Instructor: Dr. Danling Fu  
Classroom: Norman 2325 (10-EI periods)  
Phone: 273-4193  
Office: 2203 Norman Hall  
Office Hours: Tuesdays: 1:30 -4:30 or by appointment  
Email: danlingfu@coe.ufl.edu

Course Overview and Objectives

This graduate seminar is to broaden our perspectives on literacy, learning and teaching by taking a close look at the literacy patterns of students in an underprivileged class and also teaching and learning framed from different cultural and language backgrounds. We will examine the interactive patterns, learning styles and life experiences of students who are different from those in the mainstream culture or new to this culture, and discuss how students’ home culture (life experience) influences their school learning and performance and how the school culture and environment impact upon them as learners. Through extensive reading and discussing about the school and home literacy experiences of students with various backgrounds and inquiring about students’ literacy performance at school and home, hopefully, we will reach an understanding of those students with diverse backgrounds and gain an appreciation and respect for their dialects, home cultures and living and learning styles. Also, we will re-examine our conception of “Literacy” and our perception of those students and their families while exploring our roles in providing equal and justice education for the people of the underprivileged and of nonmainstream cultural backgrounds.

Required Texts


**Group Selected Readings on different topics** (loan from the professor)
- On hyphenated American
- On children of migrant workers
- On Native Americans and their children’s experience
- On Muslim Arabs’ experiences in the US

**Course Contents and Schedule:**

1-10  Course Overviews: Reading, Expectations and Assignments
      What are relationships between literacy and culture, and culture and family?  
      Your experiences of teaching children of the under-privileged class
      For international students: what are the expectations that usually parents have for their children’s schooling? What is your expectation for your education in US?
      Form book study groups

1-17  Reading: Heath: Prologue-2
      Reading for international students: Li: Introduction and Chapt 1

      Why is this part called “Ethnographer learning”?  
      What is an Ethnographic study?  
      The historical context and its lasting significance  
      The setting in an ethnographic study  
      Teaching and learning in a cross-cultural context: conflict beliefs

1-24  Reading: Heath: 3-4
      Reading for international students: Li: Chapts 2-3

      Learning to talk in two different communities  
      Ways of learning to communicate  
      Different expectations of formal schooling between teachers and parents

1-31  Reading: Heath: 5-7
      Reading for International students: Li: Chapts 4-5

      Literacy in three different communities

2
Community and school literacy
Whose Literacy counts? What is Literacy?
Children caught in two opposite views in learning

Book presentation: Native American children’s experience

2-7 Reading: Heath: 8-Epilogue
Reading for international students: Li: Chapts 6-7

What do teachers need to know and learn in order to reach all children?
How should we teach all children to learn school literacy?
Where is the place for home literacy?
What should we do when our values differ from the students’ families?

Revisit: Ethnographic research methodology

2-14 Reading: Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines: Introduction and Chapts 1-2
Reading for International Students: Ma: Parts 1 and 2
Our perception of poverty
Children and families in poverty
What can we learn from them?
Comparison and Contrast of Teaching in China and US

Book presentation: American born Chinese

2-21 Reading: Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines: Chapts 3-5
Reading for international students: Ma: Parts 3-4

Children’s perception of literacy and their world
Children/s Family and School Literacy
What have these families and children taught us?
Finding the “Middle Ground” in Teacher Education between two education systems and traditions

2-28 Reading: Purcell-Gates: Introduction and Chapt: 1-4
Reading for international students: Kanno: Chapts 1-4

Poverty and non-literate in rural America
A world without print
Living between two worlds—becoming bicultural and biliterate

Share our interview stories

Assignment due: the Interview Essay

3-8 Spring Break
3-14  Reading: Purcell-Gates: Chaps 5-9
   Reading for international students: Kanno: Chaps 5-8

   Life, school and literacy
   How can we reach the children who come from families and community with little print?
   Transnational identity construction

Book presentation: children of migrant workers

3-21  TESOL Conference

3-28  Reading: Lee: Chaps 1-2

   Asian Americans in the US society
   Hmong American Students’ experience

4-4    Reading: Lee: Chaps 3-5

   Traditional vs. Americanized Hmong Youth
   Race, schools and Asian immigrants

Book presentation: On Muslim Arab’s experience in the US

4-11  Reading: Paley: White Teacher

   Reflect our own experience and examine our own hidden perception of children of color and others’
   What do we mean by “Keep our minds open” to the cultures our children bring to our classrooms?

4-18  Final paper due

Course Assignment and Goals:

1. Weekly Reading Response (20% 1.5 for each week)--due weekly

   Every week you are expected to bring typed weekly reading response and 2-3 questions to share and discuss in class. In this response, you are required to discuss your weekly reading and raise questions related to the reading and course topics. If you fail to do the required reading and writing, you won’t be counted as full attendance to the class. At the end of each class, you are required to summarize the learning of the class, and raise more concerns and questions if you have any, which is counted as part of the weekly journal.
2. Weekly discussion leaders (5%)

Every week, students in each group will take turns to lead the group discussion: making sure all the key points discussed, and all the members are engaged in and contribute to the discussion. Every student will lead the discussion about three times throughout the semester. The group leader needs to ensure all group members’ engagement and participation by including every student’s questions and concerns in the class discussion, but not dominate the discussion. When the class reads two different books, please make sure to give equal time to discuss each book. The group leader should also make sure no off-task talk during the group discussion time and summarize the key issues of the group discussion and report the summary to the class.

3. A: An interview essay (20%) due on Feb. 28

You are required to interview a person with “non-townspeople” literacy background (in Heath’s term) about his/her family values, personal literate life, views and concerns of formal education and schooling, and of the society as a whole or what he/she wishes that the school should have done more for his/her own people. In your paper, you should present your understanding of this person as an individual, as a cultural being and his/her literate experience and life. In addition, you should view how this learning influences you as a future teacher and changes your perception of the people from a background different from yours.

3. B. For international master level students: you will interview a parent (non-American) whose child/children are currently studying in a local school and find out his/her view about the American school, what he/she thinks of his/her child/children’s education in the US or issues and concerns they have for the children’s schooling in this country and what they expect their children to gain through their learning and experiencing in the American culture. How would they prepare their children for the school back in their home country if they will return home some day. If possible, you can also interview the child/children about their views studying in the American schools and growing up in the American culture.

4. Final paper—a self-chosen research paper (30%)- due on last class

The final writing assignment of the course is a self-chosen research essay, which should demonstrate your learning in the course. In this paper, you can discuss one of the thematic topics that we have discussed in this course, and demonstrate your learning with the depth and breadth of the course. You need to back up your discussion with the course reading and research you have done, and take a stance as an educator or future educator and teacher. The course reading and discussion will give you some ideas of the topics you choose to discuss as your final assignment. Hopefully by mid-term, you would decide a topic. If uncertain, you may discuss with me either face to face or via email. This essay should be a persuasive or argumentative essay, in which you should present your beliefs on certain topics related to teaching and learning, and use research or studies to support your discussion. The length of the essay should be between 12-15 pages.
5. Book Presentation (15%)--due as scheduled

A group of 3-4 students will read a selected book in addition to required texts. You will discuss the book together and present your reading to the class. In your presentation, you will do a book talk and involve the class into the discussion. Please also include the following aspects in your book talk:

- What is the story and who is the main character?
- Provide the background information or data (including YouTube, excepts of movies, etc.) that can assist the understanding of the story/study
- The messages that author(s) tried to convey to us about certain issues and topics
- What have you learned about the culture, and the people you read from the book?
- What impact does this learning upon your role as future teachers?
- How are the issues discussed in the book related to the themes of the course?

6. Class participation and course expectations (10%)

- Full attendance and punctuality (two absences will affect the final grade, and lateness and early departure will be accumulated as absence)
- Be prepared for the class (unprepared will be counted as partially absent)
- Bring the assigned readings to the class and finish reading assignments each time.
- Keep reading journals weekly.
- Be open-minded and respect each other’s views and opinions.
- Maintain a professional attitude toward others and collaborative work.
- Active participation in class discussion and activities
- Completion of assignments by due dates
- No phone calls or read messages or emails from iPhone, iPad or anything unrelated to the class (based on instructor’s observation: frequent doing this will affect your final grade).

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<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading Journal</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Weekly Discussion Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Presentation</td>
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<td>Midterm Paper</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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**Evaluation**

All assignments will be graded on a letter system. A qualitative description of each letter grade is provided below. Pluses and minuses will be used to differentiate performances among grade levels.
Evidence of excellent work and performance; a standard by which other professionals in the field can be evaluated. This category exceeds expectations.

Evidence of good work and performance; demonstrates professional growth and achievement. The instructor expects at least good work from all students and so this category will subsume average performance.

Evidence of fair work and performance; meets minimum standards. This category will be used for below average work that still satisfies basic requirements.

Evidence of poor work and performance; meets only some of the basic requirements.

Fails to fulfill the objectives and requirements.

For the determination of final grades, each assignment will be weighted and converted to a 100-point scale. Assignment weights and the scale are below.

**Criteria of grading:**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>80-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>75-79</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>70-74</td>
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<td>C</td>
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For greater detail on the meaning of letter grades and university policies related to them, see the Registrar’s Grade Policy regulations at [http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/staff/grades.html](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/staff/grades.html)

**University and Course Policies:**

- **The Honor Code:** We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
  
  On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied:
  
  “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”
  
  Information on procedures is located in the Student Guide at [www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/) and is set forth in the Florida Administrative Code.
• Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

• **Attendance Policy:** Absence diminishes the quality of this class for others and disrespects the teaching and learning: therefore full attendance and punctuality are required. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

• **Penalty for late work:** In order to be fair to all students, any work that is turned in late will lose 1/4 of the full points automatically. Points will continue to be deducted until a week after the assignment due date, at which time no points will be awarded. Any work that is not complete at the beginning of class, or is being completed during the class that it is due, will be considered late. **Please turn work in on time. Unless I tell you differently, do not expect me to print out work that you email to me.**

• **University Grading Policies** can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

• Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

• If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the UF Counseling & Wellness Center, 352-392-1575. Visit their web site for more information: [http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/). Also, crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from: Alachua County Crisis Center: (352) 264-6789.

**Course Evaluation**

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