



School of Education
 College of Professional Studies
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

Reading In the Disciplines

Discussion Course: Education 109 (Reading In the Disciplines)

Parent-course/instructor: _____

Discussion group meeting day, time, location: _____

Discussion group leader: _____

Instructor of Record: Amanda Meidl
 Office: ALB 018E (Tutoring-Learning Center)
 Email: ameidl@uwsp.edu
 Office hours by appointment

Course description

Reading In the Disciplines is a one-credit, pass/fail course aligned with a parent-course, and designed specifically to help you develop your abilities to deal successfully with the readings and lecture material in that parent-course. Collaboration is the key to successful Reading In the Disciplines group work. You meet once a week with a small group of fellow students and a trained Reading In the Disciplines peer facilitator to go over class readings and lecture material.

Intended learning outcomes

If students bring sufficient ability and apply reasonable effort to this course, students will be able to:

- Improve their understanding of the course material. Students will have the opportunity to discuss the readings in depth under the guidance of a trained undergraduate peer facilitator.
- Explore responses and reactions to course material. Students will be meeting with the same peers each week, allowing them to get to know others in their group and to ask questions in a safe and exploratory environment.
- Develop confidence in explaining and presenting ideas in front of peers and in classroom discussion. As the semester progresses students will have many opportunities to formulate responses and arguments within the discussion group which will encourage them to be a more confident participant in class discussion.

Course requirements and expectations


The requirements for this pass/fail course are minimal, but vital to the success of a Reading In the Disciplines group. Students are expected to:

1. Attend group sessions (see attached student contract for attendance policy)
2. Actively participate in these sessions
3. Write and bring to each meeting a response to the class readings, as assigned by the peer facilitator (see attached student contract for writing assignment policy)
4. Write a short (2 page) final paper reflecting on your learning experience in Reading In the Disciplines



Class Climate & Honoring Difference

The School of Education strives to honor the uniqueness of all learners. Reading In the Disciplines peer facilitators and I are dedicated to creating safe, inclusive, welcoming experiences in which all students can succeed. We mindfully plan coursework in ways that promote pluralism: celebrating the coexistence of multiple identities, cultures, and belief systems.

This course is a Safe Zone for LGBTQ issues and more. I won't condone disrespectful or discriminatory language or behavior. I extend an open door invitation to all my students. If you feel unwelcome or unsafe in this course, or you have any concerns about your ability to succeed, please let me know. We can address the issue together, confidentially.

As a teacher, I align my policies and choices with my university's guidance, including the [UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities](#) .


Exceptional Needs Policy

I'm dedicated to accommodating the needs of my students. As a teacher, I align my policies and choices with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal law that requires educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. [Here is more information about UWSP's relevant policies](#) . If you have a disability and want an accommodation, please register with the [Disability Services and Assistive Technology Office](#)  and then contact me. If you're unfamiliar or uneasy with this process, please contact me anyways and we'll work through it together.

Integrity Policy

I expect you to come to class promptly and regularly, prepared to actively and fully participate in the activities. I expect you to treat me, your group leader, your colleagues, and anyone else with respect and tolerance. I expect you to take responsibility for managing your life so that you complete all assignments on time. If you are unable to meet these expectations (e.g., attendance, assignments), I expect you to communicate with me and anyone else affected (e.g., your peer facilitator, your colleagues) as soon as possible.

I expect you to complete your assignments with integrity. For most assignments, you will be free to use resources and people inside and outside of this course. Some assignments may even require this. However, I expect you to give proper credit for anything that isn't your own original work. I urge you to make intellectual integrity a central part of your professional identity. Professionals in a variety of fields routinely use other people's work (e.g., lesson plans in education). But accidentally or deliberately leaving off credit is professionally and morally wrong. RID group leaders and I use anti-plagiarism tools. I don't expect my students to plagiarize others' work; rather, you can be confident that no one is plagiarizing your work (e.g., in a future class). If you are unclear on how to give proper credit, please ask me or your group leader before turning in the assignment.

As a teacher, I align my policy on academic misconduct (e.g., cheating) with the [UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities \("UWSP Chapter 14"\)](#) .

READING IN THE DISCIPLINES

What you can and can't expect

YOU CAN EXPECT

- To collaborate in an enjoyable learning experience
- To improve your understanding of the parent-course material
- To discuss course readings and lecture material
- To improve your critical thinking and reflection skills through writing and discussion
- To share what you write
- To have a group leader who facilitates, not lectures
- To have a group leader who is open to suggestions
- To learn strategies that will also help you in other courses
- To improve the way you think and write about the parent-course subject material

YOU CAN'T EXPECT

- Exam answers
- A 'study group' dynamic
- To focus only on exams and quizzes
- To improve your understanding without participating
- The group leader to know all the answers
- To work on parent-course assignments during group
- Guaranteed grade improvement in the parent-course
- To pass without meeting the four requirements listed above in the course requirements and expectations section

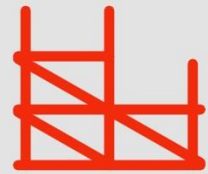
READING IN THE DISCIPLINES



**SOCIAL
CONSTRUCTIVISM**



**SOCIO-
CULTURALISM**



VYGOTSKY

Theoretical Foundations

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

One “constructs” new information and material by building upon what one already knows.

SOCIO-CULTURALISM

- Meaning is socially, culturally, historically, and contextually constructed through language.
- Reading, writing, and discussion are “higher-order psychological functions that are socially constructed” (Kong & Fitch, 2002)



LEV VYGOTSKY

Scaffolding: one with more experience or knowledge scaffolds, models, or supports learning progression. Discussion through scaffolding provides an opportunity to practice critical discourse.

