

Course Title: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools, Part I

Instructor: Carol Mowen

Length: 15 hours

Dates: Rolling admissions

Prerequisites: Bachelor Degree

Number of credits: 1

Course Description:

This course will cover a comprehensive set of topics to improve literacy in the secondary school. The definition of literacy and literacy rates around the world will be explored. A history of literacy and practical techniques for improving literacy in the classroom will be presented. Participants will learn *best practices* in literacy development based upon current research. The course will emphasize literacy across the curriculum while addressing methods for identifying struggling readers at the secondary level and overcoming obstacles to improve fluency and language acquisition skills. Learning styles theory will be explored along with effective strategies for working with diverse students and students with disabilities to improve school literacy. Literacy is approached as an issue that impacts every curricular area in the secondary school and is set within a multi-cultural framework. This course can be taken alone or with *Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools, Part II*, which highlights lesson design, media, technology, and literacy with a special emphasis on the reading and writing connection.

Objectives:

1. Knowledge –at the end of this course, the student will be able to understand:
 - a. The many factors that influence literacy development around the world,
 - b. That every teacher is a teacher of reading, and
 - c. The findings from current research and utilize them in the classroom.
2. Skills –after this course, a student will be able to:
 - a. Develop rubrics and layered curriculum,
 - b. Implement practical strategies for planning lessons in literacy, and
 - c. Assess literacy and comprehension across the curriculum.
3. Dispositions – after this course, a student will appreciate:
 - a. Literacy is the great equalizer,
 - b. Literacy is found in every classroom, and
 - c. Students have varied learning styles.

Session Topics (8):

- A Brief History of Literacy Carol Mowen
- The Essential Nature of Literacy in Today's Society Carol Mowen
- Identifying Struggling Readers Carol Mowen
- ESL and ELL Literacy Topics Carol Mowen
- Diversity and Literacy Carol Mowen
- Learning Styles and Literacy Carol Mowen
- Literacy Across the Curriculum Carol Mowen
- Implementing Research to Improve Literacy Carol Mowen

Instructor Overview:

Dr. Carol Mowen is a summa cum laude graduate of The University of Michigan, Spring Arbor University, and Capella University. Since 1985, she has been a teacher in rural, suburban, and urban public schools. She is a national speaker with many published works in education. Currently, she designs and instructs university courses in literacy and educational leadership.

Methods of Instruction:

Methods of instruction will include

- Individual sections (8) (15 hours)
- Pre assessments (8)
- Graded post assessments (8)
- Video lectures (8) Polling questions - included in videos
- Study guides (8) (60 to 100 pages)
- Handouts
- Final Project

All steps listed under each topic must be completed to receive credit for the course. No partial credit will be given.

Students must earn a minimum of 70% to pass the course.

Texts (included in program)

- Study guide provided in the program (200 pages)

Assignments

- Pre assignments (40)
- Post assignments (64)
- Final project (1)

Percentage of Course Credit

- Graded post assessments 70%
- Final Project 30%

Due dates of major assignments, projects, and examinations: Online self-running programs can be started and completed at participants' own leisure within two months from the day they begin the course. Participants must complete and turn in the final within two weeks of completing the course.

Grading criteria/system and evaluation activities:

A course administrator will be reviewing students' answers and providing feedback. Students will be evaluated on their creativity and ability to incorporate techniques from the lectures into examples, lesson plans, and the final project.