William Paterson University  
College of Education  
Department of Educational Leadership and Professional Studies

**Theme - Preparing Inquiring Educators for Diverse Settings: Developing Knowledge, Application, Dispositions**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

1. **Course Number and Title:** ELRL 6200 Diagnosis of Reading Difficulties (3 credits)

2. **Course Description:** This course will provide the prospective reading specialist with the background, knowledge, strategies, and skills necessary for diagnosing and prescribing for the remediation of problem readers. Basic to any diagnosis is a thorough understanding of students, their individual differences, the reading processes, and the reasons why children have difficulties. Prospective specialists will work with students and develop a case study through interviews, observations, reading and writing samples and formal and informal assessments. All of the above measures will be utilized to obtain an accurate and objective assessment of the client’s performance. The information gained will be examined and studied for the specific purpose of planning, developing and executing an individual educational, remedial program for the reader with difficulties.

3. **Pre- or Co-Requisites:** ELRL 601, ELRL 617, ELRL 625, ELRL 633

4. **Course Objectives:**

   Candidates will know and understand:
   1. Many factors and processes involved in the attainment of proficiency in reading and writing.
   2. Various informal and formal assessments to diagnose reading difficulties.
   3. How to administer informal and formal assessments in order to prepare a case study with specific recommendations for an on-going individual remedial program.
   4. How to interpret and report results of formal and informal test measures for the purpose of planning remediation sessions.
   5. How to prepare and conduct a meeting in order to obtain background information and to report the results of assessments to various audiences.

5. **Student Learning Outcomes:**

   Candidates will be able to:
   1. Demonstrate an understanding of the literature and research related to assessments and their uses and misuses.
   2. Demonstrate an understanding of established purposes for assessing the performance of all readers, including tools for screening, diagnosis, progress monitoring, and measuring outcomes.
3. Use multiple data sources to analyze individual readers’ performance and to plan appropriate assessment sessions.
4. Analyze and report assessment results to a variety of appropriate audiences for relevant implications, instructional purposes, and accountability as evidenced by the completion of a diagnostic case study.
5. Demonstrate the ability to communicate results of assessments to various audiences.

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6. **Course Content:**

1. Overview of Reading
2. What is a Reading Disability?
   a. Various definitions in use
   b. Terms commonly used: corrective reading, developmental reading, remedial reading, underachiever, slower learner, gifted reader, disabled reader, culturally and linguistically different, learning disabled, language impaired, dyslexia, “at risk,” struggling readers, etc
   c. Kinds of disabilities: mild to severe
   d. Clients with multiple disabilities
3. Principles of Diagnosis
   a. On-going diagnosis: observations, anecdotes, interviews
   b. Determining strengths and weaknesses of client
   c. Patterns evidenced
   d. Diagnosis determined by more than one test
   e. Interests: finding print materials to encourage reading
   f. Getting insights from student himself/herself
   g. Developing a positive attitude that all readers can learn.
4. Assessment Process for Case Study
   a. Levels of diagnosis
   b. Formal and informal assessments
   c. Group and individual reading diagnostic assessments
   d. Special diagnostic reading instruments for oral reading, silent reading, comprehension, vocabulary, etc.
   e. Informal Reading Inventory
f. Family and teacher interviews  
g. Other relevant information: reading interest surveys and questionnaires  

5. Analyzing and Reporting Data from Informal and Formal Data  
a. Examining all data for strengths and weaknesses  
b. Looking at patterns and miscues  
c. Identifying miscues, using miscue analysis  
d. Determining independent, instructional, and frustration levels.  
e. Writing a summary report based on diagnostic data  

6. Reporting to Professionals and to Parents  
a. Writing official reports to principals and the child study team  
b. Writing reports to parents  

7. Keeping Current in the Field of Diagnosis  
a. Read journals, yearbooks, online resources  
b. Participate in local, state, and national organizations  
c. Read current professional publications  
d. Attend professional development workshops and conferences  

7. Teaching/Learning Methods:  

1. Lecture and class discussion  
2. Online discussion  
3. Modeling and demonstrations  
4. Small group sharing  
5. Writing/discussion groups  
6. Electronic resources  
7. Video resources  

8. Evaluation Methods:  

1. Topic presentations: Candidates study and report a topic of reading difficulties and/or case studies of reading intervention to the class. (SLO #1)  
2. Reflective journals: Candidates write a reflective journal that includes their understanding of the assessment procedures, observations of the student performance, and their own reflections on the sessions. (SLO #2, #3)  
3. Case study of diagnostic findings of client: Candidates complete the case study of diagnosis of reading difficulties. (SLO #4)  
4. Writing letters to the client’s teacher and/or parents (SLO #5)  

9. Suggested Readings:  

10. **Preparer’s Name and Date:** Marion P. Turkish, Ph. D. Summer 2003

11. **Original Departmental Approval Date:** October 29, 2003

12. **Reviser’s Name and Date:** Carrie E. Hong, Ph.D. Fall 2010

13. **Department Revision Approval Date:** Fall 2010

14. **Bibliography:**


