

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK - POTSDAM
GRDG 625: Using Technology to Teach Literacy Fall 2011 Tues 4:45-7:15 Sat 104A

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Office Hrs: M, 2-4; W, 11-12;
by appointment

Course Description: This course uses a participatory approach to learning to teach literacy through exploration of a wide range of technologies. A primary focus in the course is to examine critical issues and tools to promote comprehensive literacy development among students with a range of abilities. Through investigation of the nature and opportunities of the “read-write Web” (Richardson, 2010), multimodal authoring, and mobile and assistive technologies, students in the course will learn to become designers and critical consumers of literacy technologies, and to apply this knowledge to school leadership roles in literacy education.

Required Texts:

- 1) Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. NY: Basic Books.
- 2) Richardson, W. (2010). *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms*, 3rd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- 3) Articles & Websites as indicated on syllabus.

Course Objectives:

GRDG 625 supports the conceptual framework for the School of Education and Professional Studies at SUNY Potsdam: *A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE: PREPARING CREATIVE AND REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS*. As a *well-educated citizen*, students gain insight into theories, histories, and practices related to the uses of technology to enhance literacy learning. This includes study and critique of the impact of media and information technologies on schools; opportunities and challenges facing teachers with regard to the use of technology; and the ways in which social, cultural, and economic diversity among learners and within/across school systems affect access to and participation in using technologies for learning. As a *reflective practitioner*, students engage in participatory exercises to learn to use instructional and assistive technologies; apply knowledge to instructional decision-making in light of local, state, and national standards; and prepare to become leaders in introducing and facilitating use of technologies for literacy teaching. As a *principled educator*, students demonstrate their ability to work with peers to be mutually productive, to attain a high level of competence, and to do so while maintaining professional integrity. Students also are willing to take risks, be flexible, show comfort with uncertainty, and recognize and respect one’s own diversity and that of others.

The IRA (International Reading Association, 2010) Standards addressed in the course are: 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 4.2; 5.1; 5.2; 6.2; 6.3 (see <http://reading.org> > Research & Policy > Standards > Professional Standards for reading educators 2010)

Assignments:

1. **Blog Participation (30% total):** Post responses to assigned and self-chosen texts, colleagues' responses, and class activities in three different blog formats. There are three major learning goals in terms of the themes of this course: a) to experiment with using blogs to record your ideas & response to texts; b) to use the blog to make connections by reading & commenting upon other Web texts connected to themes we are studying; c) to build community with your colleagues as you investigate tech/literacy ideas together. Here are formats and guidelines for each blog assignment:

a) ***Class Blog & Book Review (15%)***

"Potsdam LiteracyTech" (our class blog) is the primary location for discussion of ideas related to Turkle's *Alone Together* during the first five weeks of class. We'll also use the Blog as a place to collect and discuss questions and observations related to tech/literacy ideas throughout the semester, particularly as we work examine suggested sites in Richardson, and do activities in class to learn new tools and examine how other educators use them.

We'll discuss *Alone Together* during class as well as on the Blog. Blogging during this period of reading Turkle will aim to achieve the "connective writing" described by Richardson (pp 28-33), where our written discussion launches forward from ideas raised in Turkle, but also reflects our responses to other websites, blogs, and print material we may be reading related to her ideas.

On Sept 6, during class, we'll discuss the first chunk of reading and practice blogging. From the following class, Sept 13, through Oct 4, two students will be Blog conversation leaders each week, focusing on the assigned Turkle reading for a week. The two facilitators should post their responses by the **Saturday prior** to their assigned class date. All others in class should read the assigned text, check the Blog, and post at least one response by the **Sunday evening prior** to class. By our Tuesday meeting, facilitators should have read all submitted posts, so they can help facilitate discussion in class.

To wrap-up, each student will look back at the individual archive of Blog posts, and we'll collaboratively write a review of the book for a group of colleagues, administrators, community leaders, or other audience interested in the implications of digital literacies for children's development and for teaching.

b) ***Team Blog (15%)***. Work with a partner to launch your own blog, with class time provided for collaboration to design your blog and build content. Blogs should focus on literature for children & youth, literacy-rich web resources, literacy instructional strategies, and more. The intended audiences include pre-service teachers who are early-on in their education program (such as our EDLS 207 students); undergrads from SUNY Potsdam and SLU who are participating in afterschool 'book buddies' programs; other teachers; parents, etc. Discuss literature you love to read with kids, literacy teaching strategies, technology tools, and more. You'll all be responsible for commenting on the blog over the course of the semester, through a schedule and process you determine collaboratively. Undergraduates will be invited - and instructed - to read and comment on your blogs, so your responsibility extends to them directly. **These blogs will go live by 10/25 or earlier.**

2. **Web 2.0 Presentation & Wiki (15%):** Explore Web 2.0 and assistive tech tools that offer support for literacy learning. Provide an introduction to **two** tools in class, and **choose one** to engage the class in a hands-on experience (20 mins total). Post a description of your tools and reflection about their advantages/drawbacks on a class Wiki. Additionally, by the first week of

December, experiment with two additional tools that others have posted, and annotate the Wiki entry with a few sentences about your experience using the tool, ideas for teaching, advantages/drawbacks, etc. **Sign-up for a presentation date in our first class. Submit to Wiki within two weeks following your presentation. Try out and annotate other Wiki posts by 12/6.**

4. **Multimedia Authoring: Podcast and Digital Storytelling Projects and Analyses (15%):**

Through in-class studio time, learn to use audio recording and multimedia authoring tools. Conduct research to investigate the impact of using these tools on student literacy learning. Share the results of your creative work and research in-class. **Digital Story Share: 11/15**

5. **Report on Schools, Technology, and Literacy (no grade):** Based on a school where you work, student taught, or attended, learn more about the integration of new technologies to support literacy learning and teaching. Talk with teachers, administrators, tech coordinators. Share findings in class. **Due: 11/29**

5. **Literacy Leadership: Curriculum, Coaching, and Community Building (10%):** You'll choose from among several options designed to build your expertise with technologies for literacy teaching. As part of the assignment, you'll teach someone else about a new technology tool that can enhance their literacy teaching, as modeled in your project. Options will include (but not be limited to) re-designing a unit or series of lessons to integrate a substantive Webquest and use of Smartboard resources; designing a unit or series of lessons to include digital storytelling, podcasting, or Wiki-based writing; creating a blog project for a particular classroom and educating the class in its use. Details forthcoming. **Due: 12/12**

6. **Literacy Leadership Portfolio and Essay: (30%, self-assessment included as part of grading)**

Synthesize your learning from the semester by submitting a portfolio of 3 projects that best reflect your growth in relation to course themes. Include an introduction/overview; a reflection about each piece; and an essay that examines professional literature and research regarding technologies for literacy learning/teaching. Details forthcoming. **Due: 12/12**

Course Policies

Plagiarism: Any student who submits another person's work or ideas (including lesson plans, ideas, and units from websites) in his/her name will be subject to a failing grade in the course and any disciplinary action pursuant to the SUNY Potsdam *Code of Conduct*. Give credit where credit is due. When in doubt, ask.

Attendance: Students are expected to be present for every class, on time, and ready to participate. A pattern of absences, tardiness, early departure, and/or lack of preparation will affect the participation grade. Only documented absences will be excused. In the event of an absence, students are responsible for material, assignments, and announcements for each class missed. If you attend class but are unprepared for discussion/activity, or you do not add your voice to the conversation on a regular basis, your participation grade will be lowered.

Cell Phones/Text Messaging/Facebook: Cell phones may only be on during class in cases of emergency or for use to illustrate a technique related to new literacies instruction. Students should discuss with professor ahead of time should such a need arise. Texting and use of Fb are forbidden during class unless connected to an in-class exercise.

Assignments: Assignments must be turned in on the due dates; follow procedures for posting assignments to Moodle if appropriate. Late assignments will affect the participation grade. Assignments will not be accepted via email. Evaluation of all written assignments will include spelling, grammar, and mechanics as well as content. Students are advised to refer to a writing style guide prior to submitting written work. Unless otherwise directed, all assignments must be typed or word-processed, double-spaced, 12 point Times font, and in APA citation format. Students are encouraged to visit the College Writing Center, Carson 106, cwc@potsdam.edu, x3059, for assistance and support for writing assignments.

Documented Disabilities: Any student who believes that he or she may need academic adjustments or accommodations based on a documented disability are advised to make an appointment with the professor. Students in need of an Accommodation Plan should visit Student Support Services in Sisson Hall 119 (x2347).

Final Grade Submission: To receive a final grade for the course, students must complete all assignments. An *Incomplete* will not be given without prior consultation.

Grading Scale

4.0 (A) Excellent
3.7
3.3
3.0 (B) Good
2.7
2.3
2.0 (C) Satisfactory
1.7
1.3
1.0 (Minimum)
0.0

Course Calendar

Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
8/30	Course overview	
9/6	1) Turkle: pp ix-52 ("Author's Note" through Ch. 2) 2) Richardson, Ch 1	1) Bring responses to readings 2) Blogging basics; form blog teams 3) Explore Web 2.0 resource
9/13	1) Turkle: Chs 3-5 (*Blog about Chs 3-4 only) 2) Richardson, Chs 2-3 <u>Bloggers:</u>	1) Blog post(s) 2) In-class: Work on team blog 3) Explore Assistive Tech resource 4) Web 2.0 Tools Class Wiki – Overview in class
9/20	1) Turkle: Chs 6-8 (*Blog about Chs 6-7 only) 2) Richardson, Chs 4 <u>Bloggers:</u>	1) Blog post(s) 3) In-class: Work on team blog
9/27	1) Turkle: Chs 9-11 (*Blog about Chs 9-10 only) 2) Richardson, Ch 7 <u>Bloggers:</u>	1) Blog Post(s) 2) <u>Web 2.0 Tools presentation:</u> 3) Work on team blog
10/4	1) Turkle: Chs 12-14 (*Blog about Chs 12-13 only); read conclusion for class discussion 2) Richardson, Ch 8 - Podcasting Introduction <u>Bloggers:</u>	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools:</u> 2) Collaborative writing: Turkle Book Review 3) Podcasting: Develop an idea for a podcast for your team blog
10/11	<i>Fall Break: No Class</i>	
10/18	Podcasting & Digital Storytelling 1) Richardson, Ch 8 (re-read) 2) Readings TBA	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools:</u> 2) Podcasting studio in-class: develop content for team blog

Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
10/25	Digital Storytelling *Be ready to share DS examples you locate; analyze their attributes/utility for literacy teaching & learning	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools</u> : 2) Podcasting/DS studio in-class
11/1	1) Digital Storytelling 2) Introduction to Webquests (readings TBA) 3) SmartBoard resources for literacy and critical thinking development	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools</u> : 2) DS studio in-class
11/8	Develop “Curriculum, coaching...” project plan (individual conferences w/ prof.)	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools</u> : 2) DS studio in-class
11/15	1) Digital Story Share 2) Assistive Technologies for literacy learners (explore in class)	1) <u>Web 2.0 Tools</u> : 2) Due: DS/ Podcast projects & analyses
11/22	<i>EduTopia</i> website	1) <i>EduTopia</i> jigsaw 2) Work on “Curriculum, coaching...” assignment
11/29	Schools of the (Near) Future Readings TBA (may include field trip)	1) Report on schools & tech for literacy 2) Work on “Curriculum” project
12/6	<i>*LAST CLASS:</i> Synthesizing course themes and remaining questions/issues	<u>DUE:</u> Wiki annotations based on Web 2.0 entries
12/12	<i>*Final: Share “Curriculum” Projects & Portfolios</i>	<u>DUE:</u> Curriculum Project; Portfolio