A. Instructor Information
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Office Phone: (903) 566-7177
Office Hours: In-Person--Tuesdays & Thursdays 4:00-5:00 p.m. &/or by appointment
Virtual--Tuesdays & Thursdays 7:00-8:00 p.m. &/or by appointment
• For virtual office hours via Zoom, Google+Hangouts, Vsee, or Face Time, use Kouider@gmail.com

B. Course Description
Exploration and application of action research approaches and methods for examining and enhancing classroom instruction practices and increasing student literacy achievement outcomes in PreK-12 clinical and/or school settings.

C. Knowledge Base(s) and Rationale
This graduate level course builds upon the knowledge base and experiences gained in prior graduate and/or undergraduate coursework addressing language and literacy development issues. Particular focus is placed on critical reading, analysis, and synthesis, and application of educational research to addressing literacy issues in school settings.

Course content incorporates the International Reading Association (IRA) as well as the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) standards for the preparation of reading specialists/literacy coaches (IRA, 2010; TEA, 2006). IRA standards pertain primarily to Standard 1: Foundational Knowledge and Standard 6: Professional Learning and Leadership. TExES Standards pertain primarily to Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment-Components of Literacy, and Domain 4: Professional Knowledge and Leadership.

D. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
Upon successful completion of the requirements for this course, students will be able to develop and/or expand knowledge, skill, and experience in:

1. Critically reading, analyzing, and interpreting findings from different literacy research, policy, and practice documents.
2. Identifying and using online resources and tools such as the Internet for conducting research on specific topics, issues, or questions related to literacy teaching and learning.
4. Planning and developing a research plan for conducting a basic research study following established research and publication guidelines and conventions.
5. Reflecting on personal teaching practices, assessing professional learning, and developing a personal growth plan to support and participate in a school’s effort to improve literacy.
E. **Course Projects, Evaluation and Grading**: The assignments and projects outlined below are designed to contribute in a different, and yet complementary way in achieving the stated course objectives.

1. **Online Discussion Forums** (30 points or 30% of course grade). Following each lecture, I will ask you to engage either individually or in groups in a series of reading and response activities that will support course learning outcomes, with a focus on strengthening your ability to critically read, synthesize, and interpret literacy research findings, using research insights to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of reading instruction, and engaging in action research in your classrooms and schools.

   Discussion will generally focus on your analysis and reactions to specific readings, evaluation of arguments related to specific literacy issues from two or more authors, or exploration of the applications of specific literacy research or policy findings to the teaching of reading or writing in your classrooms and schools.

   Your contributions to the discussion forums will be evaluated on the level of engagement (how often and when you contribute to the discussions), the quality of the contributions made (how thoughtful and substantive your contributions are), and the professionalism you exhibit when responding to assigned discussion topics or issues (how respectful and considerate you are to discussion forum members). The following criteria will be used to evaluate your online discussion and engagement:

   - ✓ 0-18 points = Low level of participation and engagement
   - ✓ 19-26 points = Moderate level of participation and engagement
   - ✓ 27-30 points = High level of participation and engagement

2. **Literacy Action Research Project** (50 points or 50% of course grade). In this major course assignment, which will be designed around your particular professional learning needs and research interests, you will have an opportunity to engage in action research, which will expand your knowledge about the various ways in which literacy research informs and enriches teacher practices and student achievement outcomes.

   Your task is to develop an action research plan or proposal, which seeks to examine a specific literacy issue or question in clinical or school settings. You will be guided in (a) selecting a research topic addressing a pertinent literacy issue or question, (b) reviewing relevant research literature on the topic, and (c) developing a research plan for data collection, procedures, and analyses, and (d) obtaining approval by the Institutional Review Board\(^1\) to conduct the study. Once fully developed and approved, the proposed research plan could potentially be conducted in your own classroom at the appropriate time and location and/or used toward the development of a thesis or report in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a master’s degree in literacy.

   **End Product**: Turn in a 12-15 page typed, double-spaced paper describing the main components of the research proposal including a descriptive title, an abstract, a research synthesis pertaining to the topic selected, and a detailed research method section, which delineates research questions, study participants, data collection procedures, and data analyses. You will have an opportunity to share your research plan with classmates via a brief video poster presentation.

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\(^1\) Research with human subjects requires approval from the University of Texas at Tyler Institutional Review Board. More information about this requirement is available @ http://www.uttyler.edu/research/compliance/irb/training.
presentation to be scheduled during the 15th week of the semester. More specific information with step-by-step guidance in developing ideas for and completing this project will be provided at the appropriate times during the semester.

**Evaluation:** The criteria for evaluating the action research proposal will be based on (a) the quality of the synthesis of the relevant theories and research literature related to the topic selected, (b) the clarity and rationale for the proposed study and research question(s) or issues examined, (c) the adequacy of the description of the research methods for carrying out the proposed study, including a description of the study participants, data collection materials and procedures, and data analyses, and (d) the quality of writing and adherence to APA style conventions. A project evaluation rubric using these elements will be used to evaluate the merits of the paper.

3. **Institutional Review Board Training and Application Development** (20 points or 20% of course grade). In this assignment, you will have an opportunity (a) to learn about the processes involved in conducting research with human subjects in clinical or school settings, and (b) to gain experience in developing an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, which will authorize you to conduct research with your students in your classrooms or schools.

Your tasks are (a) to complete the IRB training online and (b) to prepare a draft IRB application. The training post for the IRB training is located at [http://www2.uttler.edu/research/compliance/irb/](http://www2.uttler.edu/research/compliance/irb/) and will take approximately 1.5-3.0 hours to complete. Make sure that you put the instructor’s name (Dr. Kouider Mokhtari) and email (kmokhtari@uttler.edu) for the Principal Investigator (PI). There are eight modules to complete. You will receive a certificate upon completion of the IRB training modules.

**End Products and Evaluation.** The criteria for evaluating this assignment include (a) successful completion of the IRB training modules (Save a copy of the certificate in your files and e-mail a copy to me), and (b) draft of the completed IRB application (Turn in a copy of the completed IRB application draft).

**F. Evaluation and Grading Guidelines and Criteria:** All written work should be typed (double-spaced, using a 12 pt. New Times Roman font, with one-inch margins, & page numbered), properly labeled, and carefully proofread and edited. Use APA guidelines for writing style, citations, and referencing. The criteria for determining your final grade are outlined below.

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<tr>
<th>Main Projects</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Online Discussion Forums</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>As Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. IRB Training &amp; Application Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>Mar 30, 2015</td>
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<td>3. Literacy Action Research Project</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50 points</td>
<td>May 2, 2015</td>
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<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Points</strong></td>
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