

READING AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The Reading and Language Development Program was designed to provide classroom educators and remedial reading interventionists with the knowledge and skills necessary to translate the science of reading into artful practice. The Program strives to create a community of reflective learners and practitioners who are committed to scientifically-informed decision-making, academic excellence, and personal accountability and growth. Congruent with our Graduate School's Conceptual Framework, the program reinforces the critical importance of professional attitudes and dispositions that foster successful collaborations in the service of children and families. These attitudes and dispositions are formally assessed at four points over the course of a candidate's engagement with the program: Program Application, Practicum I, Practicum II, Practicum III, and Program Completion.

The Program prepares educators in current best practices, as supported by reading research, and responds to state and national policy initiatives. Course content and practicum experiences are arranged to support candidates' mastery of essential knowledge and skills required in order to successfully serve students' diverse reading and language arts needs in the general education setting – this includes meeting the needs of students in core, intervention, and remediation contexts. It is important to note that special consideration is given to serving the reading and language arts needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as the Program includes several teacher training initiatives that are specifically designed to positively impact Connecticut's reading achievement gap.

Program candidates receive training in a variety of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials, and are prepared to support and mentor classroom teachers and other professionals in creating literate environments conducive to successful reading and writing. In doing so, the program prepares candidates in a wide range of critical competency areas, with consideration for students in Grades 1-12.

Candidates enrolled in one of our degree or certification granting programs are eligible to apply for national certification with the International Dyslexia Association. Interested candidates should speak directly with the Program Director, Dr. Jule McCombes-Tolis, for more information.

Attend an Information Session

Individuals interested in learning more about the programs offered through Reading and Language Development are encouraged to sign up for one of several information sessions that are scheduled throughout the year. A link for doing so can be found on the program's website (<http://www.fairfield.edu/reading>).

Programs

- Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts Certification (102) (<https://catalog.fairfield.edu/graduate/education-allied-professions/programs/reading-language-development/remedial-rla-certification>)
- Master of Arts in Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts (<https://catalog.fairfield.edu/graduate/education-allied-professions/programs/reading-language-development/ma-remedial-rla>)

- includes optional Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts Certification (102)
- Sixth Year Certificate in Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts (<https://catalog.fairfield.edu/graduate/education-allied-professions/programs/reading-language-development/syc-remedial-rla>)
- includes optional Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts Certification (102)

Courses

RLD 0429 Principles of Structured Literacy I: Fundamentals of Reading and Language Development **3 Credits**

This course covers the foundational concepts of oral and written language including the language processing requirements of proficient reading and writing: phonological, orthographic, morphologic, semantic, syntactic, and discourse processing. Students will learn other aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing such as attention, executive function, memory, processing speed, and grapho-motor control. Candidates will learn the typical developmental progression of oral language (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic), phonological skills, printed word recognition, spelling, and reading fluency. Candidates will also learn how the relationships among major components of literacy development change with reading development (i.e. changes in oral language, including phonological awareness; phonics and word recognition, spelling; and reading and writing fluency). The research and instructional strategies for phonological awareness, systematic phonics, and reading fluency will be taught. Crosslisted with SE 0429.

RLD 0486 Developmental Literacy I: Fundamentals of Reading and Language Development **3 Credits**

This course is the first in a set of two courses that address the foundational concepts, theories, empirical research, and developmental milestones associated with oral and written language. This course focuses on the development of essential decoding strand reading skills (phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency), as well as aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing. Candidates learn how to administer, score, and interpret universal screening and informal diagnostic measures in the areas of phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and fluency for the purposes of determining the most appropriate starting point for instruction and planning differentiated instructional groups. Candidates also learn how to select and deliver varied research-based instructional strategies to develop students' foundational reading skills in the areas of phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and fluency. Crosslisted with SE 0486.

RLD 0487 Developmental Literacy II: Essentials of Vocabulary and Text Comprehension **3 Credits**

This course is the second in a set of two courses that address the foundational concepts, theories, empirical research, and developmental milestones associated with oral and written language. This course focuses on the development of essential comprehension strand reading skills (fluency, vocabulary, comprehension), as well as aspects of cognition and behavior that affect reading and writing. Candidates learn how to administer, score, and interpret universal screening and informal diagnostic measures in the areas of vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency for the purposes of determining the most appropriate starting point for instruction and planning differentiated instructional groups. Candidates also learn how to select and deliver varied research-based instructional strategies to develop students' reading skills in the areas of vocabulary and comprehension. Crosslisted with SE 0487.

RLD 0488 Content Area Literacy Strategies**3 Credits**

This course introduces candidates to content area and disciplinary literacy reading practices at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Strategies to facilitate comprehension of narrative and expository text structures, including strategies that address the reading-writing connection, are introduced. Candidates also learn about adolescent literacy development, achievement, and engagement, and how factors related to cultural, linguistic, and cognitive diversity impact students' comprehension of texts.

RLD 0503 Research and Evaluation in Multidisciplinary Contexts**3 Credits**

This course examines methods of empirical research and measurement, the role of descriptive and inferential statistics in data assessment, and critical analyses of effective quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research approaches. Topics will include: evaluation of current research studies and implications for professional practice, types of assessments (i.e. traditional print and electronic), data for general education teachers and a diversified student population, and the skills needed for effective data-based decision making and sharing of results. Crosslisted with MD 0503.

RLD 0504 Practicum in Scientifically Research-Based Intervention Practices, Tiers II and III**3 Credits****Prerequisite:** RLD 0503.

Candidates will participate in a semester-long supervised apprenticeship with a master teacher in a lab school or model classroom focused on developing a deeper understanding of reading research and the application of evidence-based practice in a research practicum. Candidates will apply basic research principles learned in RLD 0503, review educational research on effective literacy practice (e.g., the essential components of reading instruction, etc.), and are supervised in designing and implementing a research project in a school setting.

RLD 0529 Principles of Structured Literacy II: Essentials of Decoding and Encoding**3 Credits****Prerequisite:** RLD 0429 or SE 0429.

This course covers vocabulary and comprehension research and explicit instructional strategies. The candidate will learn about the role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in comprehension. This course includes research-based comprehension teaching strategies that are appropriate for before, during, and after reading that promote reflective reading (e.g., prediction, prior knowledge, monitoring, think-aloud, text structure, visual representation, mental imagery, summarization, questions-questioning, etc.). Candidates will learn the factors that contribute to deep comprehension including background knowledge, vocabulary, verbal reasoning ability, knowledge of literary structures and conventions, and use of skills and strategies for close reading of text. Semantics, the ability to identify examples of meaningful word relationships or semantic organization and syntax, the ability to distinguish among phrases, dependent clauses, and independent clauses in sentence structure, are presented. This course includes an introduction to discourse organization, explaining the difference between narrative and expository text and knowledge of cohesive devices in text and inferential gaps in the surface of text. Crosslisted with SE 0529.

RLD 0530 Content Language & Reading Acquisition for English Language Learners and Students with Special Needs**3 Credits**

This course develops literacy leadership skills to train others and foundational reading skills to be better prepared to teach K-12 students to learn how to read. This course is designed for candidates to learn about the developmental learning needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, exceptional learners, and bilingual students with special needs, and promotes working in collaborative data teams. The course also explores the similarities and differences between bilingual/ESOL students and students with special needs with a focus on reading skills development (e.g. phonology, morphology, orthography, syntax) and instructional strategies that all teachers can use in their classrooms to support reading development in all students. Crosslisted with SL 0530.

RLD 0535 Handwriting, Spelling, and Writing Instruction in the Reading and Language Arts Program**3 Credits**

Candidates will learn research-based principles for teaching letter naming and letter formation, for both manuscript and cursive. Techniques for teaching handwriting fluency will be presented. Candidates will learn about the relationship between transcription skills and written expression. Candidates will learn how to identify children's different levels of spelling development and orthographic knowledge. They will learn about the influence of phonological, orthographic, and morphemic knowledge on spelling. The major components and processes of written expression and how they interact and the developmental expectations for students' writing in the mechanics and conventions of writing, composition, revision, and the editing processes will be covered. The similarities and differences between written composition and text comprehension and the usefulness of writing in building comprehension will also be included. Students will learn how to develop the writing skills of all children, including learners with special needs. This course includes technological applications and assistive technology to support the writing process and evaluation of writing using formal and informal measures.

RLD 0550 Reading Different Types of Texts and Academic Language: Content Area Literacy**3 Credits**

In this course candidates will learn the differences between, and develop comprehension strategies for, both literary/narrative texts and informational/expository texts. Candidates will learn explicit oral language activities (e.g., literature circles, think-pair-share, etc.) and writing activities (e.g., literary response journals, character analyses, etc.) that develop and reinforce comprehension of literary/narrative texts and literary analysis skills. Candidates will learn how to develop study and research skills by using informational/expository texts. Candidates will analyze the role of academic language and background knowledge in reading comprehension. They will recognize the academic language structures (e.g., syntax, grammar, etc.) and functions (e.g., analyzing, justifying, etc.) used in oral and written academic discourse.

RLD 0560 Principles of Scientifically Research-Based Interventions in Reading and Language Arts 3 Credits

Candidates will learn about basic measurement concepts and principles of test construction (e.g., reliability, validity, norm-referencing, etc.) as well as the differences among screening, diagnostic, outcome, and progress-monitoring assessments. Response to Intervention (RtI) models will be covered. Candidates will practice administering tests and using data from diagnostic surveys and assessments of foundational skills, reading comprehension, and written expression in relation to a student's component profile. The candidates will learn reasonable goals and expectations for learners at various stages of reading and writing development. Other topics in this course will include consideration of environmental, cultural, social factors and special needs that contribute to literacy development, and the use of technology in assessment and reporting.

RLD 0565 Differential Diagnosis of Reading Disability Subtypes 3 Credits

Candidates will learn the characteristics of a variety of reading and learning disabilities, including dyslexia, language comprehension and written expression disorders, and how the symptoms may change in response to development and instruction. Theory and practice of literacy interventions, and appropriate commercial instructional materials for individuals experiencing reading difficulties will also be covered with a focus on data-driven interventions to meet the needs of all children, including culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Use of technology to support the remedial reading and remedial language arts program and in reading intervention is included in this course.

RLD 0583 Tests and Measurement in Reading and Language Arts Contexts 3 Credits

This course introduces candidates to the principles and practices of response to intervention approaches to the prevention and early identification and remediation of reading difficulties. Candidates learn about the essential features of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III instruction, including common program development and delivery considerations and assessment routines.

RLD 0584 Guided Reflective Practice in Tier I Reading and Language Arts Programming 3 Credits

This course presents an overview of varied research-based instructional approaches and materials to use in designing and delivering an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced evidence-based reading and writing curriculum. Candidates are provided with the opportunity to explore varied instructional approaches, materials, texts, and classroom routines, and their use in creating a literate environment that fosters reading and writing for diverse student populations. Media Consent and Fingerprinting required.

RLD 0585 Writing Components and Processes in the Language Arts Program 3 Credits

Candidates learn how to assess students' handwriting, spelling, and writing skills, and how to teach writing across the elementary, middle, and secondary continuums, with consideration for the use of a wide range of texts and strategies designed to foster the reading-writing connection. The use of Assistive Technology and specialized instructional strategies and programs will be explored as a means to facilitate students' ability to construct quality writing samples.

RLD 0586 Diagnosis and Remediation of Reading and Language Arts Difficulties 3 Credits

This course introduces candidates to the varied reasons why students may not be responding to the provision of intensive targeted reading and writing interventions. Candidates learn how to administer a range of formal diagnostic assessment measures to students and how to analyze findings for the purpose of informing improved intervention programming for students. This course includes a six to eight hour supervised fieldwork experience. Fingerprinting required.

RLD 0587 Practicum in Tier II Reading and Language Arts Intervention Practices 3 Credits

This course presents an overview of Tier II reading and language arts intervention practices for small groups of students. Candidates learn how to apply their knowledge of benchmark and progress monitoring practices to plan and evaluate instruction for individual and groups of students, how to design and implement flexible grouping techniques, how to prepare data walls and progress monitoring reports to effectively communicate students' response data to colleagues and parents. This course includes a supervised practicum experience. Media Consent and Fingerprinting required.

RLD 0588 Practicum in Tier III Reading and Language Arts Intervention Practices 3 Credits

This course presents an overview of Tier III reading and language arts intervention practices for individual students in Grades 1-12, including students with dyslexia. Candidates in this course learn about structured literacy interventions and engage in supervised work with an assigned student in a practicum context. Candidates in this course will: administer a comprehensive literacy screening assessment to an assigned student in order to develop an individualized scope and sequence of instruction, design and deliver a series of diagnostic-prescriptive structured literacy interventions to an assigned student in the context of a supervised practicum experience, develop and implement an individualized progress-monitoring plan, and share students' progress with parents/guardians in the context of an end of term conference. Media Consent and Fingerprinting required.

RLD 0591 Practicum in Scientifically Research-Based Core Literacy Practices 3 Credits

This is a semester-long supervised apprenticeship with a master teacher in the model school or other model classroom. Candidates will have the opportunity to apply reading theories and other research-based methodologies in a general education classroom setting. Candidates will be responsible for assessing children and interpreting data, writing lesson plans based on the instructional needs of the children, and delivering evidence-based reading instruction. Candidates will analyze criteria for selecting reading materials and other online and offline resources for different instructional purposes and to address students' various literacy needs and diverse cultural backgrounds. During this practicum candidates will also learn characteristics involved in creating a literacy-rich classroom environment that values diversity and promotes reading, vocabulary, and concept development through purposeful discussions, reading and writing.

RLD 0592 Practicum in Structured Literacy Interventions 3 Credits

A supervised apprenticeship with a master teacher in the summer program will focus on diagnosis and intervention for individuals with reading and language learning disabilities. Candidates will conduct an individual diagnostic evaluation for a small group of children with reading difficulties and provide a remedial reading intervention program for the children tested. Candidates will use formal and informal assessment tools appropriate for children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Recommendations for remediation will also include suggestions for use of assistive technology tools.

RLD 0594 Designing, Implementing, and Leading the School Literacy Intervention Program: Capstone Seminar 3 Credits

Candidates will learn the essential components of a classroom environment that support and promote literacy development with a focus on planning instruction for K-6th graders in the school reading and language arts program. There will be a particular emphasis on children who are experiencing difficulties in developing literacy, addressing the special needs of diverse learners. Students will also learn how to facilitate meetings with a literacy focus including grade-level literacy team meetings, literacy leadership meetings, data team meetings, data analysis, and RTI meetings. This course will also support students' ability to design and deliver literacy-focused professional development workshops.

Faculty

Associate Professor of the Practice

McCombes-Tolis, *Director*