

**RDG 732 ISSUES AND TRENDS IN LITERACY EDUCATION**  
*RDG 732 is a required course for the Doctorate in Education in Reading*  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Language, Literacy & Special Populations**

Through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience, and research, the candidates in Sam Houston State University's Educator Preparation Programs acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment. Employing a variety of technologies, these candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction to meet the needs of our communities' diverse learners.

**Course Description:** Current issues and trends related to field of literacy acquisition will be examined through the lens of theory, process and practice.

**Text/Readings:** Smith, N. B. (2002). *American reading instruction, special edition*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.  
 Fischer, S. R. (2003). *A history of reading*. London: Reaktion Books.  
 Fischer, S. R. (2001). *A history of writing*. London: Reaktion Books.

Readings from a variety of journals will be required. Readings from self-selected publications will also be required. Journal titles include:

Journal of Reading Research  
 Reading Research and Instruction  
 Journal of Reading Behavior  
 Journal of Literacy Research  
 Reading Research Quarterly

**Standards Matrix: Doctoral students will meet the following IRA Teacher Educator standards upon completion of their coursework:**

Objectives/Learning Outcomes	Activities (* indicates field-based activity)	Performance Assessment	Standards: <i>IRA Standards</i>
Doctoral students will:  Demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of: 1. The history of research on literacy acquisition and its impact on literacy instruction. 2. Current research on literacy and how that information impacts on diverse populations.  Demonstrate and ability to synthesize and analyze current information about trends and issues in literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read a variety of literacy-related historical documents.</li> <li>• Read a variety of journals and research texts on current literacy issues.</li> <li>• Select a trend or issue of personal interest and write a professional paper that analyzes and synthesizes both the historical perspective of the selected trend or issue and its current "capital."</li> <li>• Prepare a presentation over-viewing the findings of your investigation and present it to your classmates and other appropriate audiences.</li> <li>• Engage in class discussions of relevant topics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written professional paper</li> <li>• Presentation over-viewing the paper</li> <li>• Class discussions and self-evaluation.</li> <li>• Rubrics</li> </ul>	1.1-1.4 Know a wide range of theories and how they relate to classroom practice, articulate these theories, synthesize this information and relate the information to current practices in the field of literacy.  3.4 Communicate this information to various stakeholders.  5.1-5.4 Use the knowledge and skills to articulate information, help peers articulate plans, reflect on knowledge and practices.

Web address for IRA standards: <http://www.reading.org/advocacy/standards/introduction.html>

**Course Format:**

This course will be a face-to-face seminar format with online support.

**Course Content:**

Course overview

Review of historical literacy learning theory and processes

Student-selected current issues and trends; readings and discussions may include these topics:

- The roles of policy makers, community activists, parents and media in current literacy issues
- No Child Left Behind
- Fluency and prosody
- Censorship
- Scientific based research and programming decisions
- Assessment
- National Certification
- Phonics and phonemic awareness

Student-led discussions over historical and contemporary issues

Topics to be continued throughout the program and which are embedded in the content:

- Meeting the literacy needs of a diverse population
- Implementing and integrating appropriate literacy technology in the classroom
- Professionalism how a professional educator thinks, acts, and speaks
- Selection of course material for portfolio

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Participation:** Participation is expected at the weekly discussions, when they are face-to-face and online.
2. **Professional paper:** Select a current literacy trend/issue confronting your school, program area or district or one related to your research interests. Examine this issue through the lens of history and a variety of learning theories, models of processing, social theories and psycholinguistic theories. Prepare an analysis and synthesis of the issue.
3. **Presentation:** Prepare and deliver a presentation over-viewing your research paper.
4. **Discussions:** Each doctoral student will lead a discussion over her/his selected issue. The discussion should address these questions:
  - a. What is the historical background of this trend/issue?
  - b. What are the underlying theoretical orientations of this issue?
  - c. What makes this an issue at this time?
  - d. What are the social/political forces behind this issue?
  - e. Is there public policy related to this issue?
  - f. How are schools, parents, and the public in general responding to the issue?
  - g. What does research tells us about this issue?
  - h. What are some possible qualitative and quantitative studies that might extend our knowledge base on the issue?

One week prior to your scheduled discussion please distribute to the class:

- One historical document related to your issue
- One current research article related to the issue
- Any other information that will be critical to the discussion of your trend/issue.

Class members will read these texts prior to your presentation and will be prepared to discuss them with you.

**Expectations:**

Given the heavy emphasis on discussion and engagement, attendance is a requirement.

**Disability Statement:**

Students with a disability that affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement

opportunities are not impaired. Persons with physical impairment may contact the Director of the Counseling Center as chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students by telephone (936-294-1720.)

**Selected bibliography:**

- Allington, R. (2002). *Big brother and the national reading curriculum*. Portsmouth, ME: Heinemann
- Berliner, D. C., & Biddle, B. J. (1997). *The manufactured crisis*. NY: Longman.
- Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003). *Early child development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Profiles of current research initiatives*. Cambridge, MA: Teachers College Press.
- Brooke, R. (2003). *Rural voices: Place-conscious education and the teaching of writing*. Cambridge, MA: Teachers College Press.
- Coles, G. (2000). *Misreading reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Gatto, J. (1992). *Dumbing us down: The hidden curriculum of compulsory schooling*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society.
- Graves, D. (2002). *Testing is not teaching*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kohn, A., & Shannon, P. (2002). *Education, Inc.: Turning learning into a business*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kohn, A. (2000). *The case against standardized testing: Raising the scores, ruining the schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Mc Quillan, J. (1998). *The literacy crisis; False claims, real solutions*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA): [http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,2987,en\\_32252351\\_32235731\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,2987,en_32252351_32235731_1_1_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)
- Ovando, C. & McLaren, P. (2000) *The politics of multiculturalism and bilingual education*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS): <http://timss.bc.edu/pirls2006/framework.html>
- Robinson, R. D., McKenna, M. C., & Wedman, J. M. (2004). *Issues and trends in literacy education, 3rd ed.* Boston: Pearson. (A 4th edition is coming out this fall).
- Stahl, K. A., & McKenna, M. C. (2006). *Reading research at work*. NY: Guilford Press.
- Taylor, D. (1997). *Beginning to read and the spin doctors of science*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Thayer-Bacon, B. (2000). *Transforming critical thinking*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press.
- Wilde, S. (2002). *Testing and standards*. Portsmouth, ME: Heinemann