

**MS ED 424—Critical Issues in Literacy**  
**TeachEd 324—Critical Issues in Literacy**  
**Tuesdays, 6:00-9:00 p.m. Annenberg 101**

Northwestern University/Spring Quarter, 2022

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**Please note that as a CPS teacher, I won't be able to respond to emails between 8 am and 3:15 pm. I do, however, check my personal email and respond promptly to questions at all other times. If you need to communicate with me during the day--if for example, you will be late or absent--please just text me.)**

**Course Description:** SESP has adopted our new Guiding Commitments statement, which can be found at the end of this syllabus. The result of many conversations over many months, our Guiding Commitments document is a thoughtful and exciting description of excellent teaching at this time in our history. Its four components--social justice, subject matter sense-making, learning and human development, and community--now provide the framework for all of our work in SESP. Within that framework, using political, psychological, aesthetic, and sociological lenses, this course will deal with the interaction between current theory and practice in literacy education across the curriculum. Topics to be explored in the course will include why we teach literature, how we teach writing, and how language interacts with other literacy strands. In addition, we will look at assessment, skills acquisition, and the transformative effects of technology on literacy. Through these and other topics we will examine four major critical strands in education as they apply to literacy:

1. social justice (which relates to both social justice and community),
2. aesthetics (which falls under subject-matter sense-making),
3. cognition (which relates to learning), and
4. social-emotional interaction with curriculum (which relates to human development).

Of course I'm open to including other topics for discussion. In addition, one important aspect of the course will be providing a collection of professional topics and resources which may be useful especially to graduate students. Students are encouraged to discuss possible topics and resources in class and with each other.

This course helps to prepare students for Illinois state teaching licensure as well as the internship/student teaching phase of teacher education at Northwestern.

#### **Course Goals:**

- To acquaint students with some of the major critical issues in literacy in contemporary education
- To link theory and practice in literacy education
- To co-create a community of learners who explore and analyze their own literacy as a means of understanding how literacy works
- To provide students with resources to help them create challenging and meaningful literacy experiences for their K-12 students

#### **Important Documents**

**The Illinois State Board of Education Professional Teaching Standards, the Common Core State Standards, the Illinois State Board of Education Social and Emotional Learning Performance Descriptors, the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association Standards for the English Language Arts:**

These documents are intrinsic to Northwestern's work in preparing teachers. Below please find the following documents:

Illinois Professional Teaching Standards

NU SESP Guiding Commitments

#### **ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (2013)**

Standard 1 - Teaching Diverse Students – The competent teacher understands the diverse characteristics and abilities of each student and how individuals develop and learn within the context of their social, economic, cultural, linguistic, and academic experiences. The teacher uses these experiences to create instructional opportunities that maximize student learning.

Standard 2 - Content Area and Pedagogical Knowledge – The competent teacher has in-depth understanding of content area knowledge that includes central concepts, methods of inquiry, structures of the disciplines, and content area literacy. The teacher creates meaningful learning experiences for each student based upon interactions among content area and pedagogical knowledge, and evidence-based practice.

Standard 3 - Planning for Differentiated Instruction – The competent teacher plans and designs instruction based on content area knowledge, diverse student characteristics, student performance data, curriculum goals, and the community context. The teacher plans for ongoing student growth and achievement.

Standard 4 - Learning Environment – The competent teacher structures a safe and healthy learning environment that facilitates cultural and linguistic responsiveness, emotional well-being, self-efficacy, positive social interaction, mutual respect, active engagement, academic risk-taking, self-motivation, and personal goal-setting.

Standard 5 - Instructional Delivery – The competent teacher differentiates instruction by using a variety of strategies that support critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and continuous growth and learning. This teacher understands that the classroom is a dynamic environment requiring ongoing modification of instruction to enhance learning for each student.

Standard 6 - Reading, Writing, and Oral Communication – The competent teacher has foundational knowledge of reading, writing, and oral communication within the content area and recognizes and addresses student reading, writing, and oral communication needs to facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge.

Standard 7 - Assessment – The competent teacher understands and uses appropriate formative and summative assessments for determining student needs, monitoring student progress, measuring student growth, and evaluating student outcomes. The teacher makes decisions driven by data about curricular and instructional effectiveness and adjusts practices to meet the needs of each student.

Standard 8 - Collaborative Relationships – The competent teacher builds and maintains collaborative relationships to foster cognitive, linguistic, physical, and social and emotional development. This teacher works as a team member with professional colleagues, students, parents or guardians, and community members.

Standard 9 - Professionalism, Leadership, and Advocacy – The competent teacher is an ethical and reflective practitioner who exhibits professionalism; provides leadership in the learning community; and advocates for students, parents or guardians, and the profession.

Please download the following material from the ISBE and NCTE websites:

the ISBE Social Emotional Learning Performance Descriptors

[http://www.isbe.net/ils/social\\_emotional/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm)

the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts Standards (for K-12 students)

[http://www.isbe.net/COMMON\\_CORE/pls/level1/pdf/ela-standards.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/COMMON_CORE/pls/level1/pdf/ela-standards.pdf)

the National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association

Standards for the English Language Arts <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>

#### **Attendance Policy for This Class:**

**General University Policy Statement on Attendance:** Active attendance and participation in the class is [sic] required. If you must miss a class session for any reason, please contact the instructor in advance. When missing a class, you should expect to make up the missed instructional minutes by completing any missed assignments or engaging in alternative activities as assigned by the instructor. Absences or tardiness may result in a lower course grade. With three or more absences, you may be unable to complete the class.

**My Statement about Attendance:** If you are going to be absent from class, you must leave me an email at [ddbogpbrightwords@ameritech.net](mailto:ddbogpbrightwords@ameritech.net) or text me at 773 759-5876 as soon as possible. Your absence changes the dynamic of the class for the rest of us, and this is not the kind of course in which you can simply get the notes from someone else. Rather, we create the learning experience together during our time on Tuesday evenings. As a general guideline, if you miss more than two sessions, you and I will discuss the situation with your adviser. Let's be sure we are always communicating..

### **Electronics Guidelines for This Class**

As a part of your participation during our class sessions, I am formally asking you not to use your laptop or use your phone for anything other than a class activity which requires that access. Following this guideline will help us to be genuinely present with each other as we discuss the important literacy issues we will consider.

I do not plan to record any sessions of this class. Furthermore, as detailed in notifications to faculty, *[u]nauthorized student recording of classroom or other academic activities (including advising sessions or office hours) is prohibited. Unauthorized recording is unethical and may also be a violation of University policy and state law. Students requesting the use of assistive technology as an accommodation should contact AccessibleNU. Unauthorized use of classroom recordings — including distributing or posting them — is also prohibited. Under the University's Copyright Policy, faculty own the copyright to instructional materials — including those resources created specifically for the purposes of instruction, such as syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, and presentations. Students cannot copy, reproduce, display or distribute these materials. Students who engage in unauthorized recording, unauthorized use of a recording or unauthorized distribution of instructional materials will be referred to the appropriate University office for follow-up.*

### **School of Education and Social Policy—Academic Integrity Statement**

Students in this course are required to comply with the policies found in the booklet, "Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic Guide." All papers submitted for credit in this course must be submitted electronically unless otherwise instructed by the professor. Your written work may be tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern or to download the guide, visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/index.html>.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Please also note that as a prospective teacher, you must model accurate reading, clear writing, and persuasive speech. (By the way, your pieces of original writing are a particularly good opportunity to demonstrate your thorough mastery of IPTS 1E.) If your literacy skills need work, consult your adviser. If I notice deficiencies I will discuss them with you and your adviser.

\*The following note is intended for students who are or plan to become English teachers. If you will be teaching another discipline, let's confer about your professional organization's comparable resources.

**The texts listed for this course represent an excellent foundation for your professional library as English/Language Arts teachers. While we will not read all sections of all texts, they are resources for all the domains of literacy and will provide valuable material for you in the future. Professional articles are available on the NCTE website or elsewhere as noted. As listed in each week's readings, *EJ* refers to the *English Journal*, *VM* to *Voices from the Middle*.**

**Please note that you are required to show evidence of your membership in the National Council of Teachers of English or whichever professional organization is most appropriate for your academic discipline. If you are not already a member, go to the NCTE Website and start the process as soon as possible. There is a student rate.**

Very important note: Because the ISBE Professional Teaching Standards, the ISBE SEL Standards, and the NU Guiding Commitments are so central to our work and because so much of your professional work in the future is likely to be based on them, each class session includes references to specific goals from all of these documents. The craft of teaching requires its practitioners to keep all of these visions and standards in mind simultaneously, and to approach each act of teaching with both a critical and a creative eye. You may have other goals for your students in connection with your Practical Theory Assignments. If so, feel free to add them there.

### **Course Grades:**

I'd like us to think in terms of assessment for this course, rather than grades. Assessment at the middle and secondary school level is rich and complex. So, too, is the assessment that we will use during this course. We will raise issues surrounding issues of grading and assessment, in order to provide you with an awareness of the basic challenges of evaluation when you begin your career as a teacher. We will then design a general rubric that will incorporate your own self-evaluation and your instructor's feedback and responses to your progress.

**Assignments:** You should prepare for class by reading the selections listed for each date and responding with a Canvas Discussion Posting (also called a PTA: Practical Theory Assignment) to each reading listed. **Your response must be posted by 6 PM on Monday evening at the very latest.** These may be referred to in class, and discussion will focus on how literacy learning evolves from them. Please note that it will not always be possible for us to discuss the readings in detail, but they will be useful for your professional growth nonetheless. The more professional literature you read, the deeper your pedagogical repertoire becomes. We will be using the Canvas platform for submission of work in this course. Remember to be discreet, professional, and prudent. Assume that anything you post in Canvas might one day end up as a document available for your students, their parents, the general public, or a potential employer to read. Please note that I am under no obligation to accept or grade late work. For our last class on June 7, please be sure you can access all electronic copies of the assignments (discussions, etc.) you have done for this class and any required revisions you have done. We will use this body of work for self-assessment and for instructor assessment of your work.

**Coordination with Assignments from other classes:** On the first evening of our class, I will ask what other courses you are taking this term so that we can work together on some coordination among these experiences for you if possible.

### Required Full Length Print Texts:

Author, Title, Publisher	ISBN	Retail Price
1. Baker-Bell, A. (2020) <i>Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy</i> . Urbana, IL: NCTE	978-1138551022	\$34.99
2. Hicks, T. (2017) <i>Argument in the Real World</i> . Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann	978-0325086750	\$27.50
3. Muhammad, G. (2020) <i>Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy</i> . New York: Scholastic	978-1338594898	\$14.25
4. Ortmeier-Hooper, C. (2017) <i>Writing across Culture and Language</i> . Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English	978-0814158531	\$21.99
5. Rubenstein, S. (2018) <i>Speak for Yourself: Writing with Voice</i> . Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English	978-0814146149	\$21.99
8. Wilhelm, J. and Novak, B. (2011) <i>Teaching Literacy for Love and Wisdom</i> . New York: Teachers College Press	978-0807752364	\$26.20

### Articles to Choose from:

(Please note that all these journals are easily available through our NU library system.)

- Boyd, A. (2019) Welcoming Discussions of Gender Identity in Public Schools. *English Journal*, 108.4: 88-90
- DeStigter, T. (2016) Welcoming Back the Trees: Why Everything Is Not an Argument. *English Journal* 105:6:97-100
- During, S. (2019) Losing Faith in the Humanities: The decline of religion and the decline of the study of culture are part of the same big story. The Chronicle of Higher Education. *Chronicle Review*. Endgame issue 2020. December 18 2019
- Ehrenworth, M. (2017) Why Argue? *Educational Leadership* 74: 35 ff
- Everett, S. (2018) "Untold Stories": Cultivating consequential writing with a Black male student through a critical approach to metaphor. *Research in the Teaching of English* (53:1)
- Ferrero, D. (2020) Dethroning literature: Print privilege, possibility. *English Journal* (110:2:19-21) November 2020
- Heller, R. (2019) What is English? Who decides? An interview with Lisa Scherff. *Kappan* 100:6  
<https://www.kappanonline.org/english-curriculum-who-decides-interview-scherff-heller>
- Johnson, L. (2018) Where do we go from here? Toward a Critical Race English Education. *Research in the Teaching of English* 53:2: 102-124
- Lacy, A. (2019) Starting with Students: A Framework for High School Reading. *English Journal*, 108.4:17-20
- Lai, T. (2019) From Awkward to Still Awkward But More Chill. *English Journal*, 108.4 :108-109
- LeBlanc, R. (2014) Literacy lessons: The politics of "Basics First." *English Journal* 103:4: 107-111
- Lemov, D. (2017) How Knowledge Powers Reading. *Educational Leadership* 74:5 (2017):10-16 itics of "Basics First." *English Journal*
- McConnel, L. Metaphors for literacy: Making space for layered perspectives about writing. (2020). *English Journal* 110:2: 85-91

- Miller, C. (2016) Bishop Ampleforth is Not a Pawn. *English Education* 48:2:177-184
- Murphy, J. (2021) Notes from an Average Teacher. *Kappan* 102:7: 58-59
- Nguyen, V. (2020) The Post-Trump Future of Literature. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/opinion/fiction-poetry-trump.html>
- Pindyck, M. (2015) White abjections: Language and feeling in an urban classroom. *English Education* 48:1:72-81
- Sincoff, M. (2016) Writing as Relationship. *English Journal*, 105: 3: 75-80
- Warren, J. (2010) Taming the Warrant in Toulmin's Model of Argument. *English Journal* 99:6: 41-46
- Wessling, S. (2018) Their Words, Your Voice. *Voices from the Middle* 26:2: 42-45
- Zhao, Y. (2020) Another education war? The coming debates over social and emotional learning. *Kappan* 101:8  
<https://kappanonline.org/another-education-war-social-emotional-learning-debates-zhao/>

Two back issues of professional publications may be particularly useful to us as we proceed through this course: the January 2016 issue of *English Journal* and the February 2017 issue of *Educational Leadership*. I recommend them to you; both concern issues in contemporary literacy education.

### **Resources You May Find Useful--some of these are optional readings for class; others are simply sources which may help with your Puzzle:**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Curriculum and Assessment Framework: an NCTE Position Paper.  
<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/21stcentframework>

A Report of the NCTE Review Team on the July 2009 Draft of the Common Core English Language Arts State Standards  
[http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Standards/Report\\_CoreStds\\_9-09.pdf](http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Standards/Report_CoreStds_9-09.pdf)

Aspen Institute. From a Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope.  
[http://nationathope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018\\_aspen\\_final-report\\_full\\_webversion.pdf](http://nationathope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018_aspen_final-report_full_webversion.pdf)

Beers, K. The Genteel Unteaching of America's Poor. A Report from NCTE.  
<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Press/Beers.pdf>

Harste, Jerome. The Art of Learning to Be Critically Literate. *Language Arts* 92:2 November 2014  
<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/LA/0922-nov2014/LA0922Art.pdf>

NCTE. The NCTE Definition of 21st Century Literacies.  
<http://www2.ncte.org/statement/21stcentdefinition/>

NCTE. Resolution on the Student's Right to Incorporate Heritage and Home Languages in Writing.  
<http://www2.ncte.org/statement/homelanguages/>

### **Recommended Texts and Other Possibilities:\***

- Delpit, L., ed. (2019). *Teaching When the World Is on Fire*. New York: New Press
- Handsfield, L. (2016) *Literacy Theory as Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hicks, T., ed. (2015) *Assessing Students' Digital Writing*. New York: Teachers College Press
- Hyder, J. and Hicks, T. (2014) *Create, Compose, Connect!: Reading, Writing, and Learning with Digital Tools*. New York: Routledge
- Kirby, D. and others. (2004) *Inside Out*, third edition. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- Newkirk, T. (2014) *Minds Made for Stories*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- \*Ray, M. (2019) *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Stenhouse
- Yancey, K. B. Writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Report from NCTE.  
[http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Press/Yancey\\_final.pdf](http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Press/Yancey_final.pdf)

**Session 1: Tuesday, April 5: IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; ISBE SEL 1BC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; NUGC VI, 5; SJ 1, 3, 4, 6; SM 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; LHD 2; C 1, 7, 9**

Opening image: We will begin class by looking at two images and discussing what kinds of literacy we need to help us understand them. (How do current events interact with literacy? How does they interact with the literacy strands we are discussing in this course?)

New Yorker cover September 21 2021: <https://condenaststore.com/featured/learning-curve-barry-blitt.html>

New Yorker cover March 21 2022: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/03/21>

Four strands: In class we will do some freewriting about the critical issues or strands we will be working with, including social justice, social-emotional learning, aesthetics, and cognitive skills. How is each of these a critical issue in literacy education?

**First in-class reading for this evening:**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2022/04/pandemic-politics-public-schools/622824/>

**In-class reading for Tuesday, April 5:**

Heller, R. (2019) What is English? Who decides? An interview with Lisa Scherff. *Kappan* 100:6  
<https://www.kappanonline.org/english-curriculum-who-decides-interview-scherff-heller>

Murphy, J. (2021) Notes from an Average Teacher *Kappan* 102:7: 58-59  
and

Chaves, S. (2021) I Hid My Personal Life from My Students.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/03/11/zoom-teaching-school-personal-connection/>

(What critical issues do the above artifacts bring to the surface for you?)

Now a values-centered question: What kind of teacher do you want to be?

How do you envision this course helping you work toward good literacy experiences for students?

Quick Survey on Your Other Coursework and Your Books

TWL on Critical Issues in Literacy

Expectations, Course Outline—Anything that turns up on the list we will generate tonight that isn't in the course outline will be considered seriously for possible inclusion.

Assessment and Grading: how will you and I know that you are learning these things? What kinds of assessment will be most helpful to you and to Northwestern? We will discuss this question in class over the next two evenings.

**Session 2: Tuesday, April 12: Issue: Social Justice, Part 1 ISBE SEL 1BC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; NUGC SJ 1, 2, 5; SM 1, 6; LHD 2; C4, 9.**

How does social justice interact with literacy and literacy education? We will begin to examine dialects and registers and view a clip from *Do You Speak American?*

**Readings for Tuesday, April 12:**

CCCC Statement on Ebonics. <http://www2.ncte.org/statement/ebonics/>

Baker-Bell, A. (2020) *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*.  
Urbana, IL: NCTE

Beers, K. The Genteel Unteaching of America's Poor. A Report from NCTE.  
<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Press/Beers.pdf>

(Choose an article from the list below.)

Boyd, A. (2019) Welcoming Discussions of Gender Identity in Public Schools. *English Journal*, 108.4: 88-90

Johnson, L. (2018) Where do we go from here? Toward a Critical Race English Education. *Research in the Teaching of English* 53:2.: 102-124

NCTE. Resolution on the Student's Right to Incorporate Heritage and Home Languages  
in Writing <http://www2.ncte.org/statement/homelanguages/>

**Practical Theory Assignment 1; Discussion Posting Due Monday, April 11:** Consider carefully the social and linguistic issues which appear in this week's readings. Explain how code-meshing vs. code-switching might work in academic situations in which you have participated.

**Session 4: Tuesday, April 19: Issue: Social Justice, Part 2 ISBE IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; NCTE 1, 2, 8, 11,12; NUGC SJ 1, 2, 5; SM 1, 6; LHD 2; C4, 9.**

How do issues of social justice and aesthetics interact for students?

**Readings for Tuesday, April 19:**

Muhammad, G. (2020) *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically*

*Responsive*

*Literacy*. New York: Scholastic

(Choose an article or two from the list below.)

Everett, S. (2018) "Untold Stories": Cultivating consequential writing with a Black male student through a critical approach to metaphor. *Research in the Teaching of English* (53:1) August 2018

Lacy, A. (2019) Starting with Students: A Framework for High School Reading. *English Journal*, 108.4:17-20

Lai, T. (2019) From Awkward to Still Awkward But More Chill. *English Journal*, 108.4:108-109

Nguyen, V. (2020) The Post-Trump Future of Literature.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/opinion/fiction-poetry-trump.html>

Pindyck, M. (2015) White abjections: Language and feeling in an urban classroom. *English Education* 48:1: 72-81

Van Vaerenwyck, L. (2017) Aesthetic Readings of Diverse Global Literary Narratives for Social Justice. *English Journal* 107:1: 61-65 neurobiology of empathic reading

**Practical Theory Assignment 2; Discussion Posting Due Monday, April 18:** Choose an idea from this week's readings and relate it to your preprofessional education in literature, speech, or writing. Think about how these strands of literacy were taught to various students in your high school.

In class this evening we will do some informal writing using a mimetic text you read in high school and the questions below. Then we will discuss what we learn from the process.

Good questions for teaching mimetic texts from *Teaching Tolerance*, copied July 13 2020:

1. Describe the text. what is happening? Who is taking action? What are they doing?
2. Who in this text has power? How can you tell?
3. Is there unfairness or injustice? How can you tell?
4. What assumptions, misinformation, or biases might be used to justify this injustice?
5. Who benefits from these assumptions, misinformation, or biases? Who suffers from them?
6. What about this text do you think will surprise most readers (viewers, listeners)? Did it surprise you? Why?
7. What would justice or fairness look like in this text?
8. How can you relate this text to a critical topic (like gender bias, ableism, anti-immigrant sentiment, religious bias, or anti-LGBTQ persecution)?
9. How can you relate this text to your own experience or community?

**Session 4: Tuesday, April 26: Technology, Literacy, and Pedagogy with guest speaker John Colucci IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; SEL 1BC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; NUGC SJ5, 6; SM 2, 4, 5; LHD 5; C 3, 4, 5, 8.**

We will discuss in class some of the effects of technology on literacy, especially in response to Covid. Our guest speaker is a middle school teacher in the Oak Park public schools and an NU/SESP alum.

**Readings for Tuesday, April 26:**

Begin reading Rubenstein, S. (2018) *Speak for Yourself: Writing with Voice*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English

<http://www2.ncte.org/statement/21stcentdefinition/>

<https://www.wbez.org/shows/wbez-news/in-some-communities-less-than-60-of-households-have-internet-cps-new-plan-cant-change-that/09960c93-0a87-4ea9-b5bd-b70d5900de75>

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-04-03-what-will-k-12-schools-look-like-post-coronavirus>

**Practical Theory Assignment 3: Discussion Posting Due Monday, April 25:** What critical issues do the above articles bring to the surface for you? How has Covid changed what we mean by literacy education., particularly with respect to technology?

**Session 5: Tuesday, May 3: Issue: Aesthetics, Part 1--Reading.** ISBE IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; NCTE 4, 6, 9, 11, 12; ISBE SEL 1ABC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; **NUGC SJ 2, 4; SM 1, 2, 4, 6, 8; LHD 2; C 4, 7**

In class we will read a short story, possibly: "The Ravine" by Ray Bradbury  
[https://archive.org/stream/RayBradburyDandelionWine/Ray\\_Bradbury\\_-\\_Dandelion\\_wine\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/RayBradburyDandelionWine/Ray_Bradbury_-_Dandelion_wine_djvu.txt)  
 beginning at ZsAiSa 28

Then we will analyze some student responses to that text.

**Readings for Tuesday, May 3:**

Wilhelm, J. and Novak, B. (2011) *Teaching Literacy for Love and Wisdom*. New York: Teachers College Press--  
 (Begin reading this classic book on literature and the classroom.)

excerpt from *Overcoming Literary Whiteness* distributed in class

(Choose an article or two from the list below.)

During, S. (2019) Losing Faith in the Humanities: The decline of religion and the decline of the study of culture are part of the same big story. *The Chronicle of Higher Education. Chronicle Review*. Endgame issue 2020. December 18 2019

Lemov, D. (2017) How Knowledge Powers Reading. *Educational Leadership* 74:5:10-16

Nguyen, V. (2020) The Post-Trump Future of Literature.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/opinion/fiction-poetry-trump.html>

Wessling, S. (2018) Their Words, Your Voice. *Voices from the Middle* 26:2: 42-45

**Practical Theory Assignment 4: Discussion Posting Due Monday, May 2:** Choose an idea from Wilhelm and Novak (which is filled with many specific pedagogical suggestions), and write a three-page (minimum) letter of specific advice to yourself for use in your own classroom. How will you enact your values as discussed in either of these sources? What resources would you need? You are of course free to disagree with your source; write your advice from your perspective anyway.

**Session 6: Tuesday, May 10: Issue: Aesthetics, Part 2--Writing:** ISBE IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; NCTE 1, 8, 11, 12; ISBE SEL 1ABC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; **NUGC SJ 1, 2, 4; SM 1, 3, 4, 6; LHD 2, 5; C 1, 3**

**No new reading assigned for Tuesday, May 10:** This evening will focus on writing workshop. We will experiment with a workshop format and various genres of composing. Then we will discuss how these genres and formats can work in classrooms. We may use our literacy autobiography as a source for in class writing in a different genre.

**Assignment Due Tuesday, May 10:** (Note that this week's assignment is not due until the beginning of class on Tuesday.) Your Literacy Autobiography. See end of this syllabus for details.

**Session 7: Tuesday, May 17: Issue: Social-Emotional Learning, Part 1:** ISBE IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; NCTE 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12; ISBE SEL 1ABC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; **NUGC SJ 1, 2, 5, 6; SM 3, 4, 7; LHD 1, 2, 3; C3**

**Readings in Class:**

Miller, C. (2016) Bishop Ampleforth is Not a Pawn. *English Education* 48:2 :177-184

Dickens excerpt linked in class

We will watch a video of Cris Tovani in action via YouTube.

**Readings for Tuesday, May 17:**

Finish Rubenstein.

Finish Wilhelm and Novak.

Sincoff, M. (2016) Writing as Relationship. *English Journal*, 105: 3: 75-80

Zhao, Y. (2020) Another education war? The coming debates over social and emotional learning. *Kappan* 101:8

<https://kappanonline.org/another-education-war-social-emotional-learning-debates-zhao/>

**Practical Theory Assignment 5: Discussion Posting Due Monday, May 16:** Discuss how you see the necessarily delicate balance in the teaching of writing between providing enough support for young writers and imposing a stultifying formula on their writing voices. Use examples from your own previous experience or those of peers or students you have tutored. (You may also have included this question in your literacy autobiography if it came up.)

**Session 8: Tuesday, May 24--Blending Social Justice, Technological, Aesthetic, and Social-Emotional Issues--Arguing Ourselves into a Corner: The Uses and Limits of Argument in Discourse IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; NCTE 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12; ISBE SEL 1ABC, 2ABCD, 3ABC; NUGC SJ, SM, HDL, C**

**Readings for Tuesday, May 24:**

Hicks, T. (2017) *Argument in the Real World*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Ortmeier-Hooper, C. (2017) *Writing across Culture and Language*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English. --read carefully but quickly.

DeStigter, T. Welcoming Back the Trees: Why Everything Is Not an Argument. *English Journal* 105:6 (2016): 97–100

Ehrenworth, M. (2017) Why Argue? *Educational Leadership* 74:5: 35 ff

Warren, J. (2010) Taming the Warrant in Toulmin's Model of Argument. *English Journal* 99:6: 41–46

**Writing Assignment Due Tuesday, May 24:** Critically examine the list of debate topics included on p. 38 of the Ehrenworth article. (Note the intellectual limitations imposed by the requirement of constructing a simple pro or con argument on any of these topics.) Try one of the prompts and spend half an hour or so writing in response to it. Post it and bring it to class on paper for consideration this week.

**Session 9: Tuesday, May 30: Issue: Social-Emotional Learning, Part 2: SEL 1ABC, 2ABCD, 3ABC and Puzzle Sharing (Specific Standards depend on the topic of your Puzzle.): IPTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; NCTE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 87, 9, 10, 11, 12; NUGC SJ, SM, HDL, C**

**Readings:** your puzzle sources

**Discussion Posting Due:** preliminary progress report on your puzzle.

The Puzzle is due June 11.

**Self-Evaluations – (in class) – These self-evaluations will be based upon the 2013 ISBE IPTS and SEL Standards**

### List of Assignments for This Course

1. Completion of **reading** assignments with **Practical Theory Discussion Postings/Canvas postings** and **informed participation** in discussions. Due each week as assigned.
2. Completion of a **Teaching Portfolio which includes a Puzzle**: Over the course of this term, accumulate a portfolio with two sections: One (labeled the **Plus** section) will be general teaching ideas you run across and do not want to lose or forget. In the other section you identify and follow a **Puzzle** throughout the course—that is, a problem or question in the teaching of literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening) that you spend time pursuing, perhaps modify, and think about throughout the class. Your task for the Puzzle as for the general section is to accumulate five or ten resources, not to write a lengthy research paper. Put the resources into a form you can use--one paragraph each. On May 30 we will devote a class session to completing our assembly of these resources, matching this portfolio with IPTS and NCTE Standards and composing a short section on this **Puzzle** with a tentative conclusion clearly marked. You are welcome to share resources on this project. Due date to be discussed.
3. Completion of your **Literacy Autobiography** reflecting the critical issues in literacy we have discussed this term. Due Tuesday, May 10.
4. Prompt completion and submission of the **in-class pieces** assigned throughout the term
5. **Final Assessment**

Chart of Assignments and Due Dates

Date Due-- the evening before class except for May 10 and May 24.	Topic	Possible Critical Issue	Type
4/11 posted	Language and social justice	Social justice, social emotional learning, cognitive skills	Practical Theory Discussion Posting 1
4/18 posted	Literature and social justice	Social justice, aesthetics	Practical Theory Discussion Posting 2
4/25 posted	Implications of Covid, and of technology	Technology, social justice, aesthetics, social emotional learning	Practical Theory Discussion Posting 3
5/2 posted	Literature, literacy and the Common Core	Aesthetics, social emotional learning, cognitive skills	Practical Theory Discussion Posting 4
5/10 Bring to class.	A multidimensional look at critical issues	All of the above	Your Literacy Autobiography
5/16 posted	Writing, SEL, and the Common Core	Aesthetics, social justice, social emotional learning, cognitive skills	Practical Theory Discussion Posting 5
5/24 Bring to class.	Examining argument as a genre	Social emotional learning, cognitive skills	Bring writing sample to class.
5/30	Looking at resources	You choose the emphasis.	Puzzle+ Portfolio Progress Report
6/11	Puzzle	Your choice of topic	Puzzle Due

### Your Literacy Autobiography

Create a detailed autobiography of your own literacy, beginning with your first literacy-related memory and including significant memories of your development as a reader and writer. As part of your autobiography, consider the following questions:

What does it mean to be literate in the 21st century? How are you literate as a 21st century person?

In what world(s) of discourse and power have you grown into literacy and are growing into literacy? How about that question for your students? Professors and instructors? Administrators? How did you learn to write your way in?

How far was your literacy environment as a child and adolescent from the literacy environment of school? College? How do you describe the differences? Your answer should be situated inside the issues of social-emotional learning, social justice, aesthetics, and cognitive skills we have examined this term. How distant was your home culture from the culture of the school/college---linguistically, sociologically, psychologically, politically, aesthetically and perhaps spiritually?

How did you learn to produce academic writing? How did that develop for you?

Can you retrieve any of those formative experiences? It's a long, slow process.

If you have student taught or are teaching now, how close was or is your literacy culture to the literacy cultures of your students? If you haven't student taught, think about your preprofessional experiences. Whose literacy culture was furthest from yours among your peers? Did you have to make decisions about which culture you belonged to?

What implications do your answers have for you as a teacher? For your students? Go beyond cliché.

Think about where on the Britton continuum (to be explained in class) you wish to situate this text.

**We will talk in class about issues of confidentiality related to this assignment.**

**The material shown below is NU SESP's Guiding Commitments document, very slightly annotated by me for the purposes of making explicit the ways in which our work in this class fits into the goals and values of the Guiding Commitments.**

## Teacher Education Program Guiding Commitments, January 2021

We are at a moment in history where education in general and teacher education more specifically needs to evolve to more effectively. Northwestern University's School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) Teacher Education programs are committed to nurturing ways of thinking about learning and teaching that can help all students to not only survive within systems of oppression but thrive within free and democratic life.

The well-being of students, families, communities and ecologies has too often been secondary to these purposes. We believe that making the well-being of all learners primary in theory and practice within education is necessary to help to form new social and cultural realities for people who have been historically underserved by education and to enhance the contributions of those who have been historically privileged by education to create a better world. The world now needs teachers who can weave together the assets of students' past, present and future experiences across settings to help them develop into strong leaders of subject-matter who strive to address inequities and power relations of systemic racism, sexism, socioeconomic classism, heteronormativity, ableism, and other forms of human oppression.

Northwestern University's teacher education programs are in the process of re-envisioning coursework and field-based experiences to focus on a vision of transformative teaching and learning that responds to the needs of individual and collective experiences within our current climate towards more equitable futures. By drawing on SESP's expertise in fields of learning sciences, human development and learning, and social policy, we aspire to develop educators—including our teacher education candidates, teacher leadership candidates, and teacher educators—who are committed and well prepared to advance equity and social justice-based learning environments, engage within and across communities, understand learning and development, and foster subject matter sense-making.

Many teacher education programs value the ideas and practices that are embodied in these threads. For example, equity and social justice are well articulated goals within most programs. At Northwestern, we have taken on the challenge to work at the intersections of these threads of thought and action to form a praxis that holds the necessary complexities of each thread simultaneously. We aim to contribute to the leading edge of teacher education by centering the goal of developing and studying a praxis of teacher learning that productively intertwines all of these threads. The redesigned priorities will be enacted through the development of a new level of curricular complementarities and program strategies. We believe these program priorities, when translated meaningfully into learning opportunities across coursework, will place our program design at a productive cutting edge of current practice and research in teacher development.

Re-envisioning the work of educator development is no small task and can best be accomplished in partnership with key stakeholders. Key to this work at Northwestern is creating explicit collaborations and consultations with SESP faculty colleagues. These ideas will also be shaped by expanded work with instructors, professors, mentor teachers, supervisors, school partners, job placement sites, as well as our current MSED students and alumni. Their unique perspectives will be engaged throughout the development of our vision statement and related strategic plans. We will also engage with research and practice within the field of teacher education and other fields that are relevant to our growth including subject-matter learning and teaching, SEL, community-based learning, and technological tools for learning.

### VISION: DEVELOPING EDUCATORS TO ENGAGE IN TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Northwestern University Teacher Education is committed to developing a community of educators—including aspiring teachers, faculty/staff, instructors, supervisors, mentor teachers, and teacher leaders-- of the highest caliber who see teaching as a scholarly, complex endeavor that requires an understanding of the intertwined nature of theory and practice. Our vision of transformative teaching and learning holds aspirations to develop educators who can nurture the learning of all of their students through valuing the multiple knowledges, identities and experiences that they bring with them to class and by utilizing learner-centered pedagogies. Our vision also includes the development of educators who have the capacity to design transformative educational experiences that prepare their students to contribute to social and cultural transformation. Our program helps to develop teachers who are able to nurture empathetic and productive relationships with their students, families, communities, and colleagues.

We will achieve our vision of developing transformative educators by collaborating with our educational community to advance a set of intersecting themes, which we refer to as our Guiding Commitments. The purpose of our Guiding Commitments is to provide the conceptual building blocks to develop a teacher education program that nurtures beliefs in educational dignity and equity along with the ability to create classroom interactions that enact those beliefs. The building blocks form a structure where transformative teaching and learning is constructed by the

intersecting ideas of equity & social justice, subject-matter sensemaking, learning and human development, and engagement within and across communities. These themes and their relationship to one another are articulated through the bullets below, accompanied by the graphical representation that follows.

### Northwestern Teacher Education: Guiding Commitments for Developing Educators to Engage in Transformative Teaching and Learning

Northwestern Teacher Education Guiding Commitments as:

A statement of values about education for dignity, theories of learning as a social, cognitive, ethical and cultural process, and belief in the power of practices that create culturally sustaining and antiracist learning environments

Tools for strengthening our cultural life living through Course, “Discipline”, Program, Community

Opportunities to build knowledge, enact practices/ performances, cultivate dispositions



Northwestern Teacher Education: Guiding Commitments for Developing Educators to Engage in Transformative Teaching and Learning (*coded in this syllabus as V1-6*)

1. Understand teaching as a critical scholarly endeavor that is situated within systems of history, knowledge, and power
2. Articulate how teaching practices are grounded in and informed by theories of learning, development, and pedagogy

3. Design equitable and inclusive learning environments (lessons, interactions, materials, technological tools, classrooms)
4. Engage in developmentally appropriate culturally sustaining pedagogical practices that are responsive to students' needs and based on understanding human learning as fundamentally cultural
5. See students, families, and communities as holding valuable expertise and knowledge to be incorporated into teaching and learning
6. Recognize and utilize various forms of assessment and evaluation that support asset-based student learning

### ADVANCE EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (SJ)

Great educators have both a strong understanding of their own cultural identities and value the cultural contexts and identities of their students as tools to support development and learning. They draw on these understandings to create relevant, connected and equitable learning experiences with their students. Educators must learn to design and provide the varied materials, questions, goals, and supports that each student needs. At the same time we must acknowledge that teaching and learning is situated in various systems ranging from families to communities, and we must work to understand and challenge systems that perpetuate inequality. Our teacher education programs strive to assist educators in doing this foundational and complex work by developing the following ideas and practices (*coded in this syllabus as SJ 1-6*):

1. Develop and demonstrate awareness of one's own internalized biases and positional privileges and recognize that identity awareness and development are ongoing
2. Demonstrate a recognition that teaching grounded in equity and social justice is essential in any setting and in the teaching of all subject matter
3. Identify how various forms of systemic inequity (structural, cultural, political, historical) and local policy show up in classrooms and schools, and work towards reversing these various forms of inequity
4. Understand, model, and learn to enact culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies that engage students in exploration of social issues through the lens of varied perspectives and identities
5. Cultivate interactions that demonstrably value all students and colleagues and their ideas including knowing how to facilitate difficult conversations and how to respond to various expressions of bigotry
6. Understand and draw on the assets of students, colleagues, and their surrounding communities by eliciting their experiences from both in and out of school

### FOSTER SUBJECT MATTER SENSEMAKING (SM)

We strive to develop educators with robust understandings of subject matter that can be applied in interdisciplinary ways to the world and their students' lives. These educators understand the importance of always being conscious that the way one thinks about learning informs the way one teaches. And because this is true, they are interested in studying the learning of subject matter based on their students' ideas and the literature. Knowing how students understand disciplinary ideas is an essential part of effective teaching and differentiating supports. It is also essential to recognize that subject matter ideas are always culturally situated. Educators in our programs will develop pedagogical content knowledge and practice that is primarily informed by the following ideas (*coded in this syllabus as SM 1-8*):

1. View subject matter as sets of ideas that form both content and pedagogical process for making sense of the world; engage in sensemaking as learners
2. Identify as learners and sensemakers who engage in strengthening their own subject matter knowledge and pedagogical practice
3. Notice, understand and respond to student thinking in order to encourage meaning making within and across disciplines
4. Recognize that the way learning environments are designed will elicit and privilege particular ways of knowing
5. Engage in subject matter teaching as an iterative, interdisciplinary, and reflective process of design that involves the creative and skillful use of materials and resources, including technological tools
6. Implement inquiry and other pedagogical approaches that reflect understanding knowledge as socially and culturally constructed
7. Utilize formative and summative assessment practices that contribute to students' growth
8. Examine and address standards within disciplinary areas as a way to both shape and determine content and expectations

### UNDERSTAND LEARNING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (LHD)

We recognize that the way that educators understand learning and human development is one of the most significant influences on their decisions about instructional strategies, curriculum design, and classroom interactions. The awareness that teachers hold of the complexities of the process of human development influences their ability to engage in positive and productive relationships, address the learning needs of each student whom they serve; it also shapes the way they conceive of evidence about progress and learning. At the same time, educators need to commit to a reflective stance towards their own growth and development based on relevant forms of data. Towards that end, we will work with our community of educators to:

*(The following are coded in this syllabus as LHD 1-6)*

1. Understand how theories of learning and development were established and how their enactment is complicated within powered and contradictory systems of schooling
2. Understand and enact theories of learning that consider content-area knowledge as being formed by developmental, social, cultural, ethical, and political processes
3. Engage in the study of human development as a process of maturation within a network of areas: physical, psychological, emotional and cultural
4. Consider human development through an asset-based, iterative perspective
5. Apply systematic and reflective approaches to understanding learning as a function of social, cultural and ecological interactions within contexts
6. Become facile at interpreting and evaluating data that influence learning about and improving schools by leveraging relationships between local, state and federal policies and understanding levers for changes

### **ENGAGE WITHIN AND ACROSS COMMUNITIES (C)**

We recognize teaching and learning as socially mediated experiences that are nested in multiple communities of learning that hold various funds of knowledge. These include classroom and school communities, the communities of our students and families, as well as broader professional communities. Establishing meaningful and reciprocal relationships and being in community with others is contingent upon developing awareness of self and how to negotiate with others across multiple spaces of participation. We are committed to developing the knowledge and the pedagogical skills to support educators for the multiple communities in which they engage, which include:

*(The following are coded in this syllabus as LHD 1-6)*

1. See schools, families, and communities as particular types of intersecting systems within a larger ecosystem that shape our students' lives
2. Develop a repertoire of self-awareness and self-management skills that support effective relationships and decision making in communities of practice
3. Design, establish, and maintain an environment and norms that center students' needs and ideas and fosters a sense of belonging
4. Facilitate meaningful discourse and interactions where all members of a community can meaningfully participate and where ideas are encouraged and welcomed
5. Establish asset-based, trusting authentic relationships with students and families in service of learning
6. Communicate and function with colleagues ethically, responsively and productively
7. Participate in professional learning communities as a mechanism for teacher scholarship toward continual individual growth and leadership
8. Identify and leverage the formal and informal learning that occurs outside schools
9. Engage in learning about the landscape, histories, challenges, assets, and resources of a community in which a school resides to inform relational and instructional interactions with students and families

Version Date

01.2021

*(Note from Dagny Bloland for Spring 2022: Please note that wherever I have added small notations they appear in italics.)*