

**AEDR 421**  
**Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties - ECE**  
**Spring 2009**

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Meeting Time: **M** 8:30-11:30 North Aiken Elementary School

**I. Descriptive Information**

- A. AEDR 421: **Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties**
- B. Catalog Description: (3) (Prerequisite: AEDR 420 and admission to Education Professional Program or special permission of education advisor) Clinical and classroom aspects of teaching students with reading difficulties are explored with emphasis on testing procedures, instructional materials and teaching techniques. Issues of diagnosis and teaching based upon the state mandated testing are explored.
- C. Intended Audience: Juniors and seniors who have been admitted to the Education Professional Program in early childhood or elementary education.
- D. Dynamic Educator  
The objectives of this course are designed to facilitate the candidate's development as a Dynamic Educator. This course will focus specifically on the development of the Dynamic Educator as one who plans, instructs, manages, communicates and grows professionally.

**II. Course Goals and Objectives:**

- A. General Goal: To understand and practice diverse methods of diagnosing reading problems of children in the elementary classroom and to determine strategies to correct these problems.
- B. Instructional Objectives: After reviewing the dimensions of the reading process:
  - 1. The candidate will study a student's development through direct, guided observations; focused inquiry through data collection and systematic analysis; and self-study of interaction with children.
  - 2. The candidate will have various experiences with assessment to (a) select methods of assessment appropriate to each of the disciplines and to the age, development, and characteristics of students, (b) interpret and communicate assessment results accurately and ethically, and (c) integrate information gained from assessments into instructional plans.
  - 3. The candidate will learn to use informal and formal assessment strategies to plan and individualize curriculum and teaching practices and develop and use authentic performance-based assessments of children's learning to assist in planning and to communicate with children and parents.
  - 4. The candidate will become familiar with selecting, evaluating, and interpreting formal, standardized assessment instruments and information used in the assessment of children, and understand how to integrate authentic classroom assessment data with formal assessment information.
  - 5. The candidate will be involved in clinical/field experiences in the use of a variety of assessment and evaluation methods.
  - 6. The candidate will be involved in programs in the area of students' literacy development to help him/her create experiences for students in reading, writing and oral language. The integration of reading, writing and oral language with each other and with the content areas of the elementary school curriculum will be stressed.

7. The candidate will learn about and implement ways of promoting vocabulary strategies for student independence.
8. The candidate will discover the flexible use of a variety of strategies for recognizing words in print.
9. The candidate will learn strategies readers can use to discover meaning from print and to monitor their own comprehension.
10. The candidate will identify and develop appropriate responses to differences among language learners (e.g., linguistic, socio-cultural, intellectual, physical).
11. The candidate will have the opportunity to communicate with parents concerning the school language program and developmentally appropriate language experiences at home.

### III. Course Readings:

#### A. Required Texts:

Johnson, P. (2006). *One child at a time: Making the most of your time with struggling readers, K-6*. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers.

Owocki, G. & Goodman, Y. (2002). *Kidwatching: Documenting children's literacy development*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Rasinski, T. & Padak, N. (2004). *Effective reading strategies: Teaching children who find reading difficult*. (third edition). Columbus, OH: Pearson.

Selected professional articles

**IV. Instructional Procedures:** Instructional procedures include lectures, demonstrations, on-line and class discussions, small group work, supplemented with the use of videotapes, PowerPoint, and the Internet.

### V. Course Requirements:

#### A. Administrative Requirements:

1. Candidates will sign the USCA HONOR CODE on all graded academic work certifying that no unauthorized assistance has been given or received in the completion of the work. Academic honesty violations are dealt with in accordance with the Academic Code of Conduct, which is described in the USCA Student Handbook. A breach of this code will result in a zero for that assignment and can result in a failing grade in the course.

Honor Code: The following statement should appear on all assignments: *On my honor as a University of South Carolina-Aiken student, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this assignment/examination. To the best of my knowledge I am not in violation of academic honesty.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

2. If you have a physical, psychological, and/or learning disability which might affect your performance in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services, 126A B&E, (803) 641-3609, as soon as possible. The Disability Services Office will determine appropriate accommodations based on medical documentation.

3. Your attendance is expected at ALL class meetings. Attendance will impact grades in regards to in-class assignments that cannot be made up. You are responsible for any content that you miss due to absences, tardiness, or early dismissal from class.

Incident weather – On days that you are assigned to be in the schools, adhere to the schedule of the Aiken County Schools. This information can be accessed at: [www.aiken.k12.sc.us](http://www.aiken.k12.sc.us)  
On days that you are assigned to be on campus, adhere to the USCA schedule that can be accessed at: [www.usca.edu](http://www.usca.edu)

4. Your instructor values good writing in this course. Please remember that the written work that you produce in this class can be included in your rising junior writing portfolio. For further information on the portfolio requirement, consult your USCA Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin or visit Dr. Lynne Rhodes, Director of Writing Assessment, or Karl Fornes, Director of Writing Room.

5. Submission of assignments after the due dates and times **will result** in loss of points.

6. Blackboard will be used for communication between the teacher candidates and the professor.

## **B. Academic Requirements:**

1. **Reflections on Assigned Readings and Class Engagements (due weekly):** Because learning occurs through reflection on experience, reflecting and writing about your reactions to assigned readings and class engagements will allow you to deepen your understandings of the course content. There are four formats for reflections that are required in this course. Each week, you will earn a grade on your participation/reflections/responses (see rubric at the end of this syllabus).

a. Blackboard Discussion Group (**due Fridays by 3:00 p.m.**): Each week you will logon to Blackboard where you will reflect on your assigned readings. In your reflections, you should include quotes that made you think deeply, your own thoughts and ideas about the content of the reading, things you wonder about and/or questions you have about the readings. Your reflections should be thoughtful and thorough and address the entire reading assignment.

b. Blackboard Discussion Group (**due Sundays by 3:00 p.m.**): Each week you will logon to Blackboard where you will read your peer's reflections and respond to one reflection. In your responses to your peers, you should raise questions, explore and react to issues that arise, and to push each other as learners.

c. In-Class Discussions/Participation – Each class meeting we will expand and deepen our understandings of the assigned readings and class engagements through in-class discussions. In these discussions, we will analyze issues and questions from our Blackboard responses as well as address new issues that emerge.

d. Exit Slips – At the end of each class meeting you will complete an exit slip on which you reflect on class engagements in relation to what you are coming to understand about the teaching and learning of reading. Exit slips should be thoughtfully completed and include insights, connections, and questions.

2. **Student Reports (due Feb. 9, Feb. 23, March 16, March 30, and April 13):** At regular intervals during the semester, you will write reports in which you will use student assessment data to identify the strengths and needs of one student and plan appropriate instruction to support the student's literacy development. You will follow a report structure that will include observations you make as you interact with the student (here's what), interpretations of your observations (so what?), instructional plans (now what?), and a reflection that includes how instructional decisions were made and considers possible next steps with the reader (then what?). You will find the report structure template on Blackboard and we will work through this reflective structure in class.

3. **Miscue Analysis Transcript and Discussion (due March 16/March 23):** For this assignment, you will complete a full miscue analysis with your case study student. This miscue analysis should be audio recorded from beginning to end. You will choose and prepare a text for the miscue analysis in advance of meeting with your student. On the day that the miscue analysis will take place (March 3), you will have your student read and retell the text you have chosen as you record reading miscues and behaviors. Following the miscue analysis, you will analyze the student miscues, transcribe the student retelling, and discuss the reader following the examples from Wilde's text.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, you will turn in (as one document) a copy of the text (with miscue markings), a transcript of the student retelling, and your discussion of the reader.

4. **Case Study Notebook (due April 27):** During this semester, you will complete a case study as you learn research based literacy assessment practices. Each week, you will meet with one student and engage him/her in developmentally appropriate literacy assessments and instruction that is responsive to

the strengths and needs of the student based on the assessments. You will maintain a binder which will include all the data you collect. Possible data sources include but are not limited to:

- Observation Notes
- Student Reports
- Interest Interviews/Inventories
- Written Conversations
- Student Writing Samples
- Miscue Analysis
- Oral and Written Retellings
- Fluency Scales
- Standardized Test Scores
- Dominic Assessments
- Reading Logs
- Audio Recording of Student Reading

5. **Letter of Theoretical Support (due Apr. 21):** Using data from your Case Study Notebook along with your reflections on course readings, you will craft a letter describing what you have come to know theoretically and practically about literacy learning and the role of assessment in literacy learning. You will decide to whom the letter will be addressed – an administrator, a teacher, a school board member, a legislator, the media, etc. In your letter, you should cite a minimum of five key understandings that can be documented by your work with one student. For each key understanding, your letter should describe how your work with one student influenced your understandings of literacy teaching and learning as well as how this work will impact your classroom instruction. A possible structure might be:

*I've just spent time studying the field of literacy education and using that knowledge to get to know one student well. In the process, I've deepened my understandings about some important things I think all teachers should know...*

*I've learned that (cite authors and theorists whose work helped you develop this knowledge)...*

*This became clearer to me as I worked with one student and saw...*

*This tells me that, in classrooms, it is critical that we...*

This structure (or versions of it) could be repeated for each key point you want to make.

This is a professional paper. It should follow APA format.

## VI. Evaluation and Grading Scale

Course guidelines for grading: This course is a graded course using A, B+, B, C+, C, D, and F. 93-100% is considered an A; 90-92% is considered a B+; 85-89% is considered a B; 80-84% is considered a C+; 75-79% is considered a C; 70-74 is considered a D; any grade below 70 is considered an F.

Your grade will be determined based on these 5 academic requirements.

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Reflections on Required Readings and Class Engagements | 30% |
| • Student Reports  | 30% |
| • Miscue Analysis Transcript and Discussion              | 10% |
| • Case Study Notebook                                    | 20% |
| • Letter of Theoretical Support                          | 20% |

	<b>Weekly Reflection Rubric</b>		
	<b>Unacceptable 0 Points</b>	<b>Acceptable 5 Points</b>	<b>Target 10 Points</b>
<b>Reflections on Readings</b>	Reflection is limited to one idea from the reading, or summarizes reading without including personal thoughts and ideas, or the reflection is not completed.	Reflection addresses two or more ideas from the weekly readings, includes personal thoughts, ideas, and questions, but may or may not consider the readings in relation to classroom practice.	Reflection addresses three or more ideas from the weekly readings, includes personal thoughts, ideas, and questions, and considers the readings in relation to classroom instruction.
<b>Responses to Peers</b>	Response simply agrees with peer reflection and does not push the peer to think further about the idea or issue, or the response is not completed.	Response agrees with and adds to the thinking of the peer learner.	Response questions and/or presents an alternative view to the idea or issue presented in the peer reflection.
<b>Class Participation</b>	Student arrives late/leaves early, contributes little or not at all to lectures, class discussions, and/or group work or student does not attend class.	Student arrives late or leaves early. Student contributes to class discussions and group work.	Student arrives on time and actively engages in lectures, class discussions, and group work through the duration of the class period.
<b>Exit Slips</b>	Exit slip addresses one aspect of the class session, summarizes the class session, or is not turned in.	Exit slip addresses more than one aspect of the class session and reflects on class engagements in relation to personal learning.	Exit slip addresses more than one aspect of the class session and reflects on class engagements in relation to personal learning and future teaching.