**Critical Literacies, New LITERACIES, and Teacher Inquiry**

**EDRE 3650-016 (9993)**

Fall 2023, 3 credit hours (undergraduate)

**Instructor**: Doricka Menefee, Ph.D. **Email**: doricka.menefee@unt.edu

**Tuesdays| 2:00M-4:50PM | Wooten Hall RM 313**  **Office Hours:** M-T-W by appointment only

Course Description

Literacy has moved beyond the reading and composing of print-based texts only, to describe a wider and more inclusive range of possible literacies that are growing increasingly more powerful and prevalent in our contemporary world. These include ways to read and compose in visual, sound, movement, and digital media, as well as reading all texts through lenses that critique and question social issues such as power, identity, class, race, gender expression, sexuality, and dis/ability. Learning to analyze and critique ads, videos, film, and social media to ask who benefits, who is included, and who is excluded can be easily transferred to traditional print text, and in many cases, improve and increase energy for learning to read and respond to more traditional print texts.

This course focuses on the construct of critical literacy as represented in the historical and contemporary works of local and international scholars, especially scholars of Color. Students will examine the changing nature of literacies and access to literacies of power both in society and schools. Students will also engage with the principles of practice-based research in this course.

Course Prerequisites

Must be taken in Block A; Course serves as a centering course for Block A and requires attendance in seminars. Prerequisite(s); Admission to teacher education program; EDRE 3400. Core-requisite (s): EDRE 3600.

Expected Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of multimodalities and semiotic systems as an expanded notion of “texts”.
2. Articulate a theory of what literacy is and the ways that people use it in their lives, both within and beyond classrooms and schooling.
3. Discuss strategies for comprehending, interpreting, and critiquing traditional print texts and modern multimodal and digital texts.
4. Describe critical concepts and questions for deeply reading everyday texts, digital texts, and multimodal texts to perceive and evaluate their purposes, audiences, and persuasions.
5. Describe the importance of teaching critically for social justice and equity inside elementary classrooms.

## How to Succeed in this Course

Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodation at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members can ask students to discuss such letters during their office hours to protect the student's privacy. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Academic Success Resources

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to [unt.edu/success](https://www.unt.edu/success/) and explore [unt.edu/wellness](https://wellness.unt.edu/). To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to [scrappysays.unt.edu](http://scrappysays.unt.edu/).

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Therefore, any acts of plagiarism, use of AI technology to complete course work, or the use of any other materials/ methods/means not one’s own, is prohibited. These types of offenses will be judged by the instructor, who will determine the best course of action to rectify these issues. Course of actions include:

1. **Admonition:** The student may be issued a verbal or written warning.
2. **Educational Assignment:** The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
3. **Partial or No Credit for an Assignment or Assessment:** The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic misconduct.
4. **Course Failure:** The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course.
5. **Lower Grade:** The instructor may lower the student’s final grade by one letter grade.
6. **Probation:** A student may be placed on probation for up to two (2) long semesters. Students on probation may remain at the University but may be required to satisfy specific conditions or requirements, such as, report regularly to the AIO, or be barred from holding any office or participating in any activity in which the student represents the University or University-recognized student organizations, either within or outside the University community. The sanction of probation prohibits graduation until the probation period ends, and the student has complied with all AIO requirements.
7. **Suspension:** A student may be suspended from the University for up to one year, during which time the student is ineligible for the privileges associated with registration, including living in university housing. Suspension anticipates that the student may return once applicable conditions are satisfied.
8. **Expulsion from the University:** The student is removed from good standing with the Office of Academic Integrity and must leave the University permanently without an expectation of return to the University.
9. **Revocation of Degree:** The student’s official and unofficial transcript may reflect that revocation of degree assessed as an academic misconduct penalty.

Communication Practices

Connect with me through email, through the message feature on Canvas, or by scheduling office hours. During peak times, my inbox stays full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response in one or two business days, please send me a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated 😊.

## Instructor feedback and response time

* **Grading and feedback:** For minor weekly assignments, you can (generally) expect feedback within **7 days**. For major assignments, you can (generally) expect feedback within **10-14 days (about 2 weeks).**
* **Email:** I will reply to emails within **24 hours on days when class is in session at the university**.

How this course works:

**Mode of delivery:** This course meets in-person on Tuesday from 2:00PM-4:50PM. We will meet in Wooten Hall 220.

**UNT Canvas:** This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content.  Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere](https://online.unt.edu/learn) (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

You will be expected to log into the course on Canvas every week. During most weeks you will (probably) log in many times. This is where you will submit most of your assignments and receive feedback, as well as find supplementary course readings.

## Required/Recommended Materials

## Required Textbook

* Baines, J., Tisdale, C., & Long, S. (2018). “We’ve been doing it your way long enough”: Choosing the culturally relevant classroom. Language and Literacy Series. In *Teachers College Press eBooks*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED584725>
* Supplementary materials and/or readings will be found on Canvas Learning Management System

Attendance

I have great respect for students who are balancing the demands of their coursework with the responsibilities of caring for family members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss a class, please contact me or my TA. There may be some flexibility we can offer to support your academic success. Although, because this course involves collaboration, participation is essential to learning. Our project-based activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late to class, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know prior to your absence.

Participation

We should all expect active participation in all components of this seminar for all participants, student, and professor alike. It is expected that you will come to class having read the materials and ready to engage in a lively class discussion. This will be essential to the quality of your responses to the readings and discussion around the issues.

Full credit for class participation includes:

1) being prepared for class

2) completing assignments on time

3) demonstrating engagement with course readings,

4) being engaged in and participating in class activities and discussions

5) synthesizing and critiquing the impact of teaching for social justice in course discussions

## Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together. I also encourage you to review UNT’s student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding ([Code of Student Conduct](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012)) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012).>

## Assignment Breakdown and Grading Scale

Article Annotations and Reading Responses

Every week, you will be annotating the articles that we will be reading for this course and from them writing weekly responses to the articles we read. These are important in helping you prepare for discussions we will have in class. These will be posted on Canvas by Monday night at 11:59pm before our class meeting each week. These original responses are a chance for you to begin to articulate and engage with the ideas covered in the articles and reflect on the novels you are reading. The responses themselves should ***be no more than 300 words***. NOTE: Annotations will be graded gorilla style, meaning, they will be graded randomly at the instructor’s discretion.

**Please select what annotations work best for you and your interaction with the text.**

* Summarize key points in your own words.
* Underline topic sentences or main ideas.
* Circle key concepts and phrases.
* Connect ideas with arrows.
* Add personal notes.
* Define technical words.
* Write brief comments and questions in the margins.

**Reading Responses should include:**

* Adequately synthesize and reflect
* include memorable citations from the text with proper MLA or APA
* include 2-3 discussion questions about the text

NOTE: You can rely on the reading reflection in the back of the Vasquez book when we get to that reading.

These critical responses should be useful to you in the following ways:

1. Engage and critique readings
2. Provide a space to articulate your responses to the issues raised
3. Offer you an opportunity to reflect on the connections and/or tensions between the readings

**DUE: Mondays by 11:59PM**

BookTok Presentations

For this assignment, students will submit a TikTok in which they recommend a selection of children’s novels based on the themed chapter of the day. The students will submit a brief 1-page outline, and the link to their TikTok for viewing in the class. This assignment is an inquiry of sorts and must include a thorough exploration and explanation of the children's book selected. This will be explained in more detail during the course.

Inquiry Multimodal Text Project and Presentation

This inquiry project and presentation will be a probe of what you have learned in relation to literacy, literacy education, children’s novels, and criticality. As a project, it should explore a topic of your choice from within the world of K-6 literacy education. You will detail and demonstrate an understanding of major concepts covered in class. It must include (in some way) an analysis and interpretation of a small collection of children’s literature. Moreover, it must exhibit your understanding and evaluation of personal and social values of your own and other cultures in relation to critical, and equitable literacy education. Therefore, topics focusing on aspects of social justice, equity, cultural sustainability, and diversity are important to this assignment*.*

This will be explained more in class. In all, I want to see what you have learned and what you are capable of in terms of your knowledge of critical literacy education.

**DUE: TUESDAY, December 12h by 11:59PM**

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| **Course Assignment Breakdown** | |
| Professionalism and Engagement | 200 pts |
| Article Annotations and Reading Responses | 300 pts |
| In-Class Activities and Assignments | 300 pts |
| Booktok Presentation | 150 pts |
| TEA Time Reading | 150 pts |
| Multimodal Text Project & Presentation | 400 pts |
| TOTAL | 1500 pts |

**Grades**

A = 90-100% or 1342-1500 points

B = 80-89% or 1192-1341 points

C = 70-79% or 1042-1191 points

D = 60-69% or 892-1041 points

F = under 50% or 891 points

**NOTE**: This Syllabus is provided for informational purposes regarding the anticipated course content and schedule of this course. It is based upon the most up-to-date information available on the date of its issuance; it is as accurate and complete as possible. I reserve the right to make any changes I deem necessary and/or appropriate.

Assignments (Turning in and Late Work)

* **Turning in Assignments**: All written work that is turned into Canvas for evaluation or grading should be typewritten and should employ 1-inch margins on all sides, 12-point font, either Arial or Times New Roman, and double spacing.
  + When submitting electronic copies, be sure to format your file so that it can be opened in Word or Adobe (.doc, .docx, or .pdf) and that **the file is titled with your name and assignment name**.
  + Use APA or MLA format for all papers and carefully proofread and edit. Look at the “References” tab in MS which automates the citing process.
* **Late Assignments**: All assignments must be turned in on the due date and by the time indicated.
  + Assignments turned in late will have a 10% deduction of points after the date and time indicated and for each calendar day after that. **After 5 days, late assignments will not be accepted.**
  + Flexibility is possible but only when advance arrangements are made, and only when there is a good reason (e.g., documented illness or emergency).

Course Schedule

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| Date | Essential Questions | Readings (Due before class) | | | Assignments Due |
| Week 1: Expectations and Demonstrations | | | | | |
| August 22nd | What should I expect from this course? | * Syllabus and Course Materials * Baldwin (1963) “A Talk to Teachers” In Class Assignment | | |  |
| Week 2: Introduction to New Literacy Studies | | | | | |
| August 29th | How has the concept of literacy shifted from “Literacy” to “New Literacy”? | * Street (1993) “Introduction: The New Literacy Studies” | | | All About Me Slide  Reading Response |
| Week 3: Literacy as a Social Practice | | | | | |
| September 5th | What is a social theory of literacy? | * Barton and Hamilton (2000) “Literacy Practices” * Freire (1983) “The Importance of the Act of Reading” | | | Reading Response |
| Week 4: Literacy verses Illiteracy | | | | | |
| September 12th | What are the walls and gates of the concept of literate and non or illiterate? | * Scribner (1984) “Literacy in Three Metaphors” * Finnegan (1973) “Literacy versus Non-Literacy: The Great Divide?” | | | Reading Response |
| Week 5: Expanding Our Views of Literacy | | | | | |
| September 19th | How can we deconstruct, decolonize, and decenter old notions of literacy, literate, and literacy practices? | * Garcia (2020) “What Counts as Reading?” * Saracho and Spodek (2006) Young Children’s Literacy-Related Play | | | Reading Response |
| Week 6: Un-Conventual Literacy Learning/Assessment | | | | | |
| September 26th | What can literacy- learning look like for observing educators? | * Johnson and Vasudevan (2012) “Seeing and Hearing Students’ Lived and Embodied Literacy Practices” * Kervin (2016) “Powerful and Playful Literacy Learning with Digital Technologies” | | | Reading Response |
| Week 7: Introduction to Critical Literacy | | | | | |
| October 3rd | What is Critical Literacy? What is a critical literacy perspective? How does it expand on what we know about literacy? | * Vasquez (2017) “Critical Literacy” * Shor (1999) “What is Critical Literacy?” (SKIM) | | | Reading Response |
| Week 8: Critical Literacy Perspectives | | | | | |
| October 10th | What does critically reading texts look like in practice? | * Freebody, Peter, and Luke (1990) “Four Recourses Model” * O’Neil (2011) “Reading Pictures” | | | Reading Response |
| Week 9: Cultivating a Critical Culturally Relevant/Responsive Classroom through Literacy | | | | | |
| October 17th | What is the importance of a culturally relevant/responsive critical literacy classroom? | | * Ladson-Billings (1995) Towards a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy” (SKIM) * Baines, Tisdale, and Long (2018) Ch. 1 “Choosing Culturally Relevant Teaching” | Reading Response  BookTok Presentation | |
| Week 10: Developing a Critical Consciousness as an Educator | | | | | |
| October 24th | How can I as an educator develop a critical consciousness for myself and my students? | | * Baines, Tisdale, and Long (2018) Ch. 7 “Developing a Critical Consciousness” | Reading Response  BookTok Presentation | |
| Week 11: Making Space for Musical Literacies in the Classroom | | | | | |
| October 31st | How can making space for musical literacies impact my student's development of critical literacy? | | * Baines, Tisdale, and Long (2018) Ch. 4 “Musical Literacies in the Classroom” | Reading Response  BookTok Presentation | |
| Week 12: The Importance of Oral Histories for Students | | | | | |
| November 7th | What importance is there in preserving the oral histories of our students? | | * Baines, Tisdale, and Long (2018) Ch. 5 “Oral Histories: Preserving Community Stories” | Reading Response  BookTok Presentation | |
| Week 13: Remembering Our Native Histories and Cultures | | | | | |
| November 14th | Why would remembering ancestorial ways of being or a general sense of history help our students develop critical literacy? | | * Baines, Tisdale, and Long (2018) Ch. 6 “Re-Membering History” | Reading Response  BookTok Presentation | |
| Week 14: Thanksgiving Break No Class 😊 | | | | | |
| Week 15: Final Project Workshops/ Check in With Dr. Menefee | | | | | |
| November 28th | Come to class to work on final project/presentations! 😊 | | | Draft of final project presentation | |
| Week 16: Finals Week | | | | | |
| December 5th | Final Project Presentations/ Feedback | | | Final-ish Draft of Final Projects/Presentations | |
| December 12th: **Final Projects turn in on Canvas by 11:59PM** | | | | | |