

ReadOregon*

Graduate-level Literacy Education for K-12 Teachers

Reading Results: Oregon and the Nation

Literacy is key to school achievement and lifelong learning. The widely promoted goal of all children reading at grade level by grade 3 recognizes literacy skills as a foundation for success in math, science, and other school subjects. Low literacy is strongly related to low educational levels, unemployment, poverty, poor health, and crime.

The goal of improving literacy in all grades is foundational to four of the six priorities for Oregon's public schools established by State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Susan Castillo: Ready for School, Success for all Students, Learning to Read/Reading to Learn, School and District Leadership, Every School a Community School, Middle/High School Improvement. Castillo notes: "We know that students not only need to learn to read, but they need to read to learn. That's why literacy instruction must have a place in all grades – it shouldn't stop in 3rd grade" (2/28/04). "We know that if a student isn't a proficient reader by the end of 3rd grade, the gap in achievement continues to increase as does the cost to help that student catch up" (Castillo, 4/14/04).

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) has conducted assessments since 1969 in reading, math, science, writing, history, geography, and other fields to evaluate the condition and progress of K-12 education nationwide. State participation in NAEP assessments was voluntary until 2001. With the passage of *No Child Left Behind* legislation, all states receiving federal Title I funds are required to participate in reading and math assessments at grades 4 and 8 every two years.

Results from NAEP assessments provide a troubling picture of where we are as a state and nation in reading. The goal is "proficiency or higher," yet 2003 results for Oregon found only 31% of grade 4 students and 33% of grade 8 students reading at or above the proficient level. Oregon results are only slightly better than the national average of 30% of grade 4 students and 30% of grade 8 students reading at or above the proficient level.

Central to the improvement of student literacy is teacher professional development in the teaching of reading, not only in the early grades, but in middle and high schools as well.

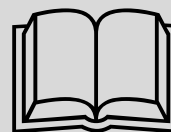
Creation of University Reading Collaborative

At the request of the Board of Higher Education in 2001, the Deans Council on Teacher Education prepared, "The Teaching of Reading in Teacher Preparation Programs in the Oregon University System (OUS)." The report found that a small number of teachers were enrolling in campus Reading Endorsement programs. The key reasons were access (teachers lived too far geographically from a campus or programs were not offered at convenient times). The report recommended the universities "develop new methods for offering the Reading Endorsement via interinstitutional/interagency collaborations and distance education."

With this goal, the Deans Council applied for and received a three-year grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education to develop a new collaborative reading program. With the assistance of the grant, five universities (Eastern Oregon University, Oregon State University, Portland State University, Southern Oregon University, and Western Oregon University) developed a shared distance-delivered Reading Endorsement program that was approved by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission in fall 2003.

Since spring 2003, the reading collaborative has offered three professional development options for teachers: a 24-credit Reading Endorsement program; a 12-credit Literacy Course of Study program for classroom teachers; and a "courses-only" option. Tuition assistance is also available for Oregon teachers through this program with the assistance of federal grants.

***ReadOregon** is the new name for the Collaborative ReadEnging Education And Distance Education (CREADE) project. The new homepage can be found at <http://ReadOregon.org>. Teachers who have the previous address bookmarked will be redirected to the new website address.



Who Teaches ReadOregon Courses?

The ReadOregon collaborative pools the expertise of more than 20 reading/literacy faculty from five universities. This enables ReadOregon to offer 9-11 courses in various thematic areas each academic term. This leveraging of resources in turn increases the course choice for students, especially courses targeted to different authorization levels: early childhood/elementary and middle/high school. All instructors are regular university faculty or adjunct faculty who also teach in Oregon public schools. Many faculty also serve as advisors to students in the program.



Number of Courses/Campuses Teaching Courses

<i>Term</i>	<i># of Courses</i>	<i>EOU</i>	<i>OSU</i>	<i>PSU</i>	<i>SOU</i>	<i>WOU</i>
Spring '03	11	9	1	–	–	1
Summer '03	9	2	–	7	–	–
Fall '03	9	5	–	1	2	1
Winter '04	11	5	–	2	4	–
Spring '04	11	8	1	–	–	2
Summer '04	12	3	–	8	1	–
Fall '04	15	7	1	3	3	1
Winter '05	14	5	1	3	2	3
Spring '05	15	9	2	–	2	2
Totals	107	53	6	24	14	10

*Does not include Practica.

The ReadOregon Curriculum

ReadOregon's graduate-level programs and courses are based on the International Reading Association's (IRA) *Standards for Reading Professionals*, updated in 2003. The Standards describe the literacy process and teaching proficiencies that reading professionals should possess to effectively apply that knowledge. Each course in the ReadOregon curriculum includes learning outcomes established by the faculty that align with the IRA and state standards in reading/literacy. Performance-based assignments assure that teachers will be able to apply what they are learning in the classroom.

Courses in ReadOregon (40)

READ 512: Foundations of Literacy: ECE/Elem. (3 cr)	READ 576: Miscue Analysis (1 cr)
READ 513: Foundations of Literacy, Middle/High (3 cr)	READ 580: Leadership in Reading Programs (3 cr)
READ 514: Linguistics for Teachers, K-12 (3 cr)	READ 581: Action Research in Leadership in Literacy (3 cr)
READ 514: Linguistics for Teachers, ECE/Elem (3 cr)	READ 590: Children's Literature, pK-5 (3 cr)
READ 515: ECE Foundations of Literacy Development (3 cr)	READ 591: Young Adult Literature, Gr 5-12 (3 cr)
READ 519: Language Study for Teachers, K-12 (1 cr)	READ 594: Young Adult Literature (1 cr)
READ 530: Reading/Composition in Content Areas (3 cr)	READ 595: Multicultural Literature (1 cr)
READ 532: Writing Across the Curriculum (1 cr)	READ 509: Literacy Practicum (3 cr) <i>varies by university</i>
READ 536: Teaching Phonics/Word Study (1 cr)	CI 810: Literacy Symposium (3 cr)
READ 537: Reading across the Curriculum, K-12 (3 cr)	ED 548: 2nd Language and ESOL Strategies (3 cr)
READ 540: Media Literacy, K-12 (1 cr)	ED 560: Foundations of Literacy Learning (2 cr)
READ 541: Literacy and the Internet, grades 4-12 (3 cr)	ED 561: Emergent Literacy (3 cr)
READ 550: Literacy Development for ELL (3 cr)	ED 562: Literacy in the Elementary Grades (3 cr)
READ 551: Literacy for Special Needs Students K-12 (3 cr)	ED 564: Literature in Literacy Programs (2 cr)
READ 554: Literacy Instruction Strategies for ELL Students, K-12 (3 cr)	ED 567: Spelling Matters (2 cr)
READ 556: Literacy and Cultural Competence, K-12 (3 cr)	ED 568: School Reading Programs (3 cr)
READ 570: Classroom Assessment & Reading Instruction (3 cr)	ED 581: Literacy in Middle/High Schools (3 cr)
READ 571: Principles/Methods of Diagnosis/Assessment (3 cr)	ED 582: Techniques of Diagnosis/Instruction for Reading Specialists (3 cr)
READ 572: Reading Assessment ECE/Elem (3 cr)	ED 599: Communication in Action (1 cr)
READ 574: Reading Assessment: Middle/High (3 cr)	ED 599: Literacy and Reading Curriculum Design (3 cr)



Program Requirements

ReadOregon offers two graduate level programs: a 12-credit Literacy Education Course of Study (mini-certificate), and a 24-credit Reading Endorsement. Both programs have been designed by a faculty advisory committee around six core

thematic areas – Literacy Foundations, Literacy Strategies and Methods, Literacy for Diverse Learners, Literacy Assessment, Leadership in School Leadership Programs, and Literature – plus a school-based practicum and electives.

Literacy Foundations

3 credits required for endorsement

Examines components that contribute to literacy practices. Foundational courses may include topics such as: language development, how written information is processed, various disciplines related to literacy acquisition, how the language areas are interrelated, strategies related to literacy instruction, how language works, and the nature of teaching language arts K-8.

Literacy Strategies & Methods

3 credits required for 12- and 24-credit programs

Helps educators guide students in acquiring skills necessary for reading, writing, thinking, and study in all curricular areas. The focus is on providing functional methods for integrating literacy strategies at all levels, from pre-reading and literacy development to content area study in the middle and high school.

Literacy for Diverse Learners

3 credits required for 12- and 24-credit programs

With modern classrooms reflecting a diversity of students from various cultural backgrounds, populations with special needs due to cognitive processing approaches, and a multitude of learning/intelligence styles, ReadOregon seeks to provide opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge of multifaceted instructional approaches. Courses provide knowledge/skills in four areas: foundations of literacy, bi- and multi-literacy, and language development; research-proven instructional methods/strategies effective in helping students develop/enhance skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking; specific methods/strategies for reading specialists that work well with a variety of students in various literacy programs; methods/strategies that empower classroom teachers to effectively work with the broad range of students in their classrooms.

School-based Practicum

3 credits required for endorsement

Practicum focuses on literacy assessment, leadership in reading programs, and an individualized project. Each university offers a 3-credit, school-based practicum for its own home institution students.

Literacy Assessment

3 credits required for endorsement

Appropriate use of authentic assessment of students' reading proficiencies and difficulties. Assessment is designed to inform curricular instruction and honor individual differences. Focus is on one or more levels: early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary, adult. Involves a wide range of tools/practices including formal individual and group assessment strategies, and extensive use of informal assessment tools (e.g., teacher observation; portfolios). The ensuing assessment forms the basis for instruction that accommodates individual learning, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Courses also offer preparation in appropriate/effective communication of assessment results to students, parents, colleagues, and administrators.

Leadership in School Reading Programs

3 credits required for endorsement

Examines issues related to school- or district-wide literacy activities. Courses are of particular interest to those in leadership roles including coordination of language arts programs or involvement with curriculum. Topics may include selecting and designing curriculum, current instructional practices, management of systems, staff roles, staff development, supervision, organization of support systems for students, research issues, review of literature, and action research.

Literature

All literature courses are electives

Develops educators' knowledge of the rationale for using literature, to provide greater awareness of current and traditional books, and familiarize educators with instructional strategies for using literature in the classroom. Topics may include Children's Literature, Young Adult Literature, and Multicultural Literature for use with early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school.

Electives

6 credits required for 12- and 24-credit programs

All literature courses are electives. Students may choose courses in other thematic areas as well.

Examples of Teacher Comments from Recent Course Evaluations

How has the course influenced your teaching?

"I am teaching my students to think and read critically."

"I am integrating more literature across the curriculum."

"I'm more aware of utilizing a variety of strategies to teach content."

- ◆ I learned to look for patterns in reading and writing behaviors. I have improved my abilities in using informal assessments for diagnostic teaching.
- ◆ I am more aware of student behaviors and can identify specific developmental stages in reading and writing.
- ◆ I have learned new techniques and some new activities that reach ALL children.
- ◆ I am looking into our school's reading programs and determining what effect they have and what I can do to help refocus or expand them.
- ◆ I am viewing inservice from a new perspective. I am also implementing and encouraging some new types of teacher learning activities.
- ◆ I have added wall-text and collaborative learning into many lessons.
- ◆ I am more reflective of my own practice as far as issues that came up as a result of reading and discussion. I have reevaluated what I do, why, and whether it is time for a change.
- ◆ It has really changed my thinking about teaching phonics and spelling.
- ◆ I've begun to think more about leadership and how to make a school-wide literacy plan.
- ◆ I have lots of ideas to share with my colleagues and I now will think about how to get reading strategies in every subject.
- ◆ I will be using more of a constructivist approach in my classroom this year.
- ◆ 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'm pumped up and want to be a better teacher, an advocate for reading."

"I reflect more about the value of my classroom activities."

"I designed and implemented a stronger reading program."

Who Applies to ReadOregon?

- ★ 66% elementary level teachers, 16% middle school, 18% high school
- ★ 67% employed teachers, 2% instructional assistants, 12% substitute teachers, 7% licensed not teaching, 5% preservice, 7% other
- ★ 30% from the Portland Metro area, 21% Willamette Valley, 10% central Oregon, 17% southern Oregon, 11% Oregon coast, 9% eastern Oregon, 2% out-of-state

- ★ 91% female, 9% male
- ★ 88% Caucasian, 3% people of color, 9% declined to respond
- ★ 72% interested in earning a Reading Endorsement
- ★ 51% have taken at least one ReadOregon course. 18% who have taken courses have taken 5-12 courses.

*Based on 562 ReadOregon applicants, 10/04

Important ReadOregon Changes

- ◆ ReadOregon is the new name for the Collaborative Reading Education And Distance Education (CREADE) project.
- ◆ Effective spring 2005, the university collaborative is being housed at the ReadOregon.org website.
- ◆ ReadOregon will be coordinated at The Teaching Research Institute, Western Oregon University.
- ◆ Visitors to the old CREADE website will be redirected to the new ReadOregon.org homepage.
- ◆ For further information, contact Bonnie Morihara, Program Coordinator: moriharb@wou.edu or 503-838-8413.

<http://ReadOregon.org>