WED140AC The Art of Making Meaning:

Educational Perspectives on Literacy and Learning in a Global World

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Course Description

WED140AC is an online course. Students will work through readings and activities each week online, and they will also participate together in one online discussion section each week using the videoconferencing application Zoom. As we explain below, there's also a fieldwork component in which WED140 students serve as mentors and tutors for kids in local after-school or school day programs. The focus of WED140AC is to understand how we use language and other modalities to communicate in a digital age—that is, how we use a variety of symbol systems to make meaning. Communication has of course been revolutionized of late, as social media have taken the world by storm. Especially apparent at the current moment is the need to be critical, reflective, and ethical in one's use of new media tools. These are topics we will address, not only through readings, but through participation with each other online, and through our work with children and youth.

The use of symbol systems such as language, writing, song, and gesture in communicating with others maintains a long history of scholarship, particularly in the field of education. With the coming of the digital age—one in which for many people paper and pencils and bodies have been replaced with screens and cameras and avatars—many practices of symbolization have moved into online, digital spheres of creation, curation, and circulation. To put this shift in perspective, every minute on the Internet in 2013, 72 hours of video were uploaded to YouTube, 216,000 photos were shared on Instagram, 278,000 Tweets were sent, and 571 new websites were created. According to a 2013 Pew Internet Survey, around 21 million (or 87% of) American teens (12-17 years old) use the Internet, while 33% of online teens share their own creative content. It is not surprising, therefore, that educators around the globe have taken a keen interest in better understanding how young people are learning online and with digital tools, and how these kinds of learning experiences can be mapped onto existing paper and pencil classroom practices and curricula. In this course, we are interested in understanding how youth develop their literate capacities, both in print and digital form, in classrooms and beyond them. We are also interested in understanding these literacy practices across time and space by

exploring literacy in local and global contexts and examining schooling and education in culturally diverse classrooms in the US and around the world.

Drawing from both historical and contemporary sociocultural theories on literacy and language as well as recent empirical research from education and new media scholars, we will explore an array of digital and non-digital forms of meaning-making and symbolic creativity, such as meme-generating, video making, micro-blogging, multi-player gaming, and app designing, as well as more traditional and non-digital or pre-digital forms of cultural participation and civic engagement. Our inquiry will span both the technical and aesthetic dimensions of these practices, as well as the social contexts and global cultural and commercial flows that give those practices their meaning.

We will be guided by the following questions:

· *What is literacy in a digital and global age, and what is the value of becoming and being perceived as literate?*

· *How do definitions of what counts as literacy vary—from place to place, context to context, time to time, language to language, mode to mode, andculture to culture?*

· *How do the social, cultural, and political values ascribed to these definitions of literacy impact or privilege certain modes and forms of meaning-making?*

· *How is literacy taught, learned, and acquired—in school and outside it, in a first language or a second or third, in global and local contexts, and online andface-to-face?*

· *How can classrooms be reimagined as spaces for youth to take collective action in the world as active and engaged citizens, informed by critical inquiry, self-reflection, and identity expression?*

In this course, we will develop critical understandings of course content through the creation of texts and digital artifacts, focusing on how different media and modes of meaning-making can be used in the production and sharing of knowledge. We will also apply theoretical ideas from readings to recent news articles, teacher and practitioner blogs, educational websites, and other mediations of current happenings in the world, as well as through our fieldwork (see below for details), where we will apply key ideas and pedagogical strategies from course readings in our own educational work. In reflecting on how educational theories relate to practice, we also will learn the fundamentals of educational and ethnographic research. Students will draw upon their data collected through fieldwork, course readings, and other available course content in authoring a final Case Study paper that explores a relevant literacy theme or issue.

Throughout the course, we ask how culture intersects with learning to read and write, and we will be alert as well to how symbolic systems like written language and image convey cultural meanings and how these meanings and the cultures they represent shift, blend, and hybridize in a global and digital world. As an American Cultures course, we will examine race and culture in the US across different geographic and ethnic dimensions. However, we will also explore

readings and conceptual frameworks on race, culture, and language in the context of a globalized world. In so doing, we will consider how traditional and bounded categories of race, culture, and language are shifting and blending amidst the broad scale circulation of cultural goods, peoples, and connective technologies.

Learning Objectives

· Students will gain a foundation for understanding socio-cultural ideas about literacy and language through an engagement with theoretical texts, video lectures, and discussion/learning activities with peers.

· Students will gain practical strategies for teaching and working with diverse groups of young students through an engagement with practitioner blogs, video interviews with teachers, and reflective practice on their own teaching.

· Students will learn key terminology and ideas about how different forms of media, social and cultural context, and aesthetic forms shape meaning in literacy practices in and out of school, locally and globally, through engagement with key texts, video lectures, and through analysis of digital artifacts.

· Students will gain the methodological tools for conducting ethnographic and educational research through engagement with key texts, video lectures, and through their own fieldwork experiences, which culminate in drafting a case study report of their research.

· Students will gain an understanding of relationships between meaning-making and literacy practice and race, ethnicity, language, class, and culture, focusing on the North American context but also introducing global contexts as well through an engagement with key theoretical and empirical texts and video interviews with researchers working in these areas.

· Students will gain an understanding of the impact student race, language, culture, and ethnicity has on education and schooling through engagement with key texts, video lectures and reflective practice on their own teaching experiences.

· Students will gain fluency in writing and knowledge of two academic genres by composing a personal essay and a social science research report.

· Students will learn to use new digital tools in creating multimedia texts that demonstrate critical understandings of course content, as well as learn how these tools shape the meaning of texts through their own experiences.

· Students will learn to work collaboratively online through the use of digital tools.

· Students will gain an understanding of the relationships between literacy practices and meaning-making and democratic participation and civic engagement through analysis of key texts, video lectures, and examples found online.

Grading Breakdown:

Online Discussion Participation and Activities (20 Total Points):

This grade will be based on your work each week moving through the online activities and your participation and attendance in video conferencing discussions. The online Engagement Index will not be used directly for grading, but will be consulted by the GSIs and your professor for rapid feedback about your participation in the online portion of the course. Students will be rewarded for contributing interesting artifacts and learning materials to the class, commenting and discussing with peers, and impacting the learning community both online and in the section meetings. Please note our attendance policy and due dates in the next section. You will receive a participation grade (10 Possible Points) at midterm and at the end of the semester (10 Possible Points).

Field Notes (25 Total Points):

Throughout the semester, students will submit 5 field notes that use qualitative research methods learned during the course in observing, documenting, and analyzing fieldwork experiences. Detailed instructions on writing field notes will be provided before you are asked to write your first note (due Week 2). Make sure you follow these guidelines, including those related to formatting the field notes. In general, field notes should include lots of vivid, objective detailed description. You will also relate your experiences in the field to class readings and discussions in an insightful way. Please note that your GSI will comment on your first 2-3 field notes in detail, making sure that you understand how to write excellent ones. Thereafter, your GSI will read and grade each field note, but will not comment in detail.

Literacy Autobiography (25 Total Points):

Students will author a Literacy Autobiography, a personal narrative that documents their own experiences in becoming literate. Drawing from theories and key concepts from course readings to frame their narratives, students will relate their own narratives to broader issues pertaining to education, literacy, society, and culture. The Literacy Autobiography will allow students to engage multiple forms of creative expression, including image, sound, video, and text, and will be assessed using a literacy autobiography rubric by GSIs.

Case Study (30 Total Points):

Students will write a Case Study (7-9 pages, not including references and appendices) based on a qualitative analysis of field notes (see above) written throughout the semester. The Case study will employ course concepts to explore a research question focused around an educational issue and will be assessed by GSIs using the Case Study rubric. Detailed instructions on writing the Case Study will be provided.

<u>**Course Logistics**</u>

Attendance:

Please expect to attend online discussion sections, and be alert to the fact that any absences will affect your final grade. Due to the short nature of our summer course (6 online sessions), you may not be absent during the semester without your grade being affected. For every missed discussion session your grade will drop ⅓ of a letter grade (e.g. from B+ to B).

Please note: GSIs will take attendance each week during online discussion sections. Due to the short nature of the summer course, there will be a strict zero (0) absence policy. If you have an emergency situation that affects your attendance, please speak with your GSI ASAP.

Due Dates

Weekly Inspire and Explore activities are due Wed 11:59pm. Collaborate and Reflection activities are due by 11:59 pm every Saturday. Field notes are due 11:59pm Saturdays, starting Week 2. Due dates for the Literacy Autobiography, and the Case Study are provided in the Weekly Topics, Readings, and Due Dates section below and also on the website under Assignments. All assignments should be turned in by the stated due date. Assignments turned in 24 hours late or more will be penalized by the reduction of assignment grade by 1/3. Assignments that are later than 24 hours will not be accepted unless an alternate due date has been arranged in advance with the professor and GSI. If you need special accommodations for completing assignments, or if you there is an emergency that affects your completion of assignments, please let your GSI know.

<u>**Weekly Topics, Readings, and Due Dates**</u>

Week 1 (7/3-7/7): What is Literacy? & Creativity in Everyday Literacy

Gee, J.P. (1998). What is Literacy? In V. Zamel & S. Spack (Eds.), *Negotiating Academic Literacies: Teaching and Learning Across Languages and Cultures* (pp. 51-59). New York, NY: Routledge.

Scribner, S. (1984). Literacy in three metaphors. *American Journal of Education 93*(1), 6-21.

Walsh, C., (2007). Creativity as capital in the literacy classroom: Youth as multimodal designers. *Literacy, 41*(2), 79-85.

Kirkland, D. E. (2009). The skin we ink: Tattoos, literacy, and a new English education. *English Education, 41* (4), 375-395.

Willis, P. E., Jones, S., Canaan, J., & Hurd, G. (1990). Chapter 1: Symbolic creativity. In *Common Culture: Symbolic Work at Play in the Everyday Cultures of the Young* (pp. **1-14**). Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Week 2 (7/10-7/14): Research in Literacy & *Critical Literacy*

Field Note 1 Due Friday, 7/14 at 11:59pm

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education. An introduction to theory and methods* (pp. 101-110). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Fadiman, A. (1997). Chapter 1: Birth , Chapter 6: High-velocity transcortical lead therapy, & Chapter 8: Foua and Nao Kao. In *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures* (pp. 8-18, 43-52, & 62-69). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Previous WED 140 student field note examples.

Freire, P. (1970). Chapter 2: Banking concept of education. Pedagogy of the oppressed (pp. 71-86). 30th Anniversary Edition (2000) with an introduction by Donaldo Macedo. New York: Continuum.

Alim, S. (2011). Chapter 14: Hip hop and the politics of ill-literacy. In B. A. U. Levinson and M. Pollock (Eds.), *A Companion to the Anthropology of Education* (pp. 232-246), Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, UK.

Week 3 (7/17-7/21):

Learning as Social Participation & Connecting School and Culture

Field Note 2 Due 7/21 at 11:59 pm.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). Interaction between learning and development & The prehistory of written language. In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.), *Mind in Society* (PDF 3-33). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Palinscar, A.S. (2003). Collaborative approaches to comprehension instruction. In Anne P. Sweet & Catherine E. Snow (Eds.), *Rethinking Reading Comprehension* (pp. 99-114). New York: Guilford Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into practice, 34*(3), 159

Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, (31), 2, 132-141.

Alim, H.S. & Paris, D. (2017). What is culturally sustaining pedagogy and why does it matter? In H.S. Alim & D. Paris (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 1-21), Teachers College Press, New York, NY.

Week 4 (7/24-7/28): Multimodality and Digital Storytelling & Language and Identity

Field Note 3 Due 7/28 at 11:59 pm.

Literacy Autobiography Paper Due 7/30 at 11:59pm

Hull, G., Kenney, N.L., Marple, S. & Forsman-Schneider, A. (2006). *Many versions of masculine: An exploration of boys' identity formation through digital storytelling in an afterschool program.* New York: The Robert Browne Foundation.

Jewitt, C. (2008). Multimodality and literacy in school classrooms. *Review of Research in Education, 32*(1), 241-267.

Rodriguez, R. (1981). The achievement of desire. In *Hunger of memory: The education of Richard Rodriguez, An autobiography* (pp. 43-73). Boston: D.R. Godine.

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). How to tame a wild tongue. In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new mestiza* (pp. 53-64). San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

Participation and Engagement Part 1: You will be evaluated on your online and zoom participation, thus far. Refer to course site for more information.

Week 5 (7/31-8/4): Language in and Out of the Classroom; Writing and the Politics of Form & Coding Field Notes

Field Note 4 Due 8/4 at 11:59 pm

Wong Fillmore, L. (2009). English language development: Acquiring the language needed for literacy and learning. (pp. 1- 15). *Research into Practice*. Pearson Education.

Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2013). Introduction. In *Literacy as Translingual Practice: Between Communities and Classrooms*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Heath, S. B. (1993). Rethinking the sense of the past: The essay as legacy of the epigram. In L. Odell (Ed.), *Theory and Practice in the Teaching of Writing: Rethinking the Discipline* (pp. 105-31). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Bartholomae, D. (1986). "Inventing the University". *Journal of Basic Writing*, 5, (1).

Dyson, A.H., & Genishi, C. (2005). Considering the case: An introduction. In *On the case: Approaches to language and literacy research* (pp.1-18). New York: Teachers College Press.

Saldaña, J. (2009). Chapter 1: An Introduction to codes and coding (pp. 1-31). In *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. London, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Weeks 6 (8/7-8/11-4/9): Remix and the Living Text*Field Note 5 due 8/11 at 11:59 pm.*

Bakhtin, M. M. (2003). The dialogic imagination (pp. 73-81). In P. Morris (Ed.), *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Madvedev, & Voloshinov*. London, UK: Arnold.

Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2008). Remix: The art and craft of endless hybridization. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*(1), 22-33.

Hull, G., & Rose, M. (1990). " This wooden shack place": The logic of an unconventional reading. *College Composition and Communication*, *41*(3), 287-298.

McDermott, R.P. (1993) 'The acquisition of a child by a learning disability', in Chaiklin, S. and Lave, J. (eds.) *Understanding Practice: Perspectives on Activity and Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 269–305.

 Hull, G. A., Stornaiuolo, A., & Sahni, U. (2010). Cultural citizenship and cosmopolitan practice: Global youth communicate online. *English Education, 42* (4), 331-367.

Pratt, M. L. (1991). Arts of the contact zone. *Profession*, 33-40.

Participation and Engagement Part 2: You will be evaluated on your online and zoom participation for the second half of the course. Refer to course site for more information.

Field Work Log Due 8/11 before midnight

Case Study Due August 13th at noon