LIS 580: Contemporary Theories and Practices of Reading

Course Outline

Winter 2017

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Office: 3-11 Rutherford South

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10.30 a.m.–11.30 a.m., or by appointment

Class times: Mondays: 1:00 p.m.–3:50 p.m. in 3-01 Rutherford South

Calendar Description:
A study of different theories of reading (e.g. social, psychological, literary) and of sites and practices of literacy in an era of rapid cultural and technological change.

Course Objectives:
On completion of this course, students will understand and be able to critique the following:

- social theories of reading
- contextual issues of reading
- platforms for reading (paper, screen, etc.)
- sites of reading (homes, educational institutions, workplaces, libraries, etc.)
- politics of literacy
- psychological approaches to reading
- cultural theories of reading
- forms and conventions of texts
- issues involving graphic materials
- questions of linguistic and cultural background
- technological pressures on reading
- changing forms of text
- organizational issues concerning literacy
- institutional approaches to meeting reader needs
- readers’ advisory work

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
• Drawing on their own experiences as readers and in collaboration with classmates, students will articulate previously tacit understanding of their own reading processes and communicate the significance of the differences among individual readers.
  ○ Measures:
    ■ class exercises
    ■ journal responses
    ■ case study
    ■ reading task
    ■ class discussions

• Drawing on course readings, video training, class discussion, and a variety of in-class exercises, students will develop skills appropriate for conducting a readers' advisory interview.
  ○ Measures:
    ■ in-class exercises
    ■ case study

• Drawing on course readings, video demonstrations, class field trips, and the presentation of case studies in class, students will develop a more acute appreciation of the complexities of reading for a variety of constituencies: child learners, adult learners, ELL readers, and people reading outside their comfort zone for any number of reasons.
  ○ Measures:
    ■ case study
    ■ journal responses
    ■ reading task
    ■ class discussions

Content:

• An introduction to major theoretical perspectives on reading
• An overview of substantial institutional questions regarding reading
  ○ how readers are supported through services and collections
• An in-depth exploration of individual variations in reading practice
• An introduction to the following topics:
  ○ variables at work in becoming a reader
  ○ the role of various forms of literacy education for children and adults
  ○ the impact of the supply and organization of literacy materials
  ○ the effects of technological change on literate behaviours
  ○ the civics of literacy

Methods:

Seminar presentations, class discussion of readings, field trips

Course Relationships:

Pre-requisite: LIS 501
Required Texts:
*What We See When We Read* by Peter Mendelsund. Available for sale in the university bookstore.

Plus a set of required further readings available in Henderson Hall and via the university library.

Assignments and Weighting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Journal</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of a Case Study</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>-written presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>-handout</td>
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<td>-oral presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>-transcript</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Task</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Contribution</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Details of these assignments, due dates, late penalties, etc. will be published soon. Raw scores (i.e. marks on assignments) are totalled at the end of the course and converted to the 4-grade scale.

School of Library and Information Studies Grading Statement:
Grades reflect professional judgements of student achievement made by instructors. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in class. The instructor should mark in terms of raw scores, rank the assignments in order of merit, and with due attention to the verbal descriptions of the various grades, assign an appropriate final letter grade.

Academic Integrity:
The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the university.

Students should also be mindful of the SLIS Copyright Policy.

Inclusive Language and Equity:
The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people within the university community and to educating faculty, staff, and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. The Faculty recommends that students and staff use inclusive language to create a classroom atmosphere in which students’ experiences and views are
treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation and ethnic background. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services.

**Recording of Lectures:**
Recording of lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.