ED 704: Contemporary Issues in Literacy Research

The course is designed to critically examine current perspectives on literacy policy and research in terms of theoretical frameworks, research methods, and implications for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Professor Susan B. Neuman
615-4655
Wed. 1-4:00
Spring Semester
Room 2334

Office Hours
Wed. 9-12:00 (by appointment)

A. Key contemporary issues in literacy research: A policy perspective. (What are major concerns about ‘reading’ in policy circles? What are the causes of concern? The political contexts?)

January 7: The Political Context: Course introduction and Overview

2. Definition of Science in NCLB
3. Stanovichs’ Using Research and Reason
4. Pressley, A few things reading educators should know about instructional experiments
5. (Optional) National Research Council, Scientific Research in Education

B. What is science in reading reform? The next two sessions focus on the current definition of science and its implications for research and research-based practice.

January 14: Science in Reading Research (How might be differentiate science from advocacy and practice? What is the current definition of scientifically-based reading research? Why this definition?)

1. National Reading Panel Report (Summary)
2. Put Reading First
3. Pressley, Effective Beginning Reading Instruction
4. Shanahan, Reading Teacher piece
5. Garan, Beyond the smoke and mirrors
January 21: Science in Reading Practice (What does the definition of SBR mean for practice?) Consider the implications of this definition in state, district and local practice. Provide more than anecdotes.

1. Guidance, Reading First (www.ed.gov)
2. Smith, Unspeakable acts
3. What Works Clearinghouse

C. Once again, policies in reading are framed against this classic debate between progressive and skill-based approaches. These readings should be examined alongside the Reading First and Early Reading First legislation and guidance.

January 28: Progressive Education vs. Skill-based approach (a replay?)

1. Chall, Academic achievement challenge
2. Ravitch, Left Behind (optional)
3. Smith, Unspeakable acts

February 4: Examining Early Intervention: The case of Reading Recovery

1. Juel, Learning to read and write
2. Shanahan and Barr, Reading Recovery
3. Chapman, Tunmer, & Prochnow, A longitudinal study

February 11: The case for Early Literacy in Head Start

1. Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, Mann
2. Campbell & Ramey, Cognitive and School Outcomes
3. Schweinhart & Weikart

D. High school and adolescent readers are not highly visible in the current political context. The question then becomes:

February 18: What to do with Struggling Readers?

1. Alliance for Excellent Education: www.all4ed.org

E. The practice of reading will be influenced by changes in Title I under NCLB. We will first examine the implications of standards and assessments. We will then focus on
accountability, and accountability systems in states, and how they will affect entrepreneurial activities in reading education.

February 25: Title 1: Standards-based Reform, Assessment & Accountability

1. H.R. 1: (Summary) Standards, assessment, and accountability
2. J. David and P. Shields, When theory hits reality: Standards based reform in urban districts
3. Elmore and Rothman, Testing, Teaching, and Learning
   check website education commission of the states
   www.ecs.com

Vacation Week

March 10: (Continued) Students will select a state and be prepared to describe their testing and accountability system.

March 17: Accountability (continued)

March 24: Supplemental Service Providers

   H.R. 1 (reread section on ssp).
   Guidance on SS providers
   Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, and Moody
   Wasik, and Slavin

F. Finally, we will examine reading as a profession, looking at Title II, Higher Education reauthorization, and professional development.

March 31: Teacher Professional Development

   Moats, Teaching Reading is Rocket Science
   Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge (www.ed.gov)
   New Brunswick, Preparing our teachers
   Title II guidance (in NCLB)
   Higher Education Reauthorization

April 7 (Teaching as a profession, continued) April 21 Final Reports

Course Expectations
Students will be expected to attend class, do the readings, participate in weekly discussions, and write an analytic paper on assigned topics. I will have office hours on Wednesday morning, by appointment. Please use email (sbneuman@umich.edu) to make appointments and deal with other matters that do not require an appointment.
References


Reading First. [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

Schweinhart, L. & Weikart, D.  The effects of the Perry preschool program on youths through age 15—A summary.


