COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course students will be introduced to the field of adult literacy and explore some of the current themes and issues within the field. We will read, discuss and write about the adult student, our own and society's assumptions about literacy, educational theory, and strategies and philosophies of teaching practice. All of this class work will be informed by and at the same time support each student's work in an adult education program.

As students begin to work in their field sites the focus of the class may move between broader issues of literacy, power, privilege and education theory and more specific questions and issues that students are encountering in their field sites. I am leaving some room in our reading schedule to have time and space for reading and writing about and discussing these issues as they arise.

I envision this class as a collaborative project. We will come together each week to share, question, and explore based on the work and teaching we have each done that week. I hope we can create a space where we all feel comfortable bringing our experiences (both positive and negative), giving and receiving feedback and suggestions, and recognizing that, at times, we may raise more questions than we answer.

This is a very demanding course, requiring a lot of work, time, attention to detail and commitment. This level of work and commitment is particularly necessary because your field sites and your students will expect you to come prepared for each session. You should view your work at the field sites as a job. You will be supported in this job by myself and the staff at the sites but you are expected to take the work seriously and do it well.
Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to your field site. Once you have made a commitment to your field site and agreed upon a schedule, you are responsible to honor this commitment. The literacy programs and, more importantly, the students, depend upon you and expect you to show up on time and prepared.

You have a responsibility to the group to be at all class meetings and on time. All students are expected to attend and participate in all classes. Persistent lateness and/or early departures from class will negatively affect your final grade. It is your responsibility to keep up with the class work if you are absent. This is not a lecture class. The class will focus on class participation in a variety of means. Since there is no way to make up the work by borrowing someone else’s notes, it is your responsibility to come to every class and to come on time.

You are responsible for completing all work for the class on time. Assignments must be completed by the beginning of each class meeting. Assignments will NOT be accepted via email. All work must be typed and double-spaced.

You are responsible for reading all the texts assigned. You will be assigned reading for approximately every other class meetings. The work in that class meeting will be based on the readings so if you have not read the text, you will not be able fully participate in the class.

You are responsible for your own participation. Participation is critical for success in this course. Participation is defined as completing homework assignments and actively, appropriately and respectfully engaging in group discussion and class activities.

Assignments

Field Work: You are expected to work 20 hours at your field site (including teaching and planning) during the semester. See attached descriptions of field sites. You will work with the teachers and staff at your site to plan what you will be doing during your time at the site. Possible activities include: observing classes, assisting the teacher, preparing for class with the teacher, working with individual students or small groups, teaching the whole group, and participating in site events.

This is an email sent to all the field sites concerning the appropriate roles and responsibilities of LIA students at their sites.

I want to take a moment to talk a bit about the LIA students and expectations around roles and responsibilities. It is important to remember that the LIA students are not in an education program and they are not training to be teachers. The class does attract students who have had some minimal tutoring experience in the past, but for the most part the LIA students do not have any real experience and training as tutors. Some sites ask the LIA students to participate in their tutor training sessions and other sites match the LIA students to teachers who often act as a model and a mentor for the NYU students. These are great way to prepare and guide the students as they assist in classrooms and work with
students. I know that many programs are stretching to match their budget to the need in their community. Ideally the LIA students can help in this regard as they assist teachers in the classrooms, collaboratively create or do research on materials and activities for the class, work with small groups of students or work with individual students. These are all appropriate tasks for the LIA students. It is not appropriate to think of the LIA students as teachers and ask them to take on the responsibilities of a teacher. At many sites the level of responsibility that the LIA student takes on increases over the course of the semester, often culminating in the LIA student planning and facilitating a lesson or a portion of a lesson with a class. This pace of development has been extremely beneficial to the NYU students and has allowed them to gain a level of comfort with the organization, the teachers and the students before also taking a lead in instruction.

You will write **5 site logs** during the semester A template for the site visit log is attached. These logs will act as a record of your work at the field site. The logs are the place to reflect upon your work at the site, raise and answer questions, and plan for your next visit. They are also a means for you to communicate with me about the work happening at all the sites.

Time will be set aside in most class meetings for discussion of your fieldwork. Please come prepared for these discussions. You could bring up an issue/concern, share a success, ask for help or suggestions, share your lesson plans, share student work. Some weeks I may give you short assignments to prepare for these discussions. (40% of final grade)

**Lesson Study:** You will work in small groups to plan a lesson, teach the lesson at a field site, and then debrief and report on this lesson. You will do this twice during the semester. (25% of final grade)

**Policy Brief:** You will research a policy point or program detail within the field of adult literacy and ESOL. (10% of final grade)

**Literacy Profile:** You will interview an adult education student and write a 3-6 page profile of him or her. (10% of final grade)

**Final Reflection Paper:** At the end of the course, you will reflect upon the work of the course, your work at your field site and any changes and developments within yourself. This paper should be 3-6 pages long. Final reflection papers are due the last day of class (March 7). (10% of your final grade)

**Please note that attendance and informed class participation (5%) will also be factors in your grades.**

**Plagiarism:** Please be aware that my expectation is for original work. Incorporating the writing and/or ideas of others into your own work in a way that makes the reader believe that they are your own words and thoughts is plagiarism, which is a form of theft that has serious academic consequences. Most of the writing in this course is either your independent response to a reading or reflection of the work of the class or your work in the field site, all of which lends itself to original thought. However, the issue brief is a research project and my expectation is that you will draw upon the writing and thinking of others to develop your own analysis. Please make this analysis your own and properly cite your resources and references. If you feel at all unsure about your work in this regard, feel free to contact me. I would be happy to help you.
Readings: You will be reading a mix of the theoretical and the practical. Ideally this mix will both ground your teaching practice in sound educational theory and also provide concrete strategies for teaching. A course packet of required readings will be available for purchase at New University Copy (11 Waverly Place) after 1/27.

As issues, themes and questions come up in the class, I will provide supplemental readings that are relevant. If you come across a reading that you think might be of interest to the class, please let me know. I would be happy to make copies.

Weekly Check-in: You will be out in the field for much of the work in this class so in order to stay connected to you and your progress in this course, I will be meeting with each of your for 10 minutes after class after you begin your site work. This is just a quick check-in for both you and me. It is a time for you to let me know more about what is happening or on the horizon for you at your field site. It is also an opportunity for me to ask questions and answer questions as well give you some additional feedback. I will meet with students depending on when they start their fieldwork. I will let you know the week before we will be meeting.
Literacy in Action  
K45.1460- Gallatin School  

Fall 2011  

Calendar  

Week 1  
Student Introductions, Introduction to Field Sites  

Week 2  
Course Overview  
Syllabus Review  
Field site Check-in  
Intro to Lesson Planning  

Week 3  
K-12 schools  
**Reading:** “Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work” Anyon  

Week 4  
No Class  

Week 5  
Lesson Study-prep  
**Reading:** *Making Meaning Making Change* Auerbach – chapter 1 p. 7-22, chapter 4  
**Due:** Site Log  

Week 6  
Lesson Study-prep  
**Reading:** *Stories and Theories* Coles  

Week 7  
Lesson Study-debrief  
**Due:** Site Log  

Week 8  
Midterm Check-in  
Participatory Education  
**Reading:** *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Freire chapter 2  

Week 9  
Using Freire  
**Reading:** Excerpts from *Dear Paulo*  

Week 10  
**Due:** Site Log  

Week 11  
Lesson Study-prep  
**Reading:** GED: online readings  
**Due:** Last day to hand in Literacy Profile  

Week 12  
Lesson Study-prep  
Assessment  
**Reading:** *Making Meaning Making Change* Auerbach - chapter 8  

Week 13  
Lesson Study-debrief  
**Due:** Site Log  
**Due:** Final reflection paper
**International Rescue Committee (IRC)**
The International Rescue Committee’s Refugee Resettlement Office offers ESL and basic literacy classes for refugees who are searching for jobs. In small classes and individual tutoring sessions, volunteers help refugees learn how to navigate healthcare, public transportation, and school systems; understand American culture and traditions; and manage their finances. Learner participation is key to Literacy for Life classes as class topics are chosen with learner’s input. This is a new program begun in Fall 2004 with the help of the Literacy in Action students. Populations most recently served by the IRC include refugees from Burundi, Burma, Bhutan, and Iraq. [http://www.the IRC.org/New York](http://www.the IRC.org/New York).

**Location:**
122 East 42nd St (at Lexington Ave) 11th floor. Bring a photo ID to show to the security guard.

**Options:**
You will work with refugees in both small group and classroom settings to help them develop English and job skills. Classes will focus on everyday vocabulary and will emphasize life skills and language necessary for employment, health, trips to the supermarket, understanding money and consumerism, housing, and learning how to use the public transportation system and obtaining directions in New York City. Even if a class is listed as full, Lisa is very open to talking with students who really want to be in this class.

- Monday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Advanced ESL) – 1 volunteer
- Monday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Cultural Orientation) – 1 volunteer
- Tuesday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Advanced ESL) – 1 volunteer
- Tuesday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Beginning ESL) – 1 volunteer
- Wednesday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Beginning ESL) – 1 volunteer
- Wednesday, 10am-12pm, teacher assistant (Cultural Orientation) – 1 volunteer
- Friday 10am-12pm, Group tutor (Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced ESL). This position will entail more independence and will require a person who is more confident in his/her ability to lead a small group of English language learners. If there are definitely 6 volunteers interested, they will be able to lead the small groups in pairs. (6 volunteers)

**Orientation Date/Time:** No set orientation. Lisa Brochet or Emily Scott will speak to/meet with interested students individually.

**Number of volunteers:** potential of 12

**Starting Date:** ASAP

**Contact:**
Lisa Brochet
Lisa.Brochet@rescue.org
University Settlement House
University Settlement's Family Literacy Program provides ESOL, computer, and life skills education to adult immigrants primarily from the Lower East Side community. A large percentage of participants are Chinese-speaking. Program director Michael Hunter says, "LIA volunteers should come with a lot of energy and try to sink their teeth into the classes. The literacy students always like to have the NYU students and will undoubtedly pepper them with questions."

Location:
175 Eldridge Street, First Office (Enter through the 2nd left door) (between Delancey Street and Rivington Street)
Subway: J train to Bowery, J, M, F, or Z to Delancey. F to Second Avenue. or B, D to Grand St
J or Z train to Delancey or Essex Street

Options
Tuesday-Thursday 1:00 to 3:00. The class the LIA student(s) could volunteer for is called Increasing English Fluency through Chaucer and Idioms for advanced ESOL students. This class is led by our program director, Michael Hunter. Every other week, they will focus on either Chaucer's Canterbury Tales or the In the Know idioms textbook. LIA volunteers can help facilitate students as they reinforce their reading, listening, grammar, and vocabulary through fun activities and exercises. Every Thursday, Michael will select a song and led the class read through the lyrics, allowing students to apply their studies of idioms and phrasal verbs within a social and cultural context.

Class Setup: We can have 2-3 classes with a group of 6 students. The number of classes will depend on the LIA student's availability. The tutors meet with small groups of students. Tutors will work independently in the small groups. During the orientation the USS staff will introduce LIA tutors to the class materials. The LIA tutors can take materials home with them. USS staff can also provide an outline for the classes and will be available for questions. However the tutors at this site must be responsible and interested in leading a class from the first day. I would like to have at least 2 LIA tutors in a class.

Schedule:
If there is a student who is only available Tues. or Thurs. this can be arranged.

Dates closed for break:
Winter Recess (12/26/11 to 1/2/12), Mid-winter recess (2/20 to 2/24/12) and Spring Recess (4/9 to 4/13/12).

Orientation Date/Time: Orientation days can be tentatively set for the first week of October, Monday through Thursday, in the afternoons for about an hour.

Number of volunteers: (1-2 volunteers per class)

Contact
Lucian Leung
Program Coordinator/NRS Specialist
University Settlement | Family Literacy
t: (212) 533-6306  f: (212) 420-0934
e: lleung@universitysettlement.org
The Fortune Society

John Kefalas
347-510-3410
jkefalas@fortunesociety.org

The Fortune Society provides various education classes (GED, basic reading and writing, math, computers) to people who have been incarcerated, at-risk-youth, and those referred to the Fortune Society’s alternative to incarceration programs. [http://www.fortunesociety.org](http://www.fortunesociety.org)

**Location:** 29-76 Northern Blvd, Long Island City, Queens
E, R or V train to Queens Plaza. If you're coming from Manhattan, get on the front of the train and exit right out of the station. If you’re coming from Queens, get on the back of the train. When you exit the station, walk up Northern Blvd. 1/2 block to a brick building. You may also take the N or W train to 39th street / Beebe Avenue in Queens. The Fortune Society is on the first floor at the far end of the building.

**Options:** You could tutor in any class- reading and writing, math, GED preparation, ESOL, or computer skills. Classes are generally small (8-12 students). One-on-one tutoring is also available.

**Schedule:**

- **Reading and Writing Classes (all levels):** Monday-Thursday 10-12; Monday & Wednesday 6-8
- **Math classes (all levels):** Monday –Thursday 12:45-1:45; Tuesdays and Thursdays 6-8
- **Computer Classes:** Monday-Thursday 2:00-6:00 (only at Castle Gardens – Riverside and 140th st)

**Dates Fortune will be closed for break or student testing:** Dates Fortune will be closed for break or student testing: March 19-30th, June 18th-29th, Sept 17-Sept. 28, Dec. 17th-Dec. 28

**Orientation Date/Time:** Thursdays, after 2pm and Friday, after 10am

**Number of volunteers:** no maximum

**Starting Date:** After orientation

The Young Adult Literacy (YAL) class is different from the other classes that we offer. For one, classes begin at 9:30am and end at 2pm, giving students a 15-hour-per-week class time commitment rather than the traditional 12-hour-per-week, during the day. It also has a required 9-hour-per-week project/internship requirement in addition to the class time.

During the summer cycle, students worked with educators from the Museum of Modern Art for the project phase of this requirement and then moved on to internships at a restaurant or on site at Fortune.

LIA students may be interested in working with John Kefalas on supporting students during this phase of the project/internship as they become acclimated to the working world.

More on that during the orientation.
Turning Point
Turning Point’s goal is to change lives by providing comfort and help. They work with disconnected youth, families in crisis, the homeless, substance abusers, persons infected with and affected by the HIV virus, adult non-readers, and English language learners. http://www.tpdomi.org/

Location: 423 39th St Brooklyn (Sunset Park)
The D, N, R, M train to 36th St.

Population: ABE/GED students at the Ed Center are mostly disconnected youth, ages 16 to 25, and ESOL students tend to be a little older, who speak a wide variety of native languages. Turning Point’s students are a challenging but stimulating group!

Options: Observing and assisting in Pre-GED, Basic Education classes, or ESOL classes.

Teaching staff:

Lauren, Advanced ESOL: 9-2, Mon-Thurs (LIA student would just need to commit to a 3 hour block, 1x a week)
Chito, High Beginning ESOL 9-12, Mon-Fri (LIA student would just need to commit to a 3 hour block, 1x a week)
OR Beginning ESOL, 12-2, Mon-Thurs (LIA student would just need to commit to a 2 hour block, 1x a week)
Joe, Intermediate Pre-GED, 9-1, Mon-Fri (LIA student would just need to commit to a 3 hour block, 1x a week)

Jill, Advanced Pre-GED, 6-9, Monday and Wednesday (LIA student would just need to commit to a 3 hour block, 1x a week)

Contact: Please plan ahead by contacting the program director ahead of time, and allowing more than 24 hours for him to get back to you.
Josh Willis
Literacy in Action

Site Visit Log Template

Name _______________________

Date and time of visit ____________   Hours to date____________

What you hoped to accomplish in this visit:

What you actually did:

What you noticed/observed:

Useful lessons you learned from this visit:
You will research and make policy recommendations for one area within the literacy field. **You must email your topic to me for approval by 2/20 and the date you would like to present.** Presentations of your findings and policy recommendations will be between 10-15 minutes. You may structure the presentation however you wish - lecture, activity, discussion, etc. Presentations will happen in class on 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23. Often new questions arise after the presentation and discussion of the policy briefs. To help you incorporate these new ideas/leads into your policy brief, your **written brief will be due two weeks after your presentation.**

**Audiences:** You will write the Policy Brief for the following three audiences (all of whom presumably know little or nothing about this issue):

- **Public policy makers** who currently (or possibly might in the future) set policy and funding for adult literacy programs in NYC.
- **Private-sector funders** who currently (or possibly might in the future) provide funding to adult literacy programs in NYC. (These private-sector funders can include foundations, corporate giving offices, or individual donors.)
- **Current and potential advocates** for adult literacy education (i.e., the general public, community and ethnic organizations, social service providers, labor organizations, business groups, etc. who should have a stake in adult literacy in NYC and who could benefit from having well-researched and well-presented “ammunition” when making the case for investment in the field).

**Content:** In a concise (brief) statement, you are to present a case for investing in a particular issue/segment of the adult literacy field in NYC. Your brief should state:

- **A definition of your issue** (so the audience knows what you’re going to be talking about).
- **What has been done about the issue so far:**
  - Nationally
  - In NYC
- **Results of these efforts to date** (Here you define why investing in this is important for the adult literacy field and for NYC as a whole.)
- **How increased investment should be targeted.** (You might suggest that further research be done, pilot projects be established, an office be created somewhere to work on this further, professional development opportunities be created, etc.)
- **Methodology and sources:** In a brief Appendix, state where you got the information you used to prepare your Brief, how you got that information (e.g., through literature review, interviews, etc.), and a timeline for the steps you took to prepare the Brief.
Purposes of the Policy Brief:

1. You will prepare a document that your classmates and possibly others in the adult literacy field can learn from and possibly use for advocacy purposes.
2. You will develop research, writing, and presentation skills that you can use in the future when preparing reports, proposals, and position papers.
3. You will develop expertise about an important issue within the adult literacy field.

Past/possible Issue brief topics

High school- drop outs/push outs
Influx of youth in ABE classrooms
GED
Comparison of US education system (k-12 & Adult ed) with the system of another country
English Only movement
Health and Literacy
Literacy as a tool of oppression
Literacy/education in prisons/re-entry programs
Second Language Acquisition
Family literacy/generational patterns
Trauma and Adult Ed
International literacy efforts
Financial literacy
Numeracy
Transitioning to college
Assessment
Civics education
Worker/Union literacy programs
National Reporting Standards
GLBT issues/identity within literacy classes/programs
Mental health and adult literacy
Arts in adult literacy programs
Funding for adult literacy
TABE (Test for Adult Basic Education)
Current advocacy work/actions within the NYC adult literacy/ESOL field.
Literacy in Action

Spring 2012

Literacy Profile

Rolling deadline

The purpose of this assignment is to give you some practice writing about the people with whom you are working. Obviously part of being a good teacher is being a good listener and a thoughtful observer. Any work we do with people needs to be rooted in our sense of what they are up to—what they actually do when they read or speak English, what attitudes and ideas they bring to the reading process and to the learning process, and what strengths and weakness they have as students.

I would like you to write about a student with whom you are working. Try to develop a profile of the person as a reader/an English-learner and as a learner in general. Also try to place your profile in a context. Our students are never just learners, but people who have lives and histories and communities that help shape who they are and how they learn. Without being invasive or voyeuristic, try to bring some relevant background information into your profile so your reader can see the whole person. 3-6 pages

Some students have preferred it when the literacy profiles were due early in the semester because it gave them a means to connect with a student at their site early on. Other students have preferred it when the literacy profiles were due late in the semester because they had begun to feel comfortable at their sites and with the students and felt more comfortable interviewing a student then. This semester your literacy profile is due anytime before the end of April, 2012. Please be aware that sometimes the logistics of scheduling the interview with a student can be the most difficult part of this assignment. Please give yourself plenty of time for cancelled appointments and missed connections.