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ENT 441.01: Teaching Literature

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ENT 441 TEACHING LITERATURE

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and by appointment

Course Purpose

This course is designed for individuals who are interested in teaching literature, grades 5-12. This course provides beginning teachers with the knowledge, pedagogy, and attitudes about reading literature. The course is based upon recent and traditional research, professional association guidelines (NCTE), and best practices in the teaching of literature. The course prepares teachers to design, implement, and evaluate methods of teaching literature. Reading/responding workshops, small and large group discussions, demonstrations, and presentations are used to create a classroom for reading, responding to, and understanding literature. Students experience and reflect upon their responses to, and engagements with, a variety of literary genres.

Course Objectives

To provide beginning teachers with the knowledge of and experience with literature, including an understanding and practice in the following:

- the reading process
- response to literature processes
- different genres of literature
- the structures/formats of literary works
- the effect of language upon readers
- identifying and assessing the developmental stages and abilities of readers

To provide beginning teachers with opportunities to practice and develop the following abilities:

- design, implement, and evaluate lessons that explore literature
- design and explore strategies, such as group size, writing, viewing, speaking, and listening, that support readers as they develop their responses to literature
- design and use response strategies to assess students' abilities and accomplishments
- interpret assessment of students' reading abilities for students, parents, and supervisors

To develop in beginning teachers the following attitudes:

- all readers have value and worth
- teachers need to understand developmental stages of growth in reading literature
- teachers need to know how to accept all responses to literature
- teachers need to encourage all readers to value their own and others' ideas
- teachers need to be lifelong readers and learners, who model good reading habits

Course Topics

- reading and viewing as literacy processes
- response to literature strategies
- reading workshops and literature discussions
- responding to students' responses
- types of genres and their characteristics
- helping students trust their responses
- literature circles and grouping methods for reading/responding
- nurturing student-to-student responses
- descriptive criteria for assessing levels and types of responses
- literature curriculum
- collaborative learning
- research in literature and response to literature
- guidelines for selecting literature/censorship issues

Requirements and Assignments

1. Regular class attendance. Excessive absences are considered in the final grade.
2. Completion of daily assignments and participation in the workshops, including small group work, role-playing, presentations, response groups, and whole class discussion.
3. Completion of major assignments, including:
 - designing and presenting lessons to teach literature
 - developing and presenting a thematic literature unit
 - developing and sharing a year-long literature curriculum

NOTE: Each of the major assignments is further described in a separate handout. Late assignments may be penalized. Plagiarized work results in an automatic F in the course.

4. Course evaluation

Texts

The instructor will present required and optional course texts on the first day of class.