

**University of Texas at El Paso**  
**RED 5348: Issues in Adult Literacy**  
**Summer II 2016 (CRN 35339)**

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Mon and Wed, 5-10 pm  
Location: Education 312

**Course description:**

This course will explore the theory and practice of adult literacy/biliteracy education, with a specific focus on the contexts for adult learning and the development of adult literacy programs. Topics related to literacy teaching, program planning, assessment, and evaluation will be covered. Students will be expected to devote significant time outside of class not only to the readings but also to developing reading syntheses and writing post-class summaries that comment and reflect on material covered during class sessions. In addition, students will have the opportunity in class to facilitate discussions and activities related to the course content so as to be able to apply adult learning principles within the course.

**Course objectives and learning outcomes:**

In completing this course, students will:

- Show understanding of theories of literacy and biliteracy as applied to adults in a variety of contexts;
- Develop a terminology for talking about and examining literacy in context;
- Demonstrate understanding of characteristics of adult learners, and differences between adults and children with respect to literacy and learning;
- Demonstrate knowledge about the historical, political, and social context of adult literacy education;
- Demonstrate knowledge about program planning and evaluation, as well as learner assessment, in adult literacy education.

**Course readings:**

Required books:

Horton, M. with J. Kohl and H. Kohl (1997). *The long haul: An autobiography*. New York: Teachers College Press.

McCaffery, J., Merrifield, J., and Millican, J. (2007). *Developing adult literacy: Approaches to planning, implementing, and delivering literacy initiatives*. Oxford, UK: Oxfam.

Selected articles and chapters:

Auerbach, E. (1995). The politics of the ESL classroom: Issues of power in pedagogical choices. In J. Tollefson (Ed.), *Power and inequality in language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barton, D. (1994). An integrated approach to literacy. In Barton, D. (Ed.), *Literacy: An introduction to the ecology of written language* (pp. 1-9). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Barton, D. (1994). The social basis of literacy. In Barton, D. (Ed.), *Literacy: An introduction to the ecology of written language* (pp. 33-52). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Belzer, A. & Packard, A. (2015). From heroic victims to competent comrades: Views of adult literacy learners in the research literature. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 65(3), 250-266.

Boudin, K. (1993). Participatory literacy education behind bars: AIDS opens the door. *Harvard educational review*, 63(2), 207.

- Freire, P. (1970). The adult literacy process as cultural action for freedom. *Harvard educational review*, 40(2), 205-225.
- Hamilton, M. (2016). Imagining literacy: A sociomaterial approach. In K. Yasukawa & S. Black (Eds.), *Beyond economic interests: Critical perspectives on adult literacy and numeracy in a globalized world* (pp. 3-18). Boston, MA: Sense Publishers.
- Gee, J. P. (1986). *Orality and literacy: From The Savage Mind to Ways with Words*. TESOL Quarterly, 20(4), 719-746.
- Kalmar, T.M. (2015). *Illegal alphabets and adult biliteracy*. New York: Routledge.
- Merriam, S. B. (2015). Adult learning theory: A review and an update. *Culture, Biography, and Lifelong Learning*, 1(1), 59-71.
- Muro, A. (2012). Pedagogies of change: From theory to practice. *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 4(1).
- Muro, A., & Mein, E. (2010). Domestic Trauma and Adult Education on the United States-Mexico Border. *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal*, 4(3), 140-150.
- Rivera, L. (2008). *Laboring to learn: Women's literacy and poverty in the post-welfare era*. University of Illinois Press.
- Rivera, K.M. and Huerta-Macias, A. (2007). Adult bilingualism and biliteracy in the United States: Theoretical perspectives. In Rivera, K.M. and Huerta-Macias, A. (Eds.), *Adult biliteracy: Sociocultural and programmatic responses*. New York: Routledge.
- Shorris, E. (1997). II. As a weapon in the hands of the restless poor. *Harpers*, 295, 39-60.
- Street, B. (2012). New Literacy Studies. In M. Grenfell, D. Bloome, C. Hardy, K. Pahl, J. Rowsell, & B. Street (Eds.), *Language, ethnography, and education: Bridging New Literacy Studies and Bourdieu* (pp. 27-49). New York: Routledge.
- Tuck, E. (2012). *Urban youth and school pushout: Gateways, get-aways, and the GED*. Routledge.

### Course requirements:

Successful completion of this course will be based on several key elements (rubrics will be provided):

- **Reading syntheses (40 points)** - To facilitate understanding of and discussion about the reading, you will be expected to do 4 reading syntheses, one each week. The synthesis should be 400-500 words in length, and should do three things: (1) summarize the main argument of the reading; (2) highlight common themes between readings; and (3) highlight one theme or aspect of the reading and analyze it in relationship to your own life/practice. You should also include any questions that you thought of while reading. Syntheses should be posted on the Sunday before class by midnight (with the exception of the first week).

Each synthesis will count 10 points. Points will be deducted for late responses. A rubric for the reading responses is provided at the end of the syllabus.

- **Class summaries (14 points)** – In order to create coherence among classes and to have an opportunity to reflect on class discussions, you will also be expected to post post-class summaries on Blackboard after each class session. The summary should be 200-300 words in length and should do two things: (1) summarize what you learned in the previous day's class session; (2) extend on what was discussed/covered in class by making connections to the readings/life practice and/or include any questions you may have.

Each class summary is worth a maximum of 2 points. You will receive **2 points** for a **superior-quality** summary that clearly describes what you learned in class and that provides thoughtful and substantive comments/questions related to course topics. You will receive **1 point** for an **adequate** summary that addresses what was learned in class and shows some level of

thoughtfulness about course content. A rubric for the class summary assignment is provided at the end of the syllabus.

- **Discussion questions for guest speakers (6 points)** – In order to prepare for our three guest speakers, you are required to develop and submit 2 discussion questions prior to each guest speaker's presentation. These discussion questions are to be submitted to our class discussion board on Blackboard by 5pm the evening before the day of the scheduled presentation. Please also bring a copy of these questions with you to class on the day of the presentation. These discussion questions should reflect thoughtful consideration of course themes/class discussions and each presenter's unique area of expertise and the context or organization in which they work. Each set of questions will be worth 2 points, for a total of 6 points. Points will be deducted for late responses and for unimaginative questions that reflect little to no preparation for engaging the speaker in conversation.
- **Case study of an adult literacy program (20 points)** – In order to apply theoretical frameworks and pedagogical principals of adult literacy education, students will have the opportunity to work individually or in pairs to develop a critical analysis of an actual adult literacy program. This case study should be no less than 8 pages long (Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced) and will draw on visits to the site to talk with students and/or teachers/directors of the program, to examine classroom texts and resources, and (if possible) to observe classroom teaching and learning in progress. The case study should connect to course topics/texts as it examines the underlying philosophies and pedagogical approaches that guide the adult literacy program. More information about this assignment, as well as a rubric for it, will be distributed in class. This assignment should be emailed to the instructor ([ajbach@utep.edu](mailto:ajbach@utep.edu)) by midnight on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **In-class presentation of your case study (10 points)** – In order to share what you have learned about the adult literacy program you have examined, students will give a short presentation on their case studies to the class on July 27<sup>th</sup>. The presentation should be 5 minutes in length and should summarize key points of your case study and make connections to other readings/topics covered throughout the course. Students should prepare a short PowerPoint to accompany their presentation. This PowerPoint should outline these key points and should cite course readings using APA style. More information about this presentation, as well as a rubric for it, will be distributed in class.
- **Final reflection (10 points)** – As the final course assignment, you should prepare a 1-2 page piece that reflects on what you learned in the course, and how/whether your understanding of adult literacy has changed (or not). Your final reflection should be emailed to the instructor ([ajbach@utep.edu](mailto:ajbach@utep.edu)) by August 2<sup>nd</sup> at midnight.

#### **Grading:**

- A 90-100 points
- B 80-89 points
- C 70-79 points
- D 60-69 points
- F Below 59 points

#### **Attendance Policy:**

Because of the short duration and intensity of this course, there is a zero-tolerance policy on absences and late arrivals for our seven class sessions. Any absence or late arrival can immediately lead to being dropped from the course.

**Disability Policy:**

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services located in Union E Room 203. Students who have been designated as disabled must reactivate their standing with the Office of Disabled Student Services on a yearly basis. Failure to report to this office will place a student on the inactive list and nullify benefits received. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or which may cause an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of Disabled Student Services. You may call 747-5148 for general information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty – which includes cheating, plagiarism, and collusion – is a violation of the norms and ethics of the university community and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

**Additional Resources:**

Academic journals – The following journals are prominent in the field of adult literacy. These are just some examples. Most of them can be found electronically using the UTEP Library website:

*Adult Education Quarterly*

*Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*

*Journal of Research and Practice for Adult Literacy, Secondary, and Basic Education*

*Anthropology and Education Quarterly*

*International Journal of Educational Development*

*Journal of Literacy Research*

**Course schedule:**

(\* indicates course book)

<b>Overview of adult learning and literacy</b>		
<b>7/6</b>	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Barton (1994), Integrated approach to literacy McCaffery et al. (2007), Ch 1-4*	<b>Assignments:</b> 1.1 – Post reading synthesis for 7/6 readings on Blackboard by 7/7 at midnight 1.2 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/8 at midnight
<b>7/11</b>	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Freire (1970), Cultural action Hamilton (2016), Imagining literacy McCaffery et al. (2007), Ch 5-8* Street (2012), New literacy studies	<b>Assignments:</b> 2.1 – Post reading synthesis for 7/11 readings on Blackboard by 7/10 at midnight. 2.2 – Post discussion questions for UTEP’s HEP visit to Blackboard by 7/12 at 5pm 2.3 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/12 at midnight
<b>Literacy in social context</b>		
<b>7/13</b>	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Barton (1994), Social basis of literacy Gee (1989), Orality and literacy Kalmar (2015), Prologue & No man’s land Shorris (1997), As a weapon in the hands of the restless poor	<b>Assignments:</b> 2.3 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/14 at midnight

	**Visit to UTEP's High School Equivalency Program (HEP) from 5-6 in Graham Hall Building	
<b>Adult literacy, inequality, and social change</b>		
7/18	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Horton (1997), <i>The long haul</i> *	<b>Assignments:</b> 3.1 – Post reading synthesis for 7/18 readings on Blackboard by 7/17 at midnight. 3.2 – Post discussion questions for Ana Huertas-Macias visit to Blackboard by 7/19 at 5pm 3.3 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/19 at midnight
7/20	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Tuck (2012), Ch. 1, Urban youth and school pushout; Ch. 6, Educational renewal Rivera (2008), Introduction, Ch. 1, & Ch. 6 of Laboring to learn  **Ana Huertas-Macias presentation in class	<b>Assignments:</b> 3.3 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/21 at midnight
7/25	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Auerbach (1995), Politics of ESL classroom Boudin (1993), Participatory literacy education behind bars Muro (2011), Pedagogies of change Muro & Mein (2010), Domestic trauma and adult education on the U.S.-Mexico border  **Andres Muro presentation in class	<b>Assignments:</b> 4.1 – Post discussion questions for Andres Muro's visit to Blackboard by 7/24 at 5pm 4.2 – Post reading synthesis for 7/25 readings on Blackboard by 7/24 at midnight. 4.3 – Post class summary and response on Blackboard by 7/26 at midnight.
<b>Adult literacy program planning and evaluation</b>		
7/27	<b>Readings: (before class)</b> Beltzer & Pickard (2015), Views of adult literacy learners in the research literature McCaffery et al., Ch 9-12* Merriam (2015), Adult learning theory Rivera and Huerta-Macias (2008), Adult bilingualism and biliteracy in the U.S.  **Student presentations on case studies	<b>Assignments:</b> 4.3 – Post class summary on Blackboard by 7/28 at midnight 4.4 – Student presentations on adult literacy case studies to be presented in class on 7/27
8/1	<b>Case study assignment and final reflection assignment due this week</b>	<b>Assignments:</b> 5.1 – Case study assignments due to instructor by midnight on 8/1 5.2 – Final reflection due on Blackboard by 8/2 at midnight

## Appendix Grading Rubrics

### Post-class summaries

**Superior (2 points)** – A superior-quality summary clearly describes what you learned in class and provides substantive comments/questions related to course topics; a superior summary may also include doubts or confusions tied to what was covered in class or in the readings. I will be looking for thoughtful, reflective commentaries rather than a detailed description of every point covered in class.

**Adequate (1 point)** – An adequate summary addresses what was covered in class and shows some level of thoughtfulness about course content.

**Below average (.5 points)** – A below average summary neither describes what was covered in class nor shows thoughtfulness in commentary about the course content.

### Reading synthesis (400-500 words)

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
Clear, coherent, and well-organized	3	
Clearly and accurately pulls out the key points of the readings	3	
Makes thoughtful connections across the readings and provides details and examples	2	
Makes thoughtful connections to life experience and present/future teaching practice	2	
<b>Total</b>	<i>10</i>	

### Discussion questions

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
The question is open-ended question and requires more than a yes-no response	.25	
The question reflects a thoughtful consideration of course themes/topics	.50	
The question reflects specific knowledge of the individual, their work, and/or their organization	.25	

## Case Study Assignment Rubric

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
Clear, coherent, and well-organized.	1	
Assignment meets the page length minimum.	1	
Paper demonstrates an excellent command of grammar, spelling, and mechanics and is free of distracting errors.	2	
APA in-text and bibliographic citations are used and used correctly.	2	
Program is described thoughtfully and thoroughly and addresses each of the questions (when applicable) outlined in the assignment description.	7	
Program is thoughtfully and thoroughly analyzed, using the questions outlined in the assignment description as a guide, and draws connections to at least 3 different course texts.	7	
<b>Total</b>	<i>20</i>	