



**EDUC 697TP: Teacher Preparation and Support for Early Grade Reading
Online Course, Spring 2018, 3 Credits**

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Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the ways in which teachers can be prepared and supported to improve children's acquisition of reading skills in early grades. The goal is to prepare you to:

- Describe the background and context of early grade reading teachers in developing countries;
- Identify key skills needed to teach reading in developing countries;
- Understand the supports and motivations teachers need to change their behavior for successfully teaching reading skills in early grades;
- Learn about teachers' beliefs about children and their acquisition of reading.
- Understand the relevant theories of adult learning and how they can be applied in early grade reading teacher preparation activities;
- Know the different models of teacher preparation for early grade reading such as coaching, job-embedded professional development, pre-service and in-service training and so on;
- Find, read and analyze teacher development programs/activities related to early grade reading initiatives that have happened in your country or region;
- Engage with practitioners from around the world who are or will be involved in developing teachers' capacity for early grade reading;
- Design early grade reading teacher preparation programs/activities keeping in mind the contextual factors of developing countries.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explain early grade reading teachers' backgrounds and the context in which they work in developing countries;
- Articulate the qualities teachers need to possess in order to teach reading in developing countries, particularly in early grades;
- Describe how we can prepare teachers to successfully teach reading for promoting print and meaning-making skills;

- Describe how we can prepare teachers to teach reading in a multilingual context, including the difference in strategies needed for L1 (first language), L2 (second language) and the transition from L1 to L2;
- Explain teachers' belief about children and their reading acquisition;
- Articulate how we can support and motivate teachers to change their behavior for successfully teaching reading skills in early grades;
- Explain theories of adult learning and how these can be applied in designing early grade reading teacher preparation programs;
- Explain and critique different activities and models for early grade reading teacher preparation;
- Design early grade reading teacher preparation programs/activities keeping in mind the contextual factors of developing countries.

Topics and Methodology

The course will cover the following topics, across three categories:

1. Who are early grade reading teachers in developing countries?

- Characteristics of early grade reading teachers in developing countries
- Research on the competencies and dispositions early grade reading teachers need
- Teaching and assessing reading for print and meaning making skills and for first and second language acquisition and transition from first to second language
- Teachers' belief about children and their early grade reading

2. How teachers learn and change

- The nature of pre-service education for early grade reading teachers
- The nature of in-service education for early grade reading teachers
- Theories of adult learning and their relation to teacher preparation for early grade reading
- Different types and models of teacher preparation activities for early grade reading, including workshops, teacher learning circles, job-embedded pre-service (practica) and professional development
- Changing teacher behavior for early grade reading, including the role of on-going coaching and continuous support
- Assessing teacher change; accountability

3. Designing teacher preparation and support activities

- Designing teacher preparation activities for early grade reading teachers
- Role of context in determining the strategies for teacher preparation activities for early grade reading, including challenges to EGR teachers' recruitment, attendance, supervision and assessment

This course will combine elements of both theory and practice and, in doing so, will require participants to read literature, watch videos, and engage in a mix of individual and discussion activities. Our readings will be drawn from both scholarly journals and in-depth reports on early grade reading teacher learning, attendance and change. You

will use the readings to reflect upon, write and share the evolution of your thinking throughout the duration of the course.

Action research is integrated into this course. By practicing this methodology, you will develop a valuable skill and process that will support your decisions on how teacher development initiatives on early grade reading can be implemented in a specific context. This methodology will require you to seek out information beyond what has been assigned in the course, conduct analyses, design action plans, and then reflect upon and revise those plans. This process will occur multiple times during different timeframes but the cycle of inquiry will remain the same.

This is an online course. Students will primarily learn from the course materials provided online in modules, supplemented by course units that will emphasize, illustrate and/or demonstrate key principles from the key topics. Students will also engage in interactive learning through discussing course-related topics, viewing video lectures, and completing assignments designed to help students to personalize the material and see its relevance to their lives.

This online course structure is different in many ways from a course in a traditional classroom context, but most students find it to be an excellent way to learn. Online courses have certain advantages over classroom courses (e.g., flexibility), but there are some disadvantages as well (such as the need to be a self-starter and self-motivated). Taking an online course is therefore not an ideal option for everyone. Consider carefully whether this course is a good fit for your needs and abilities.

The assignments are cumulative but are divided up into smaller assignments throughout the course. I will assess each individual assignment, providing feedback that should inform your final project. The final project is a model for a teacher preparation and on-going support program design on early grade reading of a particular context.

Course Requirements

This course requires the active participation of all class members: reading and sharing feedback, helping others develop their ideas, and expressing your own thoughts in class activities.

- In order to take this course, you should dedicate at least 7 hours per week to reading, writing and posting to online discussion threads. For your participation to be helpful to everyone, it is essential that you follow the course schedule and complete the required readings and discussion posts/responses by the date required.
- Please let me know in advance if you will be traveling or expect to be unavailable for an extended period of time. I expect you to communicate with me when you are out of internet connection so as to minimize the impact of your absence.

- **Discussion posts/responses are due during the week that they are assigned;** discussion posts after that week will be neither useful to your classmates nor counted towards your participation in the course grading.
- All assignments are due when indicated. You should review all assignments at the beginning of the class to ensure that you allow enough time for each. Some assignments require you to contact people and so you should schedule these conversations in advance of these assignments.

Assignments and Grading

1. Full participation in online discussions and group work throughout the course		20 points
2. <u>Paper #1</u> : Action research and analysis of <i>teacher pre-service activities</i> related to early grade reading in your own context	Due March 9, 2018: upload to Blackboard	20 points
3. <u>Paper #2</u> : Action research and analysis of <i>teacher in-service/professional development activities</i> and on-going support related to early grade reading in your own context	Due March 30, 2018: upload to Blackboard	20 points
4. <u>Final paper or product</u> : A plan for <i>improving teacher preparation and support</i> in early grade reading in your own context	Due April 20, 2018: upload to Blackboard	40 points
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS		100
	Points	Grade
	94-100	A
	90-93	A-
	87-89	B+
	83-86	B
	80-82	B-
	77-79	C+
	73-76	C
	0-72	F

ALL PAPERS SHOULD BE SINGLE-SPACED and SUBMITTED through the appropriate link on the BLACKBOARD WEB SITE. I will not accept e-mailed copies of your assignments.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete course requirements within the allotted time because of severe medical or personal problems may request a grade of Incomplete from me **by the tenth week of the course**. Normally, incomplete grades are warranted only if a student is passing the course at the time of the request and if the

course requirements can be completed by the end of the following semester. If I grant you an incomplete, I will require, by the tenth week of the course, a one-page write-up from you including

1. A description of the work that remains to be completed,
2. A description of how you intend to complete the unfinished work, and
3. The date by which the work is to be completed.

Accommodation Statement

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services, you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. You can get more information on how to access Disability Services at <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>

Academic Honesty Statement

The Academic Honesty Policy was established to ensure that the learning environment at the university is honest and fair. The policy is designed to provide faculty and students with options for handling incidents. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- Cheating - intentional use or attempted use of trickery or deception in one's academic work
- Fabrication - intentional falsification and/or invention of any information or citation
- Plagiarism - knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own work
- Facilitating dishonesty - knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty

The Academic Honesty Board handles all cases of academic dishonesty on campus. Formal definitions of academic dishonesty, examples of various forms of dishonesty, and the procedures which faculty must follow to penalize dishonesty are contained in the Academic Honesty Policy. There are two main pathways for resolving cases where dishonesty is suspected: the informal resolution and the formal charge. Both these paths require that the faculty member first inform the student of the concern and offer a meeting. <http://www.umass.edu/honesty/>.

All readings are posted on the Blackboard course website. **Unless otherwise noted, read the whole article or document.**

Week	Category	Topic	Readings to do	Assignments Due
Preview Week of January 15		Introduction to Blackboard	<p>*If you have not yet been introduced to the five components of reading, please read this article BEFORE the class starts next week:</p> <p>Comings, J. (2015). An evidence-based model for early-grade reading programmes. <i>Prospects</i>, 45(2), 167-180</p>	<p>Introduce yourself</p> <p>Watch welcome video</p> <p>Read syllabus</p>
1 Week of January 22	<i>Introduction</i>	Course Overview	<p>UNESCO. (2015). <i>Investing in teachers is investing in learning: A prerequisite for the transformative power of education</i>. Background paper for the Oslo Summit on Education for Development, pp. 1-14 #EduSummit Oslo</p> <p>Kruijer, H. (2010). <i>Learning How to Teach: The upgrading of unqualified primary teachers in sub-Saharan Africa</i>. Belgium: Education International. Read only Chapter 1 and 2 (pp. 19-37), and also read ONE of the three case studies (Tanzania, Malawi OR Nigeria).</p> <p>UNESCO. (2013). Addressing the crisis in early grade teaching. Education for All Global Monitoring Report.</p>	<p>Watch video lecture</p> <p>Post and respond to weekly discussion question</p>
2 Week of Jan 29	<i>Who are early grade reading teachers in developing countries?</i>	Characteristics of early grade reading teachers in developing countries	<p>UNESCO. (2014). A four-part strategy for providing the best teachers. Chapter 6 in <i>Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All</i>; EFA Global Monitoring Report Paris, UNESCO, Read pp. 230-270.</p> <p>Bennel, P., & Akyeampong, K. <i>Teacher motivation in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia</i>. Read only Executive Summary, pp. 3-20, and pp. 25-46.</p>	<p>Watch video lecture</p> <p>Post and respond to weekly discussion question</p>

Week	Category	Topic	Readings to do	Assignments Due
3 Week of Feb 5		Teacher competencies, dispositions, and beliefs	International Reading Association. Standards for reading professionals-revised 2010, 7 pps. Reading Instruction Competence Assessment. Skim only. Summary of John Hattie's book, <i>Visible Learning for Teachers</i>	Post and respond to weekly discussion question
4 Week of Feb 12	<i>How teachers learn and change</i>	Teaching and assessing reading for print and meaning making skills and for transition from first to second language	Kim, Y.-S. G., Boyle, H. N., Zuilkowski, S. S., & Nakamura, P. (2016). <i>Landscape Report on Early Grade Literacy</i> . Washington, D.C.: USAID. Read only Chapter 3 (pp. 17-42), and Chapter 4, Sections A and B, (pp. 43-57).	Watch video lecture Post and respond to weekly discussion question
5 Week of Feb 19		The nature of pre-service education for early grade reading teachers	Akyeampong, K., Pryor, J., Westbrook, J., & Lussier, K. (2011). <i>Teacher preparation and continuing professional development in Africa: Learning to teach early reading and mathematics</i> . Read only pp. 13-36. Stuart, J., Akyeampong, K., & Croft, A. Design and development of teacher education programs. In <i>Key issues in teacher education: A sourcebook for teacher educators in developing countries</i> . Macmillan. Read only pp. 121-136. Du Plessis, J. and Muzaffar, I. (2010). <i>Professional Learning Communities in the Teachers' College: A Resource for Teacher Educators</i> . Washington, DC: USAID.	Watch video lecture Post and respond to weekly discussion question
6 Week of Feb 26		Theories of adult learning and their relation to teacher preparation	Sierra Training Associates. <i>Adult learning theories and practices, pp. 1-8.</i> Westbrook, et al. (2013). <i>Pedagogy, curriculum, teaching practices and teacher education in developing countries</i> . Final Report. Education Rigorous Literature	No discussion this week; work on first assignment

Week	Category	Topic	Readings to do	Assignments Due
			Review. UK: Department for International Development, pp. 1-69.	
7 Week of March 5	<i>How teachers learn and change</i>	The nature of in-service education/professional development	Akyeampong, K., Pryor, J., Westbrook, J, & Lussier, K. (2011). <i>Teacher preparation and continuing professional development in Africa: Learning to teach early reading and mathematics</i> . Read only pp. 50-73. Smith, C. and Gillespie, M. (2007). <i>Research on Professional Development and Teacher Change: Implications for Adult Basic Education</i> . Read only pp. 213-234	Paper 1: Action research and analysis of teacher pre-service activities related to early grade reading in your own context <u>DUE Friday, March 9: upload on Blackboard</u>
8 Week of March 12		What is teacher learning and change?	Opfer, V.D. & Pedder, D. (2011). Conceptualizing Teacher Professional Learning. <i>Review of Educational Research</i> , 81(3), 376-407 Hattie. Chapter 3, Why Can't They Change? Read only pp. 49-53.	Watch video lecture Post and respond to weekly discussion question
9 Week of March 19		Models of in-service teacher preparation activities, including workshops, teacher learning circles, job-embedded pre-service (practica) and professional development	Dubeck, M. et al. (2015). Designing a program of teacher professional development to support beginning reading acquisition in coastal Kenya. <i>International Journal of Educational Development</i> , 41, 88-96. Kipp, S. (2017). Low-cost, familiar tech for teacher support: Evidence from a SMS campaign for early grade teachers in Malawi. RTI: Powerpoint.	Watch video lecture No discussion this week; work on Paper #2 instead
10 Week of March 26		Coaching for early grade reading teachers	Bean, R.M. <i>The Power of Coaching: Improving Early Grade Reading Instruction in Developing Countries</i> . Read pp. 1-40 Piper, B. and Zuilkowski, S. S. (2015). Teacher coaching in Kenya: Examining instructional support in public and nonformal schools. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i> , 47, 173-183	Paper 2: Analysis of teacher in-service/professional development activities and on-going support related to early grade reading in your own context <u>DUE Friday, March 30: upload</u>

Week	Category	Topic	Readings to do	Assignments Due
			Teacher Coaching in Kenya (powerpoint, USAID)	<u>to Blackboard</u>
11 Week of April 2	<i>Designing teacher preparation and support activities</i>	Designing teacher preparation activities for early grade reading teachers	Concerns-based model of teacher change (powerpoint, USAID) Comings, J. <i>Reading Teacher Training</i> . (Draft)	Post and respond to weekly discussion question
		Accountability	UNESCO, Global Education Report, 2017/18. Read only Chapter 4 SCOPE Literacy (observation protocol).	
12 Week of April 9		Role of context in determining the strategies for teacher preparation activities for early grade reading, including challenges to EGR teachers' recruitment, attendance, supervision and assessment	Naylor, R. and Sayed, Y. (2014). <i>Teacher quality: evidence review</i> . Commonwealth of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Burns, M. and Lawrie, J. (eds). (2015). <i>Where It's Needed Most: Quality Professional Development for All Teachers</i> . New York, NY: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. (Read pp. 15-35 , skim the rest).	Final paper or product: A plan for improving teacher preparation and support in early grade reading in your own context <u>DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 20: upload to Moodle</u>