I. Descriptive Information

A. Course number and title: EDRD 720 - Capstone Seminar in Language and Literacy.

B. Catalog Description: Synthesis, critique, and evaluation of current research and educational practice in language and literacy.

C. Course credit: Three (3) hours.

D. Prerequisites: EDRD 600, EDRD 715, EDRD 716, EDRD 718, and EDRD 719, and consent of instructor.

E. Intended audience: Teachers within one semester of completing their M.Ed. in Language and Literacy.

F. Instructor: Dr. Victoria Oglan
   Office: Wardlaw # 206
   Email: vaoglan@yahoo.com
   Phone: 777-7749
   Office Hours: Tues. 12:00-2:30
   Wed. 12:00-2:30
   By Appointment

II. Statement of Goals and Objectives

A. Goals: This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to review the body of research studied in their master’s degree program and other seminal works as part of a synthesis and critique of educational practice. In addition, this course helps students critically examine their current practices, make connections from course work to those practices and design, implement and assess activities to increase parent involvement and support the professional development of other teachers.

B. Core (multi-course) Objectives: Across the M.Ed. in Language and Literacy, teachers will.
1. Recognize that reading should be taught as a process.

2. Understand, respect, and value cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity.

3. Recognize the importance of literacy for personal and social growth.

4. Recognize that literacy can be a means for transmitting moral and cultural values.

5. Perceive reading as the process of constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by written language, and the context of the reading situation.

6. Understand that goals, instruction, and assessment should be aligned.

7. Recognize how differences among learners influence their literacy development.

8. Pursue knowledge of literacy by reading professional journals and publications, and participating in conferences and other professional activities.

9. Reflect on one's practice to improve instruction and other services to students.

10. Participate in local, state, national, and international professional organizations whose mission is the improvement of literacy.

C. Course Objectives. This course is designed to enable participants to:

1. Know past and present literacy leaders and their contributions to the knowledge base.

2. Know relevant reading research from general education and how it has influenced literacy education.

3. Initiate and participate in ongoing curriculum development and evaluation.

4. Apply research for improved literacy.

5. Implement effective strategies to include parents as partners in the literacy development of their children.

6. Communicate information about literacy curriculum, instruction, and assessment to allied professionals, paraprofessionals, administrators, staff members, school-board members, policymakers, the media, parents, and the community.
7. Initiate, implement and evaluate professional-development experiences that help emphasize the dynamic interaction among prior knowledge, experience, and the school context as well as among other aspects of reading development.

8. Provide professional-development experiences that are sensitive to school constraints (e.g., class size or limited resources).

9. Model ethical professional behavior.

10. Interact with and participate in decision making with teachers, teacher educators, theoreticians, and researchers.

11. Promote collegiality with other literacy professionals through regular conversations, discussions, and consultations about learners, literacy theory, and assessment and instruction.

12. Write for publication.

13. Make presentations at local, state, regional, and national meetings and conferences.

III. Required Texts and Readings


In addition to the text, we will read articles which will be posted to Blackboard (BB) and/or distributed in class.

IV. Academic Course Requirements

1. Double Entry Journal
2. Class Log
3. Best Practices Video
4. Parent Engagement Project
5. Professional Development Activity
6. Academic Paper / Comprehensive Exam

V. Administrative Course Requirements

A. Attendance. Students are expected to attend all regular class meetings. Missing greater than 10% of the required 45 hours will result in a lower course grade.

B. Auditors are expected to conform to the same attendance requirements as students registered for credit.
VI. Evaluation and Grading

1. Double Entry Journal 15 points
2. Class Log 5 points
3. Best Practices Video 15 points
4. Parent Engagement Project 15 points
5. Professional Development Activity 15 points
7. Class Participation 10 points

A = 90 - 100; B = 80 - 89; C = 70 - 79; D = 60 – 69; F = below 69

VII. Major Course Topics

- A Critical Exploration of Literacy Instruction (in schools)
- The History of the Reading Wars
- Federal Support of Education: NCLB
- The Politics of Assessment
- Formal Reading Programs vs. Teacher Decision-making
- Curriculum as Inquiry vs. Legislated Curriculum
- Position Statements and Standards
- The Schools Our Children Deserve: What Does it Take?
- Teaching Under the Gun/ Learning Under the Gun
- The Teacher as Educational Leader
- Parents as Partners: Multiple Voices and Engagement
- Literacy for Our Future: Effective Professional Development

VIII. Participation/Preparation/Professionalism

Learning is a social process, and the course is designed to support collaboration. Therefore, it is critical that you attend class and become a member of the community of learners through active participation. You are responsible for the growth of others as well as yourself.

This class offers ongoing opportunities for active participation. Active participation in group discussions will help you make meaning of the course content. Professional points will be given daily, based on:

- Coming to class on time with prepared assigned materials
- Discussion (small group and whole class) participation—bringing your DEJ to EVERY CLASS, engaging in conversations with peers about readings, paraphrasing ideas, summarizing main points, actively participating in all in-class engagements, and asking questions
- Listening to others
- Being a reflective practitioner
You are expected to attend all meetings. According to the USC Graduate Bulletin, unsatisfactory attendance may be considered adequate reason for the instructor to request that the student withdraw from the class. We will use professional teaching standards existing in the field for attendance and communication. Given this, please call me at my office (777-7749) before class if you need to be absent and leave a message.

You will be responsible for materials and/or assignments missed when absent. You may consider asking a peer in class to collect materials for you. You can also check Blackboard for document postings. All handouts and overheads are posted to Blackboard.

If you email me, all email correspondence should be professional. Be sure to include a subject for each email sent and remember to type your name at the end of every email. You are one of 20 students in this course. Sometimes email addresses do not indicate the name of the sender.

Always check Blackboard announcements before contacting me with a question/concern about a given task. Often the answers to your questions are explained here. Be sure to check BB before coming to class, just as you would check voice mail at your school for messages from parents/colleagues trying to get in touch with you.

**Cell Phones** - Please turn off all cell phones while in class. If you have an emergency and need to take a phone call during class time please see me before class begins and inform me of the situation so I can make an exception to the cell phone protocol. As well, text messaging during class-time is not acceptable and will result in mark deductions in participation. No exceptions.

**Lap Tops** – The course will require you to use a laptop at times. You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner in this regard. Logging into social sites and/or surfing the internet while in class is not acceptable and will result in mark deduction in participation. No exceptions.

**VIII. Modes of Instruction**

Types of instructional strategies used in the course include demonstrations, mini-lessons, small and whole group discussions, and student presentations. Each session may consist of a such formats as: read aloud, class log, literature circle discussion of professional readings, lesson by the instructor, reflections, exit slips, admit slips.

**IX. Description of Assignments**

Note: Please do not use plastic sleeves to protect the pages of any assignment. This makes reading and responding to assignments challenging.
Double Entry Journal

You will keep a Double Entry Journal for all reading. BRING YOUR DEJ TO EVERY CLASS. I will stamp DEJ’s every class and document those who do not have their DEJ. Not having your DEJ every class will affect your final grade for that assignment. We will use the DEJ’s as a tool to inform our thinking, our discussions and our writing.

1. Double Entry Journals must be typed using a two column format like the example given in class.

2. You must have a Table of Contents for your Double Entry Journal and this also must be typed.

3. You will also code sections of your DEJ. I want to see levels of thinking and reflecting so we will devise a coding system in class for you to use. We will base the coding system on Bloom’s Taxonomy and on what we learn about making connections to text. I expect to see reflections that demonstrate critical thinking about and/or creative application of the reading. Just as the state standards require students to be critical thinkers, so too, teachers need to be critical thinkers.

4. Be sure to accurately cite (author, text, chapter, page number) each quote you use. Refer to the sample given in class.

On the information side of your journal: record direct quotes, summaries of ideas, or outlines. Your decision about what to record will depend on the type of reading and on your needs as a teacher and learner. It also depends on what you think is central to the author’s message. Include the necessary reference information.

On the personal side of your journal: think about writing to yourself, to me and to your peers. Experiment with a variety of responses. Relate the information to your experiences; put the ideas into your own words, draw conclusions; make connections to other readings; create visuals; ask questions. This side of the journal must be substantive and must demonstrate levels of thinking and diversity of thinking.

Please ensure that this journal accomplishes at least these goals:

1. It should become a collection of insights and citations that are reflective of your thinking as you move through the theoretical and practical fundamentals of learning about reading and writing in the content areas.
2. It should show reflection about your own dispositions, knowledge, and practices.
3. It should demonstrate clearly that you have read each assignment carefully and thoughtfully.

Class Log

For this assignment, students will choose a partner and develop a class log, the purpose of which is to keep an accurate record of the class meetings. A class log is like the minutes of a meeting. For each day of the course, students will recount the day’s events by composing a log summary and submitting it to the other students on the following meeting. The best logs re-create the atmosphere of the daily sessions; they record the
highlights of class meetings and reflect on the ideas, questions, and issues raised during the discussions. Logs can be composed in a variety of genres. Logs should be no more than two sides of a page in length (double spaced).

We will negotiate the details and schedule of this assignment as a group in class and I will share a variety of demonstrations of class logs.

**Best Practices Video**

Similar to the quality of the video-tape teachers prepare when applying for NBPTS certification, you will video-tape yourself while engaged in a defined area of literacy learning, e.g. Guided Reading, Literature discussion, Interactive Read Aloud etc. These are only some suggestions - there are many possibilities for teaching. You may work with one student or more than one student. For those of you not in a classroom, we will look at possibilities for you to work with students from one of your courses.

This 30 minute tape should be accompanied by a paper in which you:

(a) provide a research and theory-based rationale for their practice(s) (3-5 pages double spaced with 5-7 references)

(b) critique and evaluate both their instructional plan and teaching effectiveness. (2-4 pages double spaced)

Within the 30 minutes, participants may detail one 30 minute instructional event or two 15 minute events.

You will write a letter of permission to the parents of the students you will work with asking for a signature. A sample letter will be distributed in class as a demonstration.

**Parent Engagement Project (Narrative and Power Point)**

Working collaboratively with a partner, students will develop a plan to draw parents into the educational enterprise in order to improve, in some way, parents’ support of students and learning in their community. Parent involvement has many benefits for students, teachers, the school and the community at large. As a result, you and your partner will develop a one year plan for parent involvement.

You will post your Power Point to Blackboard. You will submit your narrative in both hard copy and electronically.

For this project, you and your partner will interview 3 parents to determine the kinds of school involvement they have had and the kinds of school involvement they would like to have. You will write a letter to the parents indicating why you are interviewing them and assuring them their identity will remain anonymous. This letter will be included in your final project. As well, you will transcribe each of the 3 interviews.

Partners will present either this plan or the Professional Development Plan to the class. The class will collectively revise a rubric for this engagement. The following is the
format for the assignment.


- 5-7 citations in this section
- 3-5 pages (double spaced)

Section II: Goals for this Parent Engagement Project

- List 3-5 goals for this project.
- For each goal, indicate how it is connected to what the research says

Section III: Parent Interviews: You will interview 3 parents.

- Question sheet – list the questions you asked in the interviews
- Include the letter you wrote to parents
- Detail each interview – use pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. Provide a thick narrative of each interview detailing the answers to the questions and any other pertinent data which will help outline the experience. You may transcribe the interviews or provide thick description. NOTE: Identities must remain confidential.

Section IV: Year Long Plan for Parent Engagement

- Calendar of events – one page calendar with a year long view
- Each monthly session outlined and detailed. Be sure to include artifacts, book titles, handouts etc. for the engagements you have planned

Section V: What I Learned about Parent Engagement

- Each partner will include his/her own narrative about what he/she learned from the reading and research on this topic – a 2-3 page reflection (double spaced)

Section VI: References

Professional Development Activity (Narrative and Power Point)

Teachers are learners. Every day in some way they are learning what it means to be a good teacher. Teachers know that ongoing professional development is crucial to both themselves and their students. When teachers are learners everyone benefits especially the students they teach. Teachers who are learners also know what they know and what they need to know to support their efforts in the classroom. Ongoing professional development is key to good teaching.

For this assignment, students will choose a partner and develop a one year professional development plan for pre-service or in-service teachers. Students must interview three teachers to get input into the kinds of professional development needed. These three interviews will be detailed in a narrative or will be transcribed. In addition, students will submit a description of the planned activity and a narrative in which they examine how this experience will be beneficial to teachers. As well, students will include a section in
the narrative that chronicles what the research says about best practices in professional development for teachers.

You will post your Power Point to Blackboard. You will submit your narrative in both hard copy and electronically.

The following is the format to follow for this assignment.

Section I: Why Professional Development? What the Research Says about Professional Development

- 5-7 citations in this section
- 3-5 pages (double spaced)

Section II: Goals for this Professional Development Project

- List 3-5 goals for this project.
- For each goal, indicate how it is connected to what the research says

Section III: Teacher Interviews

- Question sheet – list the questions you asked in the interviews
- Detail each interview – use pseudonyms for teachers’ names, include grade level, content area, number of years teaching, school, school district. Provide a thick narrative of each interview detailing the answers to the questions and any other pertinent data which will help outline the experience. NOTE: Identities must remain confidential.

Section IV: Year Long Plan for Professional Development

- Calendar of events – one page with a year long view
- Each monthly session outlined and detailed. Be sure to include artifacts, book titles, handouts etc. for the engagements you have planned.

Section V: What I Learned about Professional Development

- Each partner will include her own narrative about what she learned from the reading and research on this topic – a 2-3 page reflection (double spaced)

Section VI: References

**Academic Paper/Comprehensive Exam**

The first 7 multi-course requirements represent content themes of the M.Ed. in Language and Literacy. This paper will demonstrate what you have come to know about language and literacy across the M.Ed. Program. This paper will be a synthesis of the big ideas from all of the research and readings you have completed in this program.

For Step 1 of this paper, you will do a comprehensive list of all the books and articles you
have read throughout the program. For each book/article, you will outline the big ideas
the author shared. This will give you a framework for synthesizing the big ideas.

For Step 2, you will choose one of the 7 multi-course themes, review the literature
related to that theme, and provide an outline of the research in that area.

For Step 3, you will synthesize and evaluate the usefulness of this research and of the
research methodology. You will also make connections to and draw conclusions about
your professional beliefs and practices.

Workshop time will be regularly scheduled in class so you can get support for your
writing and your ideas. As well, you will have a conference with me to address questions
and concerns. We will have ongoing discussions about the paper. Average length of this
paper is 20-25 pages.

X. Bibliography

The foundational theory and research within this course is consistent with the beliefs,
theory and research in the South Carolina Language Arts Standards and the standards of
the International Reading Association. The following publications offer significant ideas
about the concepts discussed in this course.


11 of 13
Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
Collaborative Evaluation Rubric
EDRD 720

Course guidelines for grading: This course is a graded course using A, B, C, D, F. 90-100% is considered an A; 80 – 89% is considered a B; 70-79% is considered a C; 60-69% is considered a D; below 69% is considered an F. Students are required to conform to attendance guidelines. Students are required to complete all assignments thoroughly and professionally.

Three categories of engagement are part of this course evaluation:

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>Written Papers</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Name:____________________________________________
Social Security Number:______________________________
Date:  Mid ______________ End-of-Semester___________

Allocate Points in each Category

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Class Participation (15)</strong></td>
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<td>Attendance/Class Participation</td>
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<td>Class Log (5 pts)</td>
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<td><strong>Professional Development (60)</strong></td>
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<td>Double Entry Journal (15 pts)</td>
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<td>Parent Engagement Project (15 pts)</td>
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<td>Best Practices Video (15 pts)</td>
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<td>Professional Development Activity (15 pts)</td>
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<td><strong>Written Paper (25)</strong></td>
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<td>Academic Paper (Part 1 10 pts)</td>
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<td>Academic Paper (Part 2 15 pts)</td>
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<td><strong>Grade (possible 100 pts)</strong></td>
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** The attendance policy for this class is in accordance with the University of South Carolina attendance policy. Missing greater than 10% (4 hours) of the required 45 hours will result in failure of the course.

FINAL Grade for EDRD 720: __________