

CREADE* Comparative Course Evaluations, 2003-2005

In 2003, CREADE developed an online course evaluation process with input from CREADE committees (Faculty Advisory, Faculty Authors, Deans Council on Teacher Education). The evaluation form includes 26 questions (21 demographic/Likert-scale, 5 open-ended). At the end of each term, the CREADE office contacted students enrolled in CREADE courses via email, requesting they complete an evaluation of each course they enrolled (does not replace university course evaluations). Two reminder notices are emailed. The CREADE office tallied results for each course. A summary of course evaluations are sent to instructor(s) and his/her Education Dean. CREADE staff compiled a grouped summary of course evaluations for the term to share with CREADE committees.

	Spring <u>2003</u>	Summer <u>2003</u>	Fall <u>2003</u>	Winter <u>2004</u>	Spring <u>2004</u>	Summer <u>2004</u>	Fall <u>2004</u>	Winter <u>2005</u>
Response rate	78%	54%	58%	54%	48%	44%	41%	47%
First distance-delivered course taken	73%	48%	43%	20%	21%	26%	27%	32%
Average credits taken per student	4.4	6	4	4.7	4.6	6	4.2	4.3
Students' average miles from teaching campus	211	160	79	186	190	113	190	240
Agreed satisfied with academic advising	100%	93%	89%	85%	96%	79%	85%	92%
Agreed that course registration was easy	92%	90%	84%	86%	87%	74%	81%	85%
Agreed the course software easy to use	89%	84%	78%	96%	87%	77%	88%	95%
Agreed that course navigation was straightforward	97%	74%	87%	96%	83%	84%	82%	88%
Agreed no problems obtaining course materials	92%	75%	81%	78%	93%	75%	82%	88%
Agreed objectives/learning outcomes were clear	97%	88%	92%	91%	89%	89%	76%	88%
Agreed student responsibilities for course were clear	93%	82%	90%	89%	83%	85%	73%	83%
Agreed assignments were helpful	100%	88%	86%	89%	93%	88%	80%	87%
Agreed the course provided practical knowledge and skills	98%	88%	87%	89%	96%	87%	78%	86%
Agreed the course was well organized	96%	86%	85%	92%	79%	86%	68%	77%
Agreed the textbook was useful	89%	86%	89%	88%	92%	83%	72%	81%
Agreed felt free to ask questions or disagree	98%	94%	88%	79%	89%	80%	77%	77%
Agreed received timely feedback to questions or concerns	98%	84%	83%	81%	81%	68%	60%	72%
Agreed had ample opportunity for interaction with students	93%	91%	87%	92%	95%	89%	87%	86%
Agreed course grading system was fair	98%	83%	90%	92%	86%	71%	79%	83%
Agreed would recommend course to others	94%	81%	81%	79%	88%	75%	69%	79%
Agreed distance learning format effective	97%	89%	91%	93%	90%	83%	80%	84%
Agreed would take another course via distance	98%	90%	95%	93%	97%	94%	94%	98%

*Collaborative Reading Education And Distance Education

Examples of Comments from Open-ended Evaluation Questions, All Terms

What Contributed Most to Learning?

- The opportunity to write reflectively and receive responses to what I said.
- Feedback from the professor was positive, prompt, and encouraging.
- Gathering new titles to use in class. Great online discussion of many issues. The instructor helped everyone feel at ease.
- The professor was able to respond to questions; the text was well organized; the assignments and research materials were easy to put to good use in the elementary classroom.
- The knowledge of the instructor, the connection with other online students, and the very useful text.
- The online format because I could read other's questions and answers. I also liked the weekly grading/ scoring evaluations that the instructor sent to me personally.
- I really appreciated the peer feedback in the discussion forum. I also valued sharing lesson plans with one another. In a typical classroom the sharing element doesn't always happen. I love to see how others utilize the learning materials.
- I enjoyed the freedom of "attending class" when it was most convenient for me. This minimized the detraction from my job and family and maximized learning the course materials and participating with other members of the course. Also, both of the books I read for this course were excellent and I have already recommended them to my principal and fellow teachers.
- The different perspectives of teachers from around the state opened my eyes to new factors in schools.
- The chance to gain valuable feedback from teachers around the state! It was an amazing opportunity to get to share with so many talented and enthusiastic teachers.
- The practicum was extremely useful in providing experience in all reading specialist roles. I was trusted to set things up in a way that met my needs and the needs of my school. I was given information and support whenever I asked for it.
- I was required to do assignments with my students and write a response on how it went. I saw immediately how well they worked or what my shortcomings were. The course helped me to make adjustments to be a more effective teacher.
- It made me really evaluate my learning. [The professor] is very knowledgeable and helpful. Her course outcomes required me to get involved in every aspect of our schools' literacy program and be a proactive advocate for positive change.
- I am a new Title 1 teacher and this class provided me with a nice overview of some of my responsibilities and duties in this position.
- The professor's amazing ability to model strategies. She really helped me develop an understanding of Miscue Analysis. She brought it to life and showed how wonderfully it fit into the daily routine of a classroom.
- The instructor was *jazzed* about what she teaches and that passed on to all the students.
- This was a very well organized course – one of the best I've taken so far. The PowerPoint presentations were especially useful, as well as the use of video.
- The assignments and expectations of the class were clearly laid out at the beginning of the class. This made it possible for me to do the coursework on my own schedule.
- All of the required readings were accessed via the Internet so they were current and applicable.
- The professor was very flexible with the assignments and allowed me to adapt them to fit the needs of my practicum site.
- Several aspects of this course contributed to my learning. First, the textbook was a great resource with applicable information. Second, the class was set up with the requirement that one respond to fellow students' papers which meant being able to "hear" what others had to say about whatever the assignment was. Third, we also had teams in addition to the whole class, which allowed for peer support and assessment of the assignment.
- The one Saturday session in La Grande was great. It gave me an opportunity to actually review some of the testing materials available in person as well as see some of them "in action" as demonstrated by our instructor.
- The websites suggested by the instructor and students.
- The assignments and expectations were clearly laid out at the beginning of the course. When I had scheduling conflicts, I could work ahead.
- Online discussion board – it was a resource I could go back to and reference as needed...tons of information there!
- The text was OUTSTANDING...keeping it on my desk in my classroom...I use it all the time.
- ▶ The text readings and team assignments were very helpful. Also, I think that the final application exercise helped me pull all the ideas from the course together in my mind.
- ▶ The content of the textbook was excellent. The professor was very organized, thorough in her syllabus, and gave assignments that would help analyze student work now and in the future.

- ▶ The project was something I needed to complete as part of my job so I was glad that this course forced me to think about it more seriously since I had to write about what I was doing and why I was doing it.
- ▶ Great online discussions with fellow students. Helpful feedback from the professor. Thought-provoking assignments.
- ▶ Cooperative work groups and projects.
- ▶ Hearing about what is happening at other schools.
- ▶ Being assigned to read children's books! Given the time to do this is fantastic. For once, I didn't feel guilty for reading and relaxing, and enjoying my homework.
- ▶ I particularly enjoyed the capstone project. I appreciated being able to check my grades and progress in the tools section.
- ▶ The texts provided great websites to access. The instructor provided a great summary of information. Feedback from other students was helpful. I really appreciated being able to attend the ORA conference and summarize my learning for one of the class projects. It really helped me to evaluate and synthesize what I learned from the experience.
- ▶ Flexibility of using the Internet to obtain and submit assignments.

What Elements Detracted from Learning?

- Not being able to meet in person was a disadvantage, but the excellent written discussion made up for it.
- Not having to actually show up for class meant I had to be sure to schedule my own time to accomplish the course requirements.
- It was a challenge to keep on top of all the reading.
- The very thing that I like about distance classes is what bogs me down! That is, I like being able to read everyone's assignments, but in a sense, I am expected to act as the teacher does - to comment on each student's assignment. So that means that I gain a lot more information from others, but it also means that as well as being a student, I am also a functioning teacher.
- The group project was very hard to coordinate.
- Sooooo much reading!
- I didn't get much feedback regarding papers that I wrote. I wasn't sure I was on track for the teacher's requirements.
- Since I don't have my own classroom, it was challenging to implement some of the assignments, which required assessing students and trying out different activities in a classroom.
- I was never sure how I was doing in the class. None of the assignments were graded during the course, so I felt like I didn't know if I was on track or not.
- The only problem I have with online classes is the lack of real time discussion. It can be difficult to respond to others when time has passed between conversations.
- I felt that the instructor tried to lecture by email. This was not a very effective way to deliver information. You cannot take a course designed for the classroom and transfer it directly to an online format, which is what I felt the professor tried to do.
- I don't think online classes are for me – I guess I really need the face-to-face interaction of the classroom. A “conversation” on a “discussion board” just isn't the same.
- There were only a handful of students, which made discussions sketchy.
- The synchronous chats seemed a little difficult to keep on track, which is probably just part of the territory.
- ▶ I did not feel free to disagree. When I did, the instructor emailed me reasons why I was wrong.
- ▶ The class was too large. It was hard to get reading everyone's postings thoughtfully. Some weeks other students did not respond to my postings because the class was so big.
- ▶ There were too many students and therefore there was a tremendous amount of reading involved. I think it would have been better to have a smaller class size.
- ▶ The discussion board was hard to maneuver in. There were no breakdowns as to individual discussion boards. It was like having to read through everything each time something new was posted. I have taken other online courses before and the design of the discussion board for this class was the hardest to deal with.
- ▶ I would have appreciated that all assignments been given to us at the beginning in a list with due dates.
- ▶ Different questions we were to answer were posted in two different sections on Blackboard. It would have been helpful to have all the questions listed in one section.
- ▶ The lack of interaction between instructor and student distracted me from learning. I received no feedback during this course. None of the assignments were graded during the course time frame and the instructor failed to respond to my weekly posts. I sent four emails throughout this course with questions about assignments and only received a response for one of the issues. There were no lectures and very few notes to tie the readings together. I found it very difficult to learn in this environment.

- ▶ Some of the assigned online reading articles had very little to do with the discussions; some were entirely too long (50-300 pages); I cannot read that much on the computer monitor or print that many pages on my own computer. It costs too much.
- ▶ Changing of due dates in midstream.
- ▶ There was a lot of work to do and I spent a lot more than 9 hours a week on this class, which made it hard to always do my best.
- ▶ Assignments due during the week.

What Suggestions do you have for Improving the Course?

- Vary the type of assignment.
- More teacher-student contact. I would like the teacher to let me know more often if my work is okay and how I can improve.
- The assignments seemed too numerous each week; it would have been better to have fewer but more in-depth assignments.
- Weekly or monthly progress reports.
- I just wish some of the courses were offered more often or more instructors were available because space [in the courses] is limited.
- There was a tremendous amount of reading, so towards the end I wasn't reflecting on the reading as much because I knew I had to get through it.
- Add real time chat rooms.
- It would be easier to pace myself throughout the course if there were deadlines for each assignment throughout the term.
- More reading, less posting.
- I felt that the questions posed for discussion were not open-ended enough so everyone answered in a similar manner.
- The instructor needs to post a general announcement each week that states how she feels the assignments are being handled or clear up any confusion or just say that it looks like we are rolling along OK.
- Some information or introduction to online classes would have been very helpful.
- I would have liked more assessment tools. It was too much theory for me.
- ▶ Structure the group sizes so each person is not expected to read and respond to all the other students' chapter responses. Don't double up the due dates. Responding to another student's literacy event on the same date that your own literacy event is due lessens your ability to be effective on both.
- ▶ Some of the deadlines and writing prompts that were posted on the discussion board changed from the beginning of the course to the end. I printed off a list the first time I successfully logged in and was caught off guard a couple of times with changes that must have been made after we were underway.
- ▶ More open-ended discussion postings over the readings.
- ▶ Be sure that when things are due is listed the same in all of the possible places, syllabus, grade list, and discussion board.
- ▶ Continue to keep the number of students manageable.
- ▶ Not as much work for the end of term projects. The weekly tasks were time consuming, thought provoking, and applicable to my classroom.

Advice for Future Students

- Register immediately so you can actually get into the course
- One of the greatest benefits of this course is being able to interact with your peers in a supportive yet intellectually challenging setting—take advantage of it!
- Order your books early.
- Do as much reading of the textbook ahead of time so you have more time to do the actual written assignments.
- Interact as much as you can with your fellow students.
- In terms of online format, students should know that this method requires much more of a time commitment than a regular in-person class format because of the volume of readings, peer postings, and writing involved.
- Communicate with the teacher often for clarification.
- The more you can begin to incorporate the various activities into your teaching immediately, the better!
- Keep track of your notes and discussion comments in a folder on your hard drive so you have a place to go to when you want to recall an assignment.
- Participate in the discussion boards. You'll gain even more insight from other's experiences.
- Be organized. Have a notebook and a calendar with all your necessary information. Buy your texts through half.com.

- Read and respond to the postings of as many students as possible, so that you can make connections with others, and so that you get as much diversity of thoughts and ideas as possible.
- Be ready to read, read, and read.
- [Students] need more than a basic understanding of the Internet I think. It is difficult for some to understand how to do some of the downloads and access the chats.
- Print off all assignments at once and file them so you have them ready for the reading.
- Create a support system with your classmates in order to get information and answer questions.
- If you have questions contact the instructor by phone.
- Investigate something that you are passionate about, use your own situation for study, get the textbook immediately and use it as a valuable reference tool.
- Plan to read and check-in daily in order to stay up with the discussion.
- Take it! You will never regret the help it gives you to analyze student work.
- You must be self-disciplined and good at time management, as well as computer literate.
- Be ready for a lot of work!
- Write everything in MS Word and cut and paste from there.
- Use your project and investigation to really address the learning needs of your students. It will really help to promote their literacy development.
- Get started early, pace yourself and don't fall behind.

How has the course influenced your teaching?

- This class has given me a much broader understanding of multicultural literature and issues.
- I now have both the theoretical framework for literacy development and practical approaches to support my students.
- I am more sensitive to incorporating media literacy skills in the curriculum.
- I have learned to look for patterns in reading and writing behaviors. I have improved my abilities in using informal assessments for diagnostic teaching.
- I am looking more closely at the assessments I use. I make more informed decisions about student needs and areas of concern because of this course.
- I'm more aware of the reasons behind miscues students make in emergent reading and have a better idea how to tailor lessons for those individual miscues.
- More aware of on-the-spot assessing and coaching during reading group. Learned new assessment techniques to incorporate or supplement with. Did a lot of self-reflection and re-evaluation of what I was doing and why and made some changes.
- I am more aware of utilizing a variety of strategies to teach content.
- I have implemented MANY new techniques and strategies into my lessons. My favorite is the Text Walls. Students can see their learning on the walls and can answer their own questions using text wall information.
- Added wall text, student work, improved my think-alouds for reading and writing.
- This course was geared more toward a school-wide reading program so I'm not necessarily teaching differently but rather looking at what I'm doing to coordinate with teachers and other specialists in the building. That was the biggest "eye opener" of this course – reminding me that I'm not an island alone in the school. My program must be in sync with the rest of the school to be most effective.
- I am becoming more cognizant of my own strategies for reading and writing and am beginning to pass these more easily to my students. I am incorporating more modeling and demonstration into my teaching, with various forms of writing in particular. I am more aware of and teaching comprehension and understanding even at the very lowest decoding levels.
- I am viewing in-service from a new perspective. I am also implementing and encouraging some new types of teacher learning activities.
- This class presented real-life examples that explain the reasons that schools need to change and ideas and ways to get started with this process. Now I have a new attitude, a new way of seeing a bigger picture of the interconnectedness of the different aspects of the school environment. I also have a broadened understanding of how to ask questions and conduct in-school research, to find areas that can be improved to benefit students' learning.
- I think more about where my students come from as far as language and dialect, cultural background, etc. which in turn helps me relate better to their needs.
- This course was very instrumental in broadening my use of discovery techniques and more meaningful activities in my classroom. It also has enabled me to better assess what a child's errors mean and so do a more thorough job individualizing for my students.
- It has really changed my thinking about teaching phonics and spelling.

- I have been meeting with my principal and talking to him about some of the things I am learning. He is very interested in having me expand my duties and responsibilities in areas that were discussed during this class.
- I've begun to think more about leadership and how to make a school-wide literacy plan.
- I learned how to do an effective teacher observation, I have a much better idea on how to design an inservice program, and I know what family literacy opportunities there are in my community.
- I am trying to incorporate family training into my curriculum, and I will be offering professional growth ideas to my colleagues.
- I got some good ideas for how to improve not only my Title I program, but also what my role at my school can/should be.
- I am integrating more literature across the curriculum.
- I will be using more of a constructivist approach in my classroom this year.
- I have a deeper understanding of the developmental continuum my students are going through and I have ideas for remediation that I am anxious to try.
- I am more aware of how linguistics affects learning and therefore I am teaching with different expectations.
- I have some specific guidelines for essays, portfolios and editing and revising. It was also great to learn a variety of strategies and ways to integrate writing across the curriculum.
- I am teaching my students to think and read critically.
- I will use several individual conferencing guides from the text and the Model of Least Biased Assessment guide. I also have some lesson ideas to try. The cumulative assignment helped me visualize how to integrate literacy routines and strategies into an ongoing instruction context, which was great!
- I will be completing reading fluency assessments on students and adjusting their materials to make them more accessible for my students.
- I plan on using some of the running record forms that were on the course website as well as share the articles with my co-workers.
- I now have several choices of assessments.
- I will be creating inquiry units with my students so that their reading on a specific topic/theme will come from a greater variety of sources.
- I will be using assessment to guide my instruction in a whole new way. I now understand portfolios in a new way. I plan to make time for conferencing and anecdotal records as a priority.
- I am designing my syllabi for the next semester with more built-in assessments given prior to instruction. I think this will be helpful for both my students and my lesson planning.
- I changed my reading times so that students spend more time with books. I also try to discuss the books read and talk about it with the students. I am having them read together more frequently.
- I am including critical media literacy questions often in my teaching now.
- I am affirmed in my approach to working with special needs kids. The best literacy practices are just as important for helping them to learn to read and write as with "regular" kids.
- I am so much more aware of how to work with special needs students. I am really working on helping them become independent users of helpful reading strategies. I am more aware of the nature of their problems and am approaching them with more understanding of their feelings and needs. I have many assessment and interpretation tools to use to help me obtain interventions.
- I'm more aware of Internet literacy resources.
- I am more aware of bias in all text, movies, videos, etc.
- I make sure that EVERY student I have understands the directions and expectations CLEARLY before we take any project further than the initial instruction.
- I will continue to read and share young adult literature with my students – according to their needs and interests. I have a better idea of all of the wonderful young adult literature available.
- I have added a lot of books to my in-class reading. I am doing book talks and book clubs regularly as part of my teaching. I am expecting my students to read far more now!
- As a result of this course I am now using many new teaching strategies for literacy. Good conversations, reading and writing response journals, teacher observation and observation notebook, literature circles, book talks, invented spelling, interactive writing, literature based writing, student centered writing...all of these are ideas and strategies I learned about in this course.
- I have really re-thought my teaching philosophy and have added new strategies to my teaching in the areas of writing especially. I feel more empowered to determine what is right for my classroom and students.

- ▶ My leadership project in particular has made me re-think my own school's reading program. I will be conducting a yearlong research project next year to determine whether there might be a better way to improve reading comprehension for our students.
- ▶ I am thinking more in terms of the BIG school-wide picture.
- ▶ My students are reading and writing more than they ever have.
- ▶ I did my leadership project at my (very small) school and it greatly improved the organization and availability of the books. The analysis of the genres/types of literature available in our school also was extremely informative and will definitely affect what we look at buying in the future to balance and build what we have.
- ▶ I have been using fluency data and implementing strategies to help struggling readers. My project was very helpful for allowing me to explore gaps in my students' literacy development.
- ▶ I am providing a weekly handout to parents about what we are reading in the classroom and offering suggestions for books related to the same theme that can be read at home.
- ▶ I have already done an Internet project. This helped me to reassess and redesign the project to promote and foster student learning and set high standards for my students to follow.
- ▶ Using more Internet sources as part of lessons.
- ▶ I feel more guilt about not using online resources in my instruction. I will be incorporating that more in my teaching.
- ▶ I am more aware of the obstacles my ELL students face, and more intentional about one-on-one work with them.
- ▶ I think specifically about my ELL students and whether the lessons I plan will work for them as well.
- ▶ I have changed the format of my lesson plan book so that I write language goals for students along with content objectives. I write these on my white board to focus my instruction and make goals clear to classroom helpers too. I am using more of the ELL strategies and SIOP in a more structured way – trying to implement something new in each unit.
- ▶ I am using various forms of literature, diagnostic reading assessments, and strategies to help make reading a positive and successful experience for my students.
- ▶ For this class I walked away with the idea to use more books in the classroom outside of textbooks. The books that I have already used have changed my classroom environment in a positive way. My students are more inspired than ever.
- ▶ Learned about some great books of all genres. I am the school librarian and will be ordering many of these and sharing them with our staff with practical ideas to use.
- ▶ I have an excellent base of using literature as a springboard for teaching other content area subjects. Not only that, one of the students in this course was a math teacher and she gave us many valuable ideas for using literature for teaching math. So, I am teaching differently by using more literature-based activities than I used before, and I am using this literature more effectively and systematically.
- ▶ Because of my increased and improved knowledge concerning children's literature – a clearer understanding of certain genre, organizing activities and information involving literature in electronic book files, a deeper awareness of the "voice" of authors and illustrators, a clearer idea of how to evaluate literature, teaching ideas learned from colleagues using literature, etc. I am bursting with new energy and determination to get kids reading!