



# Literacy and Language in the University of Maryland College of Education

## Literacy Instruction

Candidates in educator preparation programs at the [University of Maryland College of Education](#) study how learners adapt to different environments using interdisciplinary methods from developmental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, multiliteracy and direct educational interventions. They work with exceptional learners experiencing reading and writing difficulties in public schools and, through tutoring, practice the skills they are learning while also providing a free critical service to the community. Graduates of our program have a comprehensive understanding of literacy and language development and the ability to differentiate instruction based on student needs while also recognizing the importance of creating a multicultural and multimodal classroom environment. They are well-versed in current research on the science of learning and the science of reading and have the knowledge to teach students across diverse backgrounds and abilities effectively. Graduates of our programs have the skills to use evidence-based practices and make a range of educational decisions that are supported by the assessment of student literacy across multiple measures.

Our candidates engage in equity-informed instruction when learning about how to teach literacy (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, etc.). For example, our elementary teacher education curriculum and practicum experiences (Grades 1-6) support teacher candidates in working with students from diverse backgrounds through asset-based instructional practices (e.g., using multicultural literature and building on students' cultural knowledge). Our secondary education graduate program (Grades 7-12) offers a three-credit, three-course series on Studying Student Learning in Diverse Settings, which includes learner development, learner dialects, multilingual learner pedagogies, exceptional learner instruction and assessment, and facilitating learning differences. Candidates at the secondary level also complete coursework in digital literacy, content area reading, and disciplinary literacy.

Our programs model how language and communication disorders affect reading and writing development, how language and communication disorders interact with culture, language diversity, and socioeconomic differences in home and school contexts, and recognize that patterns of development vary for children with and without cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical disabilities. [Our coursework](#) requires students to examine federal and state regulations supporting multilingual learners as well as Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) as it relates to the unique literacy needs of learners experiencing language-based challenges.



Candidates also apply research-informed practices for teaching multilingual learners, including knowing their PK-12 students (e.g., their academic backgrounds, personal lives, home language and literacies, interests, family and community assets); building a positive learning environment; planning and enacting content and language instruction through scaffolding, differentiation, supporting students' language and literacy development, and more. Students learn how to support cognitive and motivational processes of literacy and multimodal learning within and across content areas.

The faculty who teach literacy courses introduce students to a wide range of literacy curricula and strategies in an effort to respond to the needs of our PK-12 communities and local districts. Faculty are well-prepared to facilitate science-based reading instruction, and in addition to their prior knowledge are applying what they learned from the MSDE-SUNY Science of Reading microcredential. Our partners consistently offer positive feedback on the extent to which our graduates are prepared to teach literacy. An example of our collective work includes the leadership of the [Maryland Initiative for Literacy and Equity \(MILE\)](#), a signature program organized across five colleges at UMD, and Morgan State University. MILE has led and supported many statewide policies and initiatives.

## Literacy and Language: A High Impact Area

The College of Education has identified [literacy and language as one of its high impact areas](#) in its most recent [strategic plan](#). Current and recent funded projects led by UMD faculty that support and align with our literacy efforts, course design, and instruction include:

- [Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity \(MILE\)](#)
- [Bridging Theory & Practice: Leveraging Technology to Create Immersive and Engaging Learning Opportunities for Preservice Elementary Teachers](#)
- [Developing a Disability Resource and Technology Hub for Writing Instructors and Student](#)
- [An Efficacy Study of Toggle Talk](#)
- [The Hatchlings Project](#)
- [Linguistically Responsive Instruction and Ideologies in Preservice Teacher Preparation](#)
- [Calling for a Humanizing Turn in Language Teacher Education: Problematizing Content and Language Instruction](#)
- [Practicing Equity in Evidence-based Literacy Instruction - MILE Statewide Literacy Review](#)



## College Innovations Supporting Literacy Initiatives

- [EdTerps Learning Academy](#) - ETLA was launched in January 2023 and supports educators, school leaders, and school-based professionals throughout their careers through professional learning experiences that are accessible, flexible, and high-impact. ETLA will develop, administer, and market three types of programs: degree-bearing programs, for-credit non-degree courses, and non-credit (Open Learning) programs.
- [Maryland Initiative for Literacy and Equity](#) (MILE) - A recently established initiative led by Drs. Donald Bolger (University of Maryland, College Park) and Simone Gibson (Morgan State University), focuses on harnessing the power of research to better understand the development of language and literacy skills AND develop cutting edge, culturally relevant strategies in teaching reading. MILE is harnessing research-to-practice partnerships in the fields of education, speech and language pathology, library sciences, policy, and community stakeholder outreach. These efforts are aimed at driving integrative research, both translational and basic, that is contextualized with respect to literacy with marginalized communities across race, culture, ethnicity, and language, as well as neurodiverse populations.
- [School Improvement Leadership Academy](#) (SILA) - An initiative of the Center for Educational Innovation and Improvement, SILA supports principal development by providing comprehensive, evidence-based professional learning to 140 principals and assistant principals in Title I schools, Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools, and/or high need schools in Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. This work aims to increase principal and assistant principal knowledge and capacity in three areas: Instructional Leadership, Equity Leadership, and Improvement Leadership. The work is funded by a grant from the US Department of Education.
- [The Creative Initiatives in Teacher Education \(CITE\)](#) program is a teacher preparation program with the College of Education and both Montgomery County Public Schools and Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Our cohorts include teachers who are hired conditionally due to the national teacher shortage and will assist them with earning their certification in less than two years.
- Launched in 2023, the [Maryland Early EdCorp Apprenticeship Program](#) recruits and prepares child care teachers to meet the needs of children with disabilities, children who are English language learners, and children experiencing homelessness. Through the program, candidates work toward the Preschool Child Development Associate credential, participate in paid apprenticeships at high-quality child care centers, and receive 160 hours of professional development and mentorship.



- [The Reading Specialist](#) program aligns with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) certification requirements for grades P-12 and has earned recognition by the International Literacy Association. Students completing this program receive the Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree. Graduates completing three years of classroom teaching experience are eligible for the reading specialist certification from MSDE. Recently

redesigned with a focus on equity for diverse readers, the program consists of 30 credits, including a capstone summer reading clinic known as the University of Maryland Summer Reading Program (SRP). In the SRP, candidates provide literacy instruction to students who struggle with reading and writing while engaging in collaborative and coaching experiences with candidates from the program. The SRP is open to children in grades PK-12 who live in the local community. With a legacy of more than 30 years, the SRP has served hundreds of students from diverse backgrounds, including those who a) qualify for the National School Lunch Program, b) identify as students of color, c) and are multilingual learners.

## Literacy Courses at UMD

Program	Reading Courses	Title	Credits
Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education	<a href="#">EDHD314</a>	Reading in the Early Childhood Classroom	3
	<a href="#">EDHD/EDSP315</a>	Reading in Early Childhood Classroom: Instruction and Materials Part II	3
	<a href="#">EDSP417</a>	Reading Diagnosis and Assessment	3
	<a href="#">EDHD425</a>	Language Development and Reading Acquisition	3
Special Education	<a href="#">EDSP443</a>	Language and Literacy Acquisition in Children with Disabilities	3
	<a href="#">EDSP416</a>	Reading and Writing Instruction in Special Education I	3



	<a href="#">EDSP484</a>	Reading and Writing Instruction in Special Education II	3
Elementary	<a href="#">TLPL300</a>	Digital Learning Tools and Communities	1
	<a href="#">TLPL340</a>	Introduction to Children's Literacy and Critical Literacy	3
	<a href="#">TLPL341</a>	Assessing Language and Literacy Development in Elementary Classrooms	3
	<a href="#">TLPL342</a>	Promoting Skilled and Motivated Readers in Diverse Elementary Classrooms (Part 1)	3
	<a href="#">TLPL343</a>	Promoting Skilled and Motivated Readers in Diverse Elementary Classrooms (Part 2)	3
	<a href="#">TLPL344</a>	Culturally Responsive Language and Literacy Instruction in Diverse Elementary Classrooms	3
	<a href="#">TLPL460</a>	Materials and Instruction for Creating Skilled and Motivated Readers, Part I	3
	<a href="#">TLPL461</a>	Materials and Instruction for Creating Skilled and Motivated Readers, Part II	3
	<a href="#">TLPL642</a>	Processes and Acquisition of Reading	3
	<a href="#">TLPL647</a>	Diagnostic Reading Assessment and Instruction	3
Middle School/Mathematics & Science	<a href="#">EDHD436</a>	Cognition and Motivation in Content Area Literacy for Middle-School Students	3
	<a href="#">TLPL462</a>	Reading in the Secondary School	3



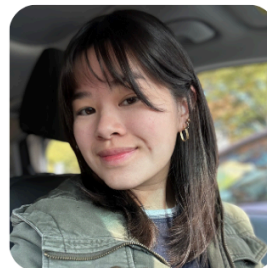
Secondary/PK-12	<a href="#">EDHD426</a>	Cognitive and Motivational Literacy Content	3
	<a href="#">TLPL300</a>	Digital Learning Tools and Communities	1
TESOL	<a href="#">TLPL442</a>	Foundations of Literacy and Biliteracy Development	3
	<a href="#">TLPL646</a>	Linguistics in Education	3
	<a href="#">TLPL655</a>	Student Assessment in the Second Language Classroom	3
	<a href="#">TLPL656</a>	Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners	3
	<a href="#">TLPL661</a>	Multiliteracies: Theory and Practice	3
	<a href="#">TLPL662</a>	Second Language Acquisition	3
	<a href="#">TLPL665</a>	Methods for Teaching Multilingual Learners	3
	<a href="#">TLPL666</a>	English Grammar for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages	3



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## Literacy & Language Education Contributors







## Literacy Publications

As a result of these projects and our collective work, we've compiled a selection of faculty publications that also serve as recommended readings for our students. Following the references are additional innovations that anchor literacy research, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

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