

Sul Ross State University

Department of Education

ED 6318 Literacy through Literature Spring 2017

Instructor: Rita (Pat) Seawell, PhD

Office: MAB 306

Office Phone: 432-837-8643

Fax: 432-837-8390

Email: rseawell@sulross.edu

Office Hours: Virtual - Tue 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Phone 432-386-8141

Actual - Thu 10:00 -11:30 a.m.; 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. Phone 432-837-8643

& by appointment

Integration Analyst/Tech Support: Sandy Bogus, MS

Office: ACR 207

Office Phone: 432-837-8523

Email: sbogus@sulross.edu

Office Hours: M – F 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Course Description

This course is a requirement for the Master of Education Reading Specialist degree and the Reading Specialist Certification program. It focuses on using literature in the elementary, middle school, and secondary classroom to teach the skills necessary for independent reading. Children's and young adult literature is explored through different genres and cultures, current technology applications, and informative evaluation criteria.

Required Textbooks

Anderson, N. A. (2013). *Elementary children's literature Infancy through age 13* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson.

Bean, R. M. (2015). *The reading specialist Leadership and coaching for the Classroom, School, and community* (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford. ISBN 978-1-4625-2153-1

(The Bean textbook will be used in this and in other reading courses.)

Recommended Reading

Larson, L. (2013). From print texts to e-books: The changing nature of literacy. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 49, 168-173. doi:10.1080/00228958.2013.845505

(This article can be found in the Week 1 Folder.)

Lehman, C., & Roberts, K. (2014). *Falling in love with close reading Lessons for analyzing texts -- and life*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Trelease, J. (2013). *The Read-Aloud Handbook* (7th ed.). New York: Penguin.

Certify Teacher Software

The following information is for Texas Reading Specialists Candidates and students seeking Reading Specialist Certification in Texas.

If you have not already done so, when you are within two semesters of completing your degree, purchase the Certify Teacher software to help you prepare for the TExES Reading Specialist 151 exam. (certifyteacher.com>Products>TExES Certification Practice Tests>enter test number 151 in the Search window.) Purchase the Online version for \$55.

Access the Certify Teacher site with your SRSU email address. When prompted about the six-hour requirement, click ACCEPT. TEA requires a minimum six-hours of preparation for the TExES.

DO NOT USE THE PRACTICE TEST MODE AT THIS TIME! Use only Study Mode and Flash Cards. During ED 6314 you will be required to take the Certify Teacher Practice Test for the first time and have the score sent to me and to the SRSU Certification Coordinator. If you pass the practice test with 260 points, you will be recommended by SRSU to take the TExES Reading Specialist 151 at the next available opportunity. If you do not pass the practice test during ED 6314, you will have another opportunity to take it during the ED 7312 Practicum in Reading course. During ED 7312 you will be required to take the Certify Teacher Practice Test in order to complete the course. During the ED 7312 course you will be allowed to take the Practice Test twice (if necessary) and have the score sent to me and to the SRSU Certification Specialist. If you take the Practice Test more than two times, the scores will be invalid and you will be required to pass a paper/pen practice test on campus in order to receive credit for the course and receive a recommendation to take the TExES Reading Specialist exam. Certify Teacher requires a passing grade of 240 on the Practice Test, but SRSU requires a passing grade of 260.

Work in Study Mode and Flashcards on a regular schedule. You will pay for the software only once and you may use it for as long as you need it, but you will be required to reactivate it periodically. **REMEMBER** work only in Study Mode and Flashcards in order to assure that the scores you make on the Practice Test during your ED 7312 course will be valid.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

- The student will demonstrate that he/she can apply developmentally appropriate reading curriculum and instruction at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.
- The student will demonstrate that he/she can apply knowledge of theoretical foundations of literacy at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Course Objectives

Through the activities of this course, students will become familiar with a variety of children's and YA literature. Students will explore methods of using this literature to promote independent reading at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Course Format

This is an online course. Online learning is a very different kind of experience from the traditional face-to-face course. Although online courses are convenient, you will shoulder a greater responsibility for your own learning than you might in a face-to-face course.

Four points are critical to your success in this online course:

- ❖ Your personal responsibility for working on your own and exerting the personal discipline necessary to complete the assignments on time is point one. Read the syllabus and review the course calendar to know what to do for each assignment. Read the syllabus and course calendar. Study the syllabus and calendar. Follow the syllabus and calendar.
- ❖ Your commitment to a consistent and continual effort is point two. Work consistently. Don't wait until the last minute to rush through assignments. Schedule time for reading, reflecting, working with your classmates, and preparing written assignments. Log on to Blackboard and your SRSU email account several times a week to check for messages, announcements, or other developments.
- ❖ Your ability to devote a minimum of 6-9 hours per week to your course work is point three. If you don't have that kind of time right now, drop the course and take it later. **A grade of "Incomplete" will not be given in this course. Assignments will not be accepted after the due date.**
- ❖ Your determination to maintain a sense of adventure is point four. Sharpen your coping skills. We're all learners here. When dealing with technology and people, expect the unexpected. Hope for the best from your primary technology source, but have a back-up plan just in case. Hope for an informed professor and amiable classmates, but exercise patience and ignite your sense of humor, just in case. Contradictions, ambiguities, and change are natural states of affairs. Expand your comfort zone. Between stimulus and response lies a space. In that space you have the power to choose your response. In your response lies your growth and your freedom. Grow and be free!

Reading Specialist Standards

This course addresses the following standards and competencies. A complete copy of the four standards and fourteen competencies to be mastered by Texas Reading Specialists can be found at: cms.texas-ets.org/index.php/download_file/view/634/259/

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 19 EDUCATION
PART 7 STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
CHAPTER 239 STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATES
SUBCHAPTER D READING SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE

Domain I Instruction and Assessment: Components of Literacy

Standard I Components of Reading

The reading specialist applies knowledge of the interrelated components of reading across all developmental stages of oral and written language and has expertise in reading instruction at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Main Focus:

Competency 001 (Oral Language) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of oral language development, relationships between oral language development and the

development of reading skills and instructional methods that promote students' oral language development at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Competency 002 (Phonological and Phonemic Awareness) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of phonological and phonemic awareness, relationships between phonological and phonemic awareness and the development of reading competence and instructional methods that promote students' phonological and phonemic awareness at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Competency 003 (Concepts of Print and the Alphabetic Principle) The reading specialist understands concepts of print and the alphabetic principle and applies knowledge of instructional methods that promote students' reading acquisition at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Competency 004 (Word Identification) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of word identification skills and strategies and instructional methods that promote students' reading competence at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Competency 005 (Fluency) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of reading fluency and instructional methods that promote students' reading competence at grades 1 - 12.

Competency 006 (Comprehension) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of reading comprehension and instructional methods that promote students' reading comprehension at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Competency 007 (Vocabulary Development) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of vocabulary development and instructional methods that promote students' oral and written vocabulary knowledge at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Domain II Instruction and Assessment: Resources and Procedures

Standard II Assessment and Instruction

The reading specialist uses expertise in implementing, modeling, and providing integrated literacy assessment and instruction by utilizing appropriate methods and resources to address the varied learning needs of all students.

Competency 010 (Instructional Methods and Resources)

The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of methods and resources for providing effective literacy instruction that addresses the varied learning needs of all students at the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

Domain IV Professional Knowledge and Leadership

Standard IV Professional Knowledge and Leadership

The reading specialist understands the theoretical foundations of literacy; plans and implements a developmentally appropriate, research-based reading/literacy curriculum for all students; collaborates and communicates with educational stakeholders; and participates and takes a leadership role in designing, implementing and evaluating professional development programs.

013 (Theoretical Foundations and Research-Based Curriculum) The reading specialist understands and applies knowledge of the theoretical foundations of literacy and of research-based reading/literacy curriculum.

014 (Collaboration, Communication, and Professional Development) The reading specialist understands and applies procedures for collaborating and communicating with educational stakeholders and for designing, implementing, evaluating and participating in professional development.

Course Activities

- Student Info Form
- Room With a View
- Connections & Goals
- Assigned Textbook Readings
- Reflections on the Readings
- Peer Responses to the Reflections
- Award Books & Activity
- Digital Books & Activity
- Newbery Award Books & Activity
- Informational Books & Activity
- Audit
- Portfolio
- Mid-semester Exam
- Final Exam

Connections, Expectations, Goals, and Objectives

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to activate your prior knowledge and apply it to your upcoming experiences in this course. Use the Goals & Objectives form found in Assignments Week 1 to describe how you might connect to this course and what you hope to learn from this course. Then using the Standards on the form develop one or more goals with accompanying objectives toward which to work. Tips for writing goals and objectives are in the main menu Course Content. Be SMART!

Review your goal(s) periodically to check for progress toward mastery. In your Audit at the end of the semester you will discuss the level of mastery you have reached.

Assigned Readings & Reflections

Our purposes are to become familiar with children's and Young Adult (YA) literature and to learn how to use literature to promote independent life-long reading. Research indicates that we learn most effectively when we engage in our own learning by writing about and reflecting on new information, by relating new information to past knowledge, and by applying new information to our daily lives. Engaged learners ask questions, experiment with new ideas, discover connections, and create new paths to follow. I invite you to engage!

With this in mind, prepare to discuss and reflect on the readings from the textbook by flagging, highlighting, taking notes, or using other methods to draw attention to ideas or suggestions that interest you as you read the assignments from the text. Read with a "so what?" attitude. How is what you are reading going to affect you and the students you teach? Make every reading assignment about you and your students. The content presented in your textbook is an important component of this course. It is because of the importance of this content that I ask you to spend an ample amount of time on the reading assignments.

Part 1, Reflections #1 - #4

In an effort to absorb, remember, and be able to put into practice the ideas presented in your textbook, write your reactions to and reflections on the information as you read. Include an entry of

approximately one-half to one double-spaced page (125 – 250 words) for each chapter you read. Title each chapter separately (Chapter 1, Chapter 2).

Before you begin writing your reflections, review the rubric that I will use as a grading tool to get an idea of what I consider important. (See Course Menu/Assignments/Rubrics/Reports/Forms.) As you write, remember that a reflection is not a summary of the chapter. In your reflection, you will explore what you can do with one or more of the strategies you encounter in each chapter. As you reflect, ask yourself questions; make text-to-self connections (connect the reading to your own experience and memories), text-to-world connections (connect the reading to the facts and information you know about the world), and text-to-text connections (connect the reading to other books or materials you've read); experiment with ideas; pose "I wonder ..." queries; probe your reactions to the suggestions; imagine how you could use the information about which you are reading.

Some reflective responses might include phrases similar to these: When I read ..., I wondered about ...; Before I read the theory behind ..., I thought that ...; Ouzts's description of ... gave me the idea to ...; If I explain the ... theory to them, my students will probably ...; When I read ... it reminded me of ...; Judging from what Anderson says about ..., I'm considering ...; In my opinion, ... would cause ...; The thing that surprised me most about ... is ...; The biggest challenge I see with ... is ...; One thing that I found confusing about ... was ...; In my experience the ... strategy will not work with my students because ...; The main advantage I see in ... is

On or before the day they are due, submit your reflections in **TWO** places: 1) the class discussion board for your classmates to read; 2) the appropriate Week Folder for me to read.

Reflection #5 - Jigsaw Activity

The readings and reflections for *The Reading Specialist* will be done as a modified jigsaw activity. Choose three chapters from Chapters 6, 7, 10, 11, 12 that you feel will be most beneficial to you. Read the three chapters and reflect on them as you have done with the chapters in *Elementary Children's Literature*. For this assignment, include the title of each chapter in your Reflections. Submit the Reflections in two places as you have before: 1) the class discussion board for peers to read; 2) the Week Folder in Assignments for me to read.

The five Reflections are the first part of your reading assignment grade. **Please be prompt with this assignment. Late submissions will not be accepted. The Reflections submission link will disappear after the assignment is due. Email attachments will not be accepted. If not submitted on time you will lose credit for this assignment.**

Part 2, Peer Responses, #1 - #5

When your classmates' reading reflections are submitted to the discussion board, read their reflections and respond to their comments and ideas. Some of you have extensive classroom experience, some of you are just beginning your teaching careers. This is where we share our knowledge and learn from each other.

In writing your responses, strive to have a conversation, a beneficial exchange between professional colleagues. Ask questions, offer suggestions, make comments, give your opinions, and generally react to what your classmates have written

The ideal feedback is specific and can include recommendations. Be kind and considerate in your responses, but if you only say things like “Great idea!” you are not helping your classmates very much. Take a few of their comments and expand on them, question them, wonder about them. Try to provide some constructive suggestions, and be open to constructive suggestions your classmates might offer you.

You are encouraged to read the reflections of as many classmates as time allows and respond to as many as you like. Frequently several people will be particularly interested in a specific topic or idea and the discussion becomes lively. You want to exchange questions and answers, comments and opinions, and you want to do it quickly. I hope this happens often during this course. In these situations please exchange information without feeling inhibited or stifled by the fact that the Peer Response is one of the assignments for which you will receive points. I urge you to fire away as often as you like. **Then, on or before the due date, submit to me through the appropriate Week Folder in Blackboard your two responses that most closely follow the Peer Response rubric. Submit both responses at the same time.**

When a classmate responds to one of your reflections please reply to his or her response by answering any questions that are asked or otherwise clarifying an idea you may have posited. None of us are as smart as all of us, and all of us know more than we think we know. Please use this assignment as an avenue to teach and learn from each other.

Before you begin writing your peer responses, review the rubric that I will use as a grading tool to get an idea of what I consider important. (See Course Menu/Assignments/Rubrics/Reports/Forms.)

The Peer Responses are the second part of your Assigned Textbook Readings grade. **Please be prompt with this assignment. Late submissions will not be accepted. The Peer Response submission slot closes after the assignment is due. If not submitted on time you will lose credit for this assignment. Email attachments will not be accepted. See Course Calendar for due dates.**

Reflection & Response Audit

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to draw some conclusions by reviewing the professional growth you’ve experienced this semester. Begin by re-reading in chronological order the reflections and responses you have written during the semester. Also, re-read the responses your colleagues and I have made to your reflections. Try to step back and put some distance between yourself and what you've written. Imagine that these reflections and responses were written by a different you at a different time. Attempt to self-evaluate your ideas.

Analyze the reflections and responses by commenting on such things as themes that may have emerged, ideas that are worth revisiting, changes in your thoughts over time, recurring ideas, surprises you encountered, changes in opinions, inspirations to try something new with your students, and new beliefs.

Some questions you might attempt to answer include: What do I usually write about in my reflections? What specific issues reappear in my writing? How has writing reflections and responses related to my learning process? What effect did my colleagues' responses have on me? How have I contributed to the online learning community through my reflections and responses?

What did I learn from this course that I can take with me? What did I learn from this audit activity that I can take with me? What aspects of the reflections and responses do I value most and how does it show up in my posts? What else do I notice?

As part of the Audit, revisit the goals and objectives you set for yourself at the beginning of the semester and describe your success toward attaining these goals and objectives. If a particular goal was not met to your satisfaction, explain the reason and describe steps you could take in the future to meet the goal.

Before you begin writing your Reflection & Response Audit, review the rubric that I will use as a grading tool to get an idea of what I consider important. (See Course Menu/Assignments/Rubrics/Reports/Forms.) **Please be prompt with this assignment. Late submissions will not be accepted. The Audit submission link will disappear after the assignment is due. Email attachments will not be accepted. If not submitted on time you will lose credit for this assignment.**

Award Books & Storytelling Activity

The purpose of these activities is to introduce you to a few of the many awards given to authors of children's and YA books and to encourage you to develop your storytelling skills.

1. Choose five children's and/or YA books that have won awards **other than** the Newbery Award. The list of awards given for children's literature includes, but is not limited to:

- a) The Caldecott
- b) The Hans Christian Andersen International Medal
- c) Children's Book Award
- d) Laura Ingalls Wilder Award
- e) The Boston Globe/Horn Book Award
- f) The Coretta Scott King Award
- g) The Pura Belpré Award
- h) The Americas Award
- i) The Orbis Pictus Award

Choose your books from as many different award categories as possible. Check www.ala.org/awardsgrants for award lists. Read the five books and enter the appropriate information for each book onto the **Book Chart Fiction** form. (Use the Book Chart Non-fiction if appropriate. See Course Menu/Assignments/Rubrics/Reports/Forms.)

2. Select one of the five books and follow the instructions in Anderson, page 85 (Responding to Literature: Storytelling). NOTE: Prepare to tell the story, rather than read it.

3. Use this opportunity to engage in the rich oral tradition of storytelling by telling the story in your own words, in your own way. The KEY here is that you TELL rather than READ the story! Try it! Your audience will love it!

4. Write a paper in which you report on the outcome of your experience. Include:
✓ title of the story

- ✓ steps you took to prepare the story
- ✓ a description of your audience
- ✓ details of the audience's reaction
- ✓ a critique of your performance
- ✓ any insights you drew from this experience

As soon as you submit this assignment to me through the appropriate Week Folder, please post a copy in Share Storytelling on the Discussion Board. Please be prompt with this assignment. You know why.

Digital Books

The purpose of this activity is two-fold. It will give you opportunities to explore a large digital library of children's books as well as to become familiar with culturally diverse literature.

The American Association of School Librarians has designated this site as one of the "25 Best Websites for Teaching and Learning." Investigate the website with a particular class or child in mind.

Here's a quick way to get started:

1. Google "International Children's Digital Library." (I wasn't able to get to the site using the website address.)
2. Open the website with the URL entitled "en.childrenslibrary.org."
3. Under THE LIBRARY First Time Visitors (on the left of the page) click Read Books.
4. On the left of the new page click the age group you want; choose the language; choose any other criteria you want (short books, award-winning books, etc.)
5. Click on the book you want to read and read About This Book on the right.
6. Click Read the Book; click the first page to begin, then use the arrow top right to turn the pages.
7. Back on the home page under THE LIBRARY click Using the Library for a list of activities that can be used with books.

Here's your assignment:

Write a short critique of the site discussing such things as:

- 1) your first impressions of the site
- 2) your ease or difficulty in using the site
- 3) your thoughts concerning the value of the site to you as a parent, a teacher and a reading specialist
- 4) your favorite and/or least favorite things about the site
- 5) your ideas about how you might be able to use this site or about why you wouldn't consider using it
- 6) any additional thoughts about the site

As soon as you submit this assignment to me through the appropriate Week Folder, please post a copy in Share Digital Books on the Discussion Board. Please be prompt with this assignment. You know why.

Newbery Award Books & Story Pyramid Activity

The purpose of this activity is to give you an opportunity to become acquainted with several YA books and to provide you with an engaging way to interact with a book that you might want to use with your students.

1. Choose five Newbery Award books. Read the five books and enter the appropriate information for each book on a **Book Chart Fiction**. (Use the Book Chart Non-fiction if appropriate. See Course Menu/Assignments/Rubrics/Reports/Forms.)

2. Select one of the five books and summarize it using a story pyramid. A story pyramid gives specific information about a book in a specific number of words.

- ✓ Line 1 contains one word: the main character's name.
- ✓ Line 2 contains two words: the main character's age or grade level.
- ✓ Line 3 contains three words: the setting.
- ✓ Line 4 contains four words: the problem.
- ✓ Line 5 contains five words: one main event.
- ✓ Line 6 contains six words: a second main event.
- ✓ Line 7 contains seven words: a third main event.
- ✓ Line 8 contains eight words: a solution to the problem.

The lines need to convey pertinent information, but they do not need to be complete sentences.

As soon as you submit this assignment to me through the appropriate Week Folder, you are invited to post a copy in Share Newbery on the Discussion Board. Please be prompt with this assignment. You know why.

Informational Books & Online Videos

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate the value of using informational books to provide background information and to pique interest in topics your students are studying in their content area textbooks.

1. Choose five children's and/or YA informational books. Read the five books.
2. Enter the appropriate information for each book onto the **Book Chart Non-fiction**. (See Course Menu/Assignments Rubrics/Reports/Forms.)
3. Our textbook lists several excellent information sites on page 300, "Extending Learning Through the Internet." It is also easy to find activities and videos to support the informational books you have chosen simply by googling the main topics of the informational books. For example, I arbitrarily choose to google "butterfly videos, dust bowl videos, swimming safety videos, and Jupiter videos" and found short videos that would provide background info on each of these topics. I was also successful in finding more videos on my chosen topics on the site called WatchKnowLearn.org ... Free Videos for Kids.

On the Book Chart include the URLs for any videos you find that will be of help in building background info for your students.

As soon as you submit this assignment to me through the appropriate Week Folder, please post a copy in Share Info Books on the Discussion Board. Please be prompt with this assignment. You know why.

Academic Portfolio

Please see Portfolio Instructions in the Main Menu for information about the Academic Portfolio. Portfolio requirements for this course are:

- 1) Audit -- instructor-selected course assignment--place this under the Standard it most reflects -- use the Portfolio Artifacts Form as a preface to the Audit
- 2) Student-selected course assignment--place this under the Standard it most reflects -- use the Portfolio Artifacts Form as a preface to the Audit
- 3) Complete the following portions:
 - Accolades
 - Professional Resources
- 4) Begin or continue Vision for Reading and Vision for Learners portions of the Reflective Statement.

Mid-semester Exam

The mid-semester exam will consist of 25 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each from Anderson, Chapters 1-7. These questions will be selected from the questions posted on Blackboard under Mid-semester Exam Review Questions. You may practice these review questions as often as you choose prior to the mid-term exam.

The mid-semester exam will be available for five days. Mark your calendar. You will only be allowed to log on to the mid-semester exam one time. Once you begin taking the exam, you must complete it. You will be allowed 30 minutes to answer the 25 questions.

The mid-semester exam will be available during the days designated on the Course Calendar. You will find the exam on the course menu and in the Week Folder.

Final Exam

The final exam will consist of 25 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each from Anderson, Chapters 8 - 14. These questions will be selected from the questions posted on Blackboard under Final Exam Review Questions. You may practice these review questions as often as you choose prior to the final exam.

The final exam will be available for five days. Mark your calendar. You will only be allowed to log on to the mid-semester exam one time. Once you begin taking the exam, you must complete it. You will be allowed 25 minutes to answer the 25 questions.

The final exam will be available during the days designated on the Course Calendar. You will find the exam on the course menu under Final Exam and in the Week Folder.

Grading & Grading Policy

Only those students who adhere to the SRSU attendance policies will pass this course. (See Distance Learning Attendance paragraph that follows.) Grades are based on a 1000 point system. A=900-1000; B=800-899; C=700-799; F=0-699

- Goals 20
- Reflections: 200 (40x5)
- Peer Responses: 200 (40x5)
- Award Books: 85
- Digital Books: 85
- Newbery Books : 85
- Informational Books: 85
- Audit 75
- Portfolio 65
- Mid-semester Exam: 50
- Final Exam: 50

1. Late assignments not be accepted. Email attachments will not be accepted.
2. You are welcome to turn in assignments early.
3. All assignments must be submitted before finals week begins. No work will be accepted after the last class day of the semester.
4. No extra credit points are available.
5. There are no incompletes for this course.
6. Students will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit assignments provided they were originally submitted on time. Work submitted on the last class day of the semester cannot be revised and resubmitted.
7. Please stay in touch. I'm always happy to hear your questions and comments. Email is the best way to contact me. I usually check email from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily, including most weekends.
8. I reserve the right to make adjustments to this syllabus based on changes that may occur during the semester.
9. Please do not panic or stress over technology issues or course content issues. Contact Sandy for help with technology issues. Contact me for help with course content issues. Helping you navigate a successful learning experience is our goal.

To avoid receiving an F in a course for which you have registered but in which you have not been able to participate, withdraw from the course prior to the last day for withdrawal with a W. Check the academic calendar for this date.

Academic Integrity

Students are to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach. They are to maintain complete honesty and integrity in academic experiences as described in the University Policies & Procedures section of the Sul Ross State University Student Handbook.

Application for Candidacy

Graduate students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA average throughout the program. **Students seeking a Master's degree are required to complete an Application for Candidacy after completing 12 hours in the graduate program.** This form can be accessed on the SRSU webpage and should be returned to the program advisor for approval. (Academics>Professional Studies>Education>Forms)

Distance Learning Attendance

Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including web-based, online, and ITV courses. The University allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences. In web-based, online, and ITV courses, this policy is interpreted as not participating for more than three weeks in a long semester, one week in a summer session, or three days in a mid-winter session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an F in the course dropped. Inactivity may include the following:

- not logging on to the course
- not submitting assignments
- not participating in scheduled activities
- not communication with the instructor by phone or email
- not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus

Comprehensive Examination/E-Portfolio Presentation

Graduation requirements for students in the reading specialist program are transitioning from a comprehensive exam to an electronic portfolio presentation.

The following guidelines apply to students who began prior to Fall 2015: When you have completed, or almost completed, the course work for your Master of Education Reading Specialist Degree, you will be required to pass a Comprehensive Examination (the Comps). Through this four-hour essay exam you will show that you have an understanding of the material you have studied throughout your years in graduate school. Reading Specialists candidates may make arrangements to take the Comps in their geographic area. Students are required to apply for the comprehensive exam the semester preceding the final semester of enrollment. If you are planning to graduate next semester, apply now. Reading Specialist candidates, please check with me for comp review questions. Other students who have requested that I serve on your exam committee, please check with me for review questions.

You will be required to complete the portfolio assignments in each of your remaining courses. Please check with me to discuss which of the graduation requirements you should use as your exit requirement.

The following guidelines apply to students who began during or after Fall 2015: Throughout the program you will build a portfolio that reflects your understanding of the Reading Specialist Standards. During your last semester of study, your portfolio will be reviewed by an academic committee composed of your major advisor and additional professors.

Graduation Application

Students are required to apply for graduation the semester prior to the final semester of enrollment. If you are planning to graduate next semester, apply now. Students who fail to complete this application process during the semester preceding their final semester will incur a late fee. Do not procrastinate. Apply now!

Grants for Special Projects

If you have an idea for a small project for your students and need a grant to fund it, try DonorChoose.org. This organization awards grants up to \$400, and you may apply for more than one project. At this time 16 different reading specialist candidates have applied for and received DonorChoose.org grants for a total of over \$16,500.

Passing the TExES

HB 2205 "Effective September 1, 2015 a person may not retake a TExES examination more than four times." The exact language is below:

Section 21.048, Education Code, is amended by amending subsection (a-1) and (c-1) and adding subsections (a-2) to read as follows:

(a-1) The board may not require more than 45 days elapse before a person may retake an examination. A person may not retake an examination more than four times, unless the board waves the limitation for good cause as prescribed by the board.

(a-2) For purposes of the limitation imposed by subsection (a-1) on the number of administrations of an examination, a person who initially took an examination before September 1, 2015, may retake the examination up to four times after that date, regardless of the number of times that the person attempted to perform satisfactorily on the examination before that date. This subsection expires September 1, 2018.

Accessibility Services

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from Accessibility Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from Accessibility Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Mary Schwartze with Accessibility Services in Ferguson Hall 112, or call 432- 837- 8203..

SRSU DISABILITIES SERVICES

The University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disabilities Services Coordinator in Counseling and Student Support Services has the responsibility to ensure students with disabilities the opportunity for full participation in programs, services, and activities.

Students seeking disability services please contact the ADA Coordinator, Ferguson Hall 112. The mailing address is Sul Ross State University, PO Box C-122, Alpine, TX 79832. The telephone number is 432-837-8691; the fax number is 432-837-8363.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a Web-Enhanced class; however, the guiding principles of the Sul Ross Absences/Class Attendance Policy are still relevant. Read the policy and note especially the last phrase in the last sentence.

Students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. Students must notify the instructor in advance if unable to attend a class or immediately after missing a class. Students are to make themselves aware of the SRSU policies on Absences and Class Attendance posted in the SRSU Student Handbook. Make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor as it relates to “explained and excused” absences. The Absences/Class Attendance policy includes all absences excused or unexcused. In this course you are expected to attend all classes (as scheduled on campus or electronically on Blackboard), to be punctual, and to complete all assignments on time.

TOBACCO POLICY

Smoking is not permitted on the Sul Ross State University campus.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT POLICY

Use of cell phones, pagers, or any electronic device is prohibited during class time. There are EMERGENCY exceptions. See your instructor.