

APPENDIX A

2003 HELC Prototype of Early Literacy 1 and Early Literacy 2

Early Literacy Instruction I

Course Description

Concepts, materials and teaching strategies for oral language development and systematic early reading and writing instruction, specific to concepts about print, phonemic awareness, and phonics. (3 hours)

Goals

1. Understand literacy as an integrated process that results in comprehension/communication as a product.
2. Understand and apply the research base for effective literacy instruction: principles, techniques, theories, philosophies and historical bases.
3. Engage children in activities that promote intrinsic motivation to read and write for pleasure and information.
4. Understand and promote oral language development.
5. Be able to assess, formally and informally, the literacy learning needs and gaps of individual children in order to guide precise instruction.
6. Possess in-depth knowledge of phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, and the rules that govern the relationship between sounds and symbols (phonics).
7. Understand how concepts about print, phonics and phonemic awareness are learned by children and why they are important to the reading and writing process.
8. Possess and be able to apply a wide variety of explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers/writers learn concepts about print, phonemic awareness, and phonics.

Early Literacy Instruction II

Course Description

Concepts, materials and teaching strategies for oral language development and systematic early reading and writing instruction, specific to vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. (3 hours)

Goals

1. Understand reading as an integrated process that results in comprehension/communication as a product.
2. Understand and apply the research base for effective reading instruction: principles, techniques, theories, philosophies, and historical bases.
3. Engage children in activities that promote intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure and information.
4. Understand and promote oral language development.
5. Be able to assess, formally and informally, the learning needs and gaps of individual children in order to guide precise instruction.
6. Possess in-depth knowledge about vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.
7. Understand how vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension are learned by children and why they are important to the reading and writing process.
8. Possess and be able to apply a wide variety of instructional strategies for helping beginning readers/writers learn vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

APPENDIX B

Protocol for Course Analysis, Observations, and Sample Questions

PROTOCOL FOR COURSE ANALYSES included a review of EL1 and EL2 syllabi goals and objectives, course outlines, textbook(s), assignments, and written assessments. The following criteria were used to determine to what extent these components reflected the expectations and specifications recommended by the Higher Education Literacy Council in 2003 (Appendix A) for compliance with licensure requirements specific to early literacy.

- ✓ *Alignment with standards.* Extent to which goals and objectives aligned with national and specialty professional associations (SPAs) standards, including the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), International Reading Association (IRA), the Interstate New Teacher and Support Consortium (INTASC), International Dyslexia Association's (IDA), and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards (specifically, Standards 2 & 3). See guidelines outlined in Part A: Section IV based on the internally-developed crosswalk of standards.
- ✓ *Alignment with HELC recommended course description, goals, and objectives for EL1 & EL2.* See Appendix A for these prototypes which emphasize thorough coverage of the 5 elements of reading (and writing) with a focus on how to teach and assess each component.
- ✓ *Modeling of early literacy instruction --* Extent to which courses provided pertinent information and explicit modeling of and practice with instructional strategies related to EL1 and EL2 concepts as informed by current research. **Because the six-hour block was designed to adequately prepare teachers with knowledge and instructional strategies for teaching and assessing the 5 components of reading, material not related to these topics was flagged as "outside scope and sequence of course" even though the information may be relevant to elementary education majors in general.** It is not assumed that learning to teach these early literacy skills is the focus of any other course offered, **therefore this review of EL1 & EL2 is stringent in its approach to assessing whether or not sufficient time is devoted to pedagogy and practice in the five elements of reading.**

Note: Computations of use of class hours were based on the total number of sessions or portions of sessions devoted to a topic as indicated in the course outline over the course of the semester. For example, if the class met for 28 days during a semester and each session was 50 minutes, the total number of course hours is 1400 minutes or 23.3 hours. If during a semester two whole class sessions were devoted to teaching phonics this would be computed as: 2 (class sessions) x 50 (min per session) = 100 minutes on phonics divided by 60 minutes (to convert to hours of class time) = 1.6 hours of class time devoted to phonics. These computations included practicum experiences.

PROTOCOL FOR UNDERGRADUATE CLASS OBSERVATIONS -- For consistency across Institutions and within the department and in keeping with best practices for undergraduate education the following framework was used:

Classroom environment – Was the seating conducive to the format of the class and appropriate materials available to simulate instructional activities? Was technology available to support undergraduate material as well as to demonstrate its use in early reading instruction.

Relationship between Objective and Instruction – Was the day’s objective clearly stated or posted. Did it fall within the domain of the course syllabus as specified by the statute? Did discussion relate to the objective as stated? How were required text(s) or supplemental readings incorporated?

Clear Content Reflecting Best Practices – Were the concepts taught evidence-based and were they explained clearly, explicitly, and accurately? Did the instruction include relevant background information, research basis, or demonstration/modeling of methods and strategies specific to early literacy skills? Were questions encouraged and fully addressed? What was the level and quality of student participation? Were students challenged to think critically? Were opportunities provided for students to practice and receive feedback? Were there opportunities to check for understanding and mastery of concepts?

Instructional Delivery and Structure Geared to Undergraduate Learners

Since pre-service candidates will take their cues from the instructional modeling they experience in undergraduate courses and field work, notes were made relative to *how material was presented* during class meetings observed (Charts 1.B and 2.B in Part B reflect *how much time was spent* on specific topics during a semester). Albeit, these observations reflected a single session in a semester long course and, allowing for unexpected events that can alter plans as written, a summary of instruction is provided for each session based on the 7 principles for good practice in undergraduate education (Chickering & Gamson, 1991): (1) active learning, (2) prompt feedback, (3) high expectations, (4) collaboration, (5) time on task, (6) diverse ways of learning, (7) faculty/student interaction. This is provided merely as a snapshot of an undergraduate literacy class from the learner’s point of view. No scores were assigned or rankings given. The table below comprises the observable elements. A statewide aggregate of these snapshots appears in the Statewide Summative Report.

APPENDIX C

Pre-service Faculty Interview Questions

1. What is your educational background? Have you ever taught reading in grades K-3 or attended a LETRS training?
2. How long have you taught EL1 and EL2? Are there other early literacy courses you have taught?
4. At your institution, how are the five components of reading addressed in EL1 and EL2? Describe any practicums associated with EL1 and EL2. Do concepts of print, oral language, and writing fit in somewhere?
5. Describe today's lesson that was observed.
 - a. What was your specific objective?
 - b. What have students learned before today and what learning topics will follow?
 - c. Where does today's lesson fall among the 5 components of reading?
 - d. In what specific ways will today's lesson help students become an effective reading teacher?
6. Describe some specific examples of how you teach each of the five components of reading.
7. What percentage of coursework is typically spent on research vs. practical strategies? What are some examples of research that you use to support the evidence-based strategies you teach?
8. Describe what "systematic, sequential, and explicit instruction" means to you.
9. Are students taught how to assess the individual components of reading? What assessment instruments are used? Is there a separate diagnostics/assessment course at this institution?
10. How much exposure do your students get to The National Reading Panel, The Literacy Based Promotion Act, Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, The Simple View of Reading?
11. Describe the courses that this institution offers that cover early literacy. In your estimation, are there any unnecessary overlap or gaps?
12. Do you feel that your institution's current elementary education curriculum adequately prepares pre-service candidates to be ready to teach reading on day one upon graduation? Why or why not? What would you do differently if you could?
13. Do you have any other thoughts or comments you would like to make that you think this report should include?

APPENDIX D

Focus Group Questions

1. Why have you chosen elementary education as a profession?
2. What is the most challenging course you've had so far and why?
3. What topics have been covered thus far in EL1 vs. EL2?
4. What can you tell me about the Common Core State Standards? How are these addressed in your courses?
5. On a scale of 3 to 1 (3- could explain in detail; 2- have heard about it; 1-unfamiliar) how much do you know about the findings of the National Reading Panel Report? When was it produced and what significant influence did it have on how reading should be taught?
6. What are the components of reading and in which courses have you learned about how to teach them? Can you describe some of the strategies you've learned for each?
7. Have you been asked to present a lesson on how to teach any of these components or common core standards? If so, in which course? Describe what you did. Did the instructor first model how to use the strategy before asking you to demonstrate or present the lesson?
8. What have you learned so far about how to help a struggling reader learn to read? What would you do first?
9. Below is a list of terms and concepts that have been observed in reading instruction around the country. Tell me what you know about each and in which course you learned about it. (e.g. Evidence-based practices: The Simple View of Reading vs. those not supported by research: Round Robin Reading)
10. Among all of your courses (and without identifying anyone by name) give me some examples of good teaching practices used by instructors that have helped you the most in learning to teach reading.
11. What specific benefits have you gleaned from your field experiences? What kind of things are you expected to do in the field and do you find these helpful in making you a better teacher?
12. Are there particular aspects of teaching reading that you feel well-prepared to teach? Conversely, unprepared to teach? Why?
13. As you think about moving into a K-3 classroom, what are some things you are hoping still to learn in order to feel well-prepared to teach reading? Are you concerned that these things might not be covered in the program? Why?
14. Any final thoughts or comments? What would you like the dean and faculty to know about your experience here?

APPENDIX E

Internal Guidelines Used by Study Team: A Crosswalk of Standards

(separate attachment)