University of Southern Maine

EDU 626
Writing Process
Spring 2015

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Course Syllabus

The course focuses on the study of writing development in children, and how classroom teachers can facilitate writing through a process approach. Many writing strategies for the classroom and the individual writer will be modeled and applied according to current theory and practice. In addition, students will investigate specific areas of interest to improve their own writing and writing instruction. These projects will help to develop a community of writers and writing teachers, regardless of subject areas. Through participation of writing lessons and workshops, students will develop their own pieces of writing, examine the needs of diverse learners, explore the use of technology, and understand the implications of national, state, and local standards.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. Ability to define, use and teach all aspects of the writing process
2. To understand the stages of literacy development and be able to facilitate appropriate applications with students.
3. To investigate current research in writing development and be able to share and demonstrate how to put theory into practice.
4. To be able to facilitate writing workshops designed to meet the needs of individual students
5. To be able to assess writing and link to further instruction
6. To understand and use strategies for integrating reading and writing with all forms of literature and content area topics
7. To learn strategies for personal genre writing and for incorporation in the classroom, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and personal narratives
8. To know the potential and limitations of Internet use in the classroom
9. To develop a piece of writing, utilizing writing process through active participation in writing workshop. This includes publication of one self-selected piece.
10. To demonstrate how writing process and the various writing methods and practices meet national, state and local standards.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Course Outline

I. Literacy Development

OBJECTIVES:

A. To define writing process
B. To examine the role of writing in literacy acquisition
C. To review the process of oral language acquisition

TOPICS:

A. How has writing changed?
B. The acquisition of oral language by young children
C. Conditions of language learning
D. Parallels between oral and written language development
E. Why Kids Won’t Write

REFERENCES:

Calkins, ch. 1, 3; The art of teaching writing. Heinemann, 2001.
Graves, Language Arts, Nov. 2004
Spandel, ch. 1; The 9 Rights of Every Writer. Heinemann, 2005.
Cunningham and Cunningham, chs. 1, 2; What Really Matters in Writing. Allyn and Bacon, 2010.

II. Emergent Literacy

OBJECTIVES:

A. To examine children’s earliest attempts to create print
B. To become familiar with the development and implications of “invented spelling”
C. To explore the relationship between drawing and writing
D. To become familiar with developmental and cultural differences

TOPICS:

A. Concepts of print: the basis of reading and writing
B. Research on early writing and spelling: Chomsky, Read, Gentry, Sulzby
C. Techniques for beginning writing instruction.

REFERENCES:

Hilliker, “Labeling to beginning narrative”
Sulzby, E. “Forms of Writing and Rereading from Writing” in Reading and Writing Connections, J. Mason, ed., 1989
Spandel, ch. 4; The 9 Rights of Every Writer. Heinemann, 2005.
III. Writing Process

OBJECTIVES:

A. To learn the components of writing process
B. To use the “writing process” as an instructional approach
C. To participate in a writing workshop using writing process.

TOPICS:

A. Differences among writers
B. Process in action
   1. Topic selection
   2. Drafting and revision
   3. Sharing and conferring
   4. Editing and publishing
   5. Management of the writing process
C. The Mini-lesson
D. Teacher-directed writing
E. Evaluating writing
F. Writing and Special Populations
G. Writing and the Internet

REFERENCES:
Atwell, In the Middle. Heinemann, 1998.
Lane, Barry. After the End. Heinemann, 1993.

IV. Exploring Other Genres

OBJECTIVES:

A. To write in various genres
B. To identify ways to help students read and write in different genres

TOPICS:

1. Fiction
   a. Responding to stories
   b. Writing fictional narratives

2. Poetry
   a. Enjoying poetry
   b. Writing poetry

3. Informational Writing/Content Area Writing
   a. Writing to learn
b. Sharing information

REFERENCES:

Graves, Donald, ch.5, Experiment with Fiction. Heinemann, 1989.

V. Mechanics

OBJECTIVES:

A. To become familiar with the most effective ways of teaching and learning mechanics

TOPICS:

A. The goal: interesting, clear, effective written expression
B. Spelling
C. 1. Grammar study
   2. Usage

REFERENCES:


Conceptual Framework/Core SEHD Values

• Democracy – Students will be exposed to multiple views and perspectives with regard to writing instruction and development K-12, utilize inclusive dialogue, and be encouraged to express their views.

• Civility and Caring – The instructor will model the use of constructive communication, protection of individual dignity, and empathy, compassion, and openness. Students will be expected to demonstrate these qualities in their interactions with instructor and peers. Evidence of differentiation for students will be expected to be included in lesson plans.

• Equity and Diversity – Course content will include ways to differentiate for a variety of learner types including struggling writers and individuals from different cultures. Students will be expected to include differentiated elements in their lesson plans.

• Social Justice – Students will adjust instruction utilizing various writing strategies, as needed, to empower all learners to develop literacy skills in order to be active members of society.

• Ethical Practice – Instructor will engage in and insist on the highest level of professional practice.

• Scholarship – Students will investigate current theory and best practice and be critical consumers to guide their own content area instruction and assessment.
• Professional Learning and Continuous Improvement – Students and instructor will participate in ongoing dialogue to exchange ideas for mutual and continuing professional growth.