members will contribute. It is important that you attend all class meetings and that you prepare yourself for all our meetings by reading the assigned texts, taking notes from them, and having written or oral assignments completed. You are expected to come to class with comments and questions relevant to the evening’s topic and to the readings. If you do have to miss a class, please contact another class member and get any class notes or handouts you missed and learn how you can be prepared for our next meeting. More than one absence will have a negative effect on your grade.

Late work and Make-up Exams
I take pride in being fair to all students. It is not fair to students who are prepared and attend class when other students do not follow the due dates on the tentative schedule. Therefore, late work will not be accepted and communicating an excuse for a late assignment does not constitute a waiver of the deadline. *Please do not use class time to discuss your personal grade. Your grade is a private discussion between you and me. You are to schedule an appointment during office hours if you have any questions.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage
Cell phones, text messaging, and checking your cell phone, email, and text messages or any other form of social networking which do not support course instruction during class are all strictly prohibited. Come to class prepared to focus on class. Violations may result in being asked to withdraw from the course and/or failure of course. If there is a potential rising emergency, then prior notification of such possibility must be made known to me before the start of class and phone set on vibrate.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 4, 2011 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Preferred methods of scholarly citations
You are to use APA 6th edition for all citations.
Classroom/professional behavior

Grade Appeals*

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Disabilities Accommodations*

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in CCH 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Syllabus

(course outline)

08/28 Introductions
Course Expectations

09/04 Formative Design Experiments

09/11 Ethnographic Research

09/18 Case Study
Forum Analysis Due
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<td>09/25</td>
<td>Literacy Research Seminar</td>
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<td>Discourse Analysis-Conversations</td>
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<td>Conference Proposal Due</td>
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<td>10/09</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis – Written Text</td>
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<td>Correlations and Causes</td>
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<td>Literacy Research Seminar</td>
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<td>Intellectual Biography Due</td>
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<td>Experimental – Quasi Experimental Design</td>
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<td>Single-Subject Experimental Design</td>
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<td>Verbal Protocols of Reading</td>
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