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SPED 415/415A Reading and Writing Disabilities: A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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SPED 415/415A Reading and Writing Disabilities

A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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Abstract

This portfolio explores four aspects of the lecture and practicum that comprise the coursework for students learning to tutor children with reading and writing disabilities. The first aspect is the alignment of the course objectives, teaching methods, assessments and scores. The second aspect is innovation in curricula for tutoring, explored through student response to surveys at the end of the tutoring session. The third aspect is student experience of participating in the course at mid-point and suggestions for improvement of course delivery, gathered by a mid-semester survey. The fourth aspect is topics and content students would like to see added to the course to help them become the kind of teachers who change the world. This was gathered through an end-of course final reflection on their evolving teacher identity. Student testimony, complaints, praise and suggestions feed into the planned changes for the course.

Keywords: Reading Center, tutoring, literacy, reading disability, teacher education

I always knew that school was important but the reason why it's so important didn't come to me until teachers' college. School is beyond the material you learn or the grades you receive. It's the lessons you learn as you learn.

Rosie Gomez

Final in-class reflection,

SPED 415

4/18/2018

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Objectives of Peer Review Course Portfolio

SPED 415/415A Reading and Writing Disabilities is a course I have been teaching and modifying for six years; I want to step back and look at it from a course-design framework and see if the objectives, materials, assignments, and grades correspond to the aims I have for the course.

We piloted the use of scripted curriculum materials for basic reading skills (Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies, or PALS-1) and comprehension (PALS-2) in summer semester 2017 and fall 2017. In spring semester 2018, we planned to “scale up” the use of the curriculum materials by requiring tutors whose children match the materials, to use them. This means we are leaving behind a word-sorting curriculum for basic reading skills, and tutor-choice of a range of reading comprehension strategies. I want to know what the tutors say about the benefits and challenges of using PALS-1 and PALS-2, and whether or not our procedures for accessing the materials are working. Additionally, in spring semester 2018, we required all tutors to teach two to four lessons of phonemic awareness, and urged them to teach more lessons as appropriate to their child. I want to know what they did and if they saw phonemic awareness lessons as beneficial.

I collect a mid-semester survey on challenges the students are experiencing in the course and suggestions for improvement. I would like to spend more time reviewing their comments than I usually do. I also want to collect suggestions for improvement at the end of the course.

I want to use my review of the course design and the student input to plan for the next year or two of development of the course.

Description of the Course: Goals, Context, and Enrollment

“SPED 415/415A is designed to teach state of the art practices in assessment and instruction for ensuring all students have the best opportunities to learn critical reading and writing skills. Individuals completing this course will demonstrate competency in:

1. Identifying factors associated with reading and writing difficulties/disabilities and characterizing procedures for identifying these students.
2. Delivering and interpreting assessments to identify specific areas of difficulty and to monitor progress.
3. Developing instructional goals to meet specific needs of students.
4. Selecting and adapting evidence-based practices for specific students.
5. Using effective instructional techniques (such as explicit instruction and strategy instruction) to deliver intensive interventions to students with special needs.”

(See the teaching framework matching objectives, activities, and assessments in Appendix A. See the course syllabus and calendar in Appendix B.)

SPED 415/415A is housed at the Kit and Dick Schmoker Reading Center located in the Barkley Memorial Center on East Campus. Students take a 2-hour lecture course that meets once a week and a 2-hour practicum that meets twice a week. In the practicum, students tutor a child who is a year or more below expected in some aspect of literacy, usually reading. Students from three departments enroll in the course: Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education (TLTE); Special Education and Communication Disorders (SECD); and Child, Youth and Family Studies (CYFS). Students take the course in the semester before student teaching and after completing their nine-hour literacy block. They are well-prepared for the literacy instruction they conduct during tutoring, but do not have experience with assessments, goals for instruction, writing

multiple lesson plans, and providing on-going instruction. Many do not have experience working with children with learning disabilities.

In spring semester 2018, 63 students enrolled in the four practicum sections. I taught all students in Practicum and I taught 31 of the students in Lecture; a colleague taught the other 32 students in Lecture. A majority of the students (51%, or 32 students) were Elementary Education majors. Many students (41%, or 26 students) were “dual majors,” enrolled in Elementary Education and Special Education. Four students (6%) were enrolled in Early Childhood Education within the TLTE department, and one student was enrolled in Child, Youth Early Childhood education in the CYFS department.

Teaching Methods/Course Materials/Course Activities

The topics and activities in the Lecture portion of the course divide into three phases, each ending with the students producing a major writing assignment. Phase one occupies the first five weeks of the semester and is focused upon preparation for tutoring (weeks one and two), assessment of the children and beginning of instruction (weeks three and four), and launching of the many tutoring routines, starting with week five. At the end of week five, students turn in an essay in which they analyze and synthesize the assessments they have conducted and set goals for instruction and instructional plans for the rest of the semester.

Phase two covers weeks six through ten. The readings and in-class activities focus first on characteristics of explicit instruction and research-based routines for teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Starting with week seven, the readings also include research on the underlying causes of dyslexia and other reading and writing disabilities. In week ten, students turn in an essay in which they state whether or not they

think their child has a reading or writing disability, review the relevant theories, and present evidence from assessments, Woodcock-Johnson Reading Mastery Test screening, and observation of the child during tutoring.

Phase three covers weeks eleven (Spring Break) through sixteen. Readings include more theoretical chapters on severely delayed readers and nonreaders; on causes and correlates of individual differences in reading ability; and principles of instruction for delayed readers. Students write several in-class reflections in these weeks, applying the concepts from the textbook to their experiences working with the child they are tutoring. In week thirteen students start working on their final writing assignment, a Child Study Report. Students conduct assessments in week fourteen and fifteen and turn in a draft of the Report at the end of week fifteen. They meet with their Practicum Supervisor to review the Report in week sixteen and turn in a final copy. The Child Study Report presents the initial and final assessments, the goals for instruction, description of instruction, evaluation of progress and recommendations for future instruction and learning.

In addition to the three written reports, students take five quizzes on the readings, write four in-class reflections, and present one strategy demonstration to a small group of peers. They meet in small groups during Lecture for “peer consultations” on issues they encounter in tutoring. One of their in-class reflections asks them to describe changes they have made in tutoring based on peer consultations. The major writing assignments count 40 points each, for 120 points out of 205 (58.5%); the quizzes count 10 points each, for 50 points out of 205 (24.4%); the reflections count 25 points (12.2%) and the strategy demonstration counts 10 points (5%) of the total.

The primary work of students in Practicum is tutoring a child who is below expected level in literacy, twice a week. Tutoring begins in week three and ends in week fifteen. There are 23 hour-long tutoring sessions. Tutors train to administer and interpret assessments in reading, writing, spelling, and phonemic awareness; then assess their child and design goals for instruction and instructional plans. They write lesson plans and conduct the instruction across the semester, using data and progress monitoring to decide how to best meet the needs of the child. Tutors provide instruction in phonemic awareness, basic reading skills/decoding, sight words, spelling, vocabulary, fluency, reading comprehension, and writing. They develop additional lessons specific to their child for “flex time.”

Each tutor works with a Practicum Supervisor who is an experienced teacher of literacy and/or special education. The Supervisor observes the student teaching for about 15 minutes once a week, types a descriptive observation on the lesson plan while observing, summarizes what went well and what the tutor can work on next, and scores the teaching according to a rubric. The Supervisor also scores one lesson plan per week according to a lesson-plan rubric; it is usually the same lesson the Supervisor observes. Supervisors work with six students within a tutoring section, observing three on Monday (for example) and three on Wednesday (for example). The Supervisor meets with all six students for a debriefing session after every day of tutoring.

There are ten teaching observations, scored at 13 points each; nine lesson plan evaluations scored at 7 points each; and 35 points applied to progress monitoring. The observations count for 57% of the total points, the lesson plans count for 28%, and the progress monitoring counts for 15%.

Materials for Lecture are two textbooks and an on-line curriculum for writing instruction. Materials for Practicum is a color-coded packet for Getting Started with Assessments, Getting Started with Instruction, Word Work Resources, Writing Strategy Instruction, and Reading Strategy Instruction. The packets have evolved over the past three years; they started as the handouts we provided in Lecture to teach the skills and routines the students need for tutoring.

The Reading Center provides the assessment kits the students use, the books they use for teaching reading, basic teaching supplies, and copies of curriculum materials for tutoring such as PALS-1 and PALS-2. Additionally, many resources are uploaded to Canvas.

The Practicum and Lecture are closely intertwined, and much of the Lecture time is devoted to support of the Practicum. The challenge of teaching Lecture is to provide just-in-time instruction for the tutors so they have the training and theory they need for Practicum, not too soon and not too late. It is also important to provide substantial content in Lecture, especially about reading and writing disabilities, which are the topic of the course. Finally, a challenge for both Lecture and Practicum is providing enough supports for the students; the course is fast-paced, requires a lot of production from the students, and continually asks them to do tasks they have never done before. We try to scaffold their tutoring by providing five pre-written lesson plans, processing time in Lecture, and professional development for their many instructional routines.

The Course and the Broader Curriculum

Students complete SPED 415/415A the semester before they student teach. The course lays the foundation for classroom teaching in that students experience in miniature all of the activities they will enact in a whole-class setting. In addition to assessing, planning, instructing,

and progress monitoring, students also encounter and solve challenging behavioral and engagement issues. The course also lays the foundation for Special Education teachers who will conduct interventions for children with reading or writing disabilities.

The course is a Special Education course. The SECD department has an expectation that explicit, direct instruction is presented as the teaching method of choice and that curriculum be supported by research, preferably meeting Institute of Education Sciences' criteria. This has shaped our choice of writing program, Self-Regulated Writing Strategies (SRSD), and reading curriculum, Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS-1 and PALS-2).

I have a Vygotskian perspective on tutoring. I consider that much of the power of tutoring flows from the co-construction of meaning between a teacher and learner, engaged in joint productive activity with shared materials and task. The Vygotskian and the Special Education perspectives can be compatible: I would view explicit instruction and research-based curriculum as elements within a larger context of socially-constructed learning.

I have some goals for the teachers I train. I want teachers to understand the causes of reading and writing disabilities. I want future teachers to quickly recognize when children are struggling with literacy, and know how to assess and begin classroom interventions immediately. I want teachers to internalize instructional routines for literacy so they absolutely know how to teach phonemic awareness, sight words, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, spelling, reading and writing. I want the teachers to bring their entire being to their interactions with children, and I want them to interact with the entire being of the child.

I want teachers to expect that all children can learn. I want them to know that children have a zone of proximal development for every skill and learn best if we meet them right at that

point of next growth. I want teachers to be helpful to students who struggle or are different than other children. I also want teachers to celebrate the happiness of childhood.

Analysis of Student Learning and Student Input on Course Procedures

There are four sources of data for analysis in this report. The first is the scores on assignments in Lecture class (31 students) and Practicum (four sections, 63 students), along with growth in their tutored child's reading level. The purpose of the analysis is to see if the scores seem equitable and reflect the course objectives. A secondary question is, do higher scoring tutors produce more growth in their child's reading level?

A second source of data is surveys we created focused on three innovations in tutoring curriculum. One survey addresses teaching of phonemic awareness: we required all tutors to teach at least some phonemic awareness this semester and provided an additional resource, the Sound Play materials in PALS-K (See the Phonemic Awareness Survey in Appendix C). The second survey addresses teaching of PALS-1 in the word work part of the lesson plan. We had made PALS-1 optional in the fall semester, and few students tried the curriculum. In spring semester, we required all teachers to use it if their student's spelling stage matched the content covered in PALS-1 (See the PALS-1 Survey Questions in Appendix D). The third survey addresses teaching PALS-2 in the reading comprehension part of the lesson plan. In the fall semester, we had scheduled six days of PALS-2 instruction and invited tutors to add more. For the spring semester, we directed all tutors of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade children to teach at least ten days of PALS-2, and made it optional for tutors of 5th and 6th grade children. The purpose of the analysis is to learn the tutor's view of the benefits and challenges of teaching the curriculum, and

get feedback on our procedures for providing materials (See the PALS-2 Survey Questions in Appendix E).

A third source of data is a mid-semester survey given in Lecture class, asking students what is working and what more I could do to support them in lecture and practicum. This is a survey I have administered for three years; it has been a useful source of information for improving the course (See the Mid-Semester Survey Questions in Appendix F).

The fourth source of data is a question I added this semester to their final in-class reflection; I asked what topics or content could I add to the course to help them become the kind of teachers who change the world. This gave me suggestions for improvement from their perspective at the end of the semester. (See the Final Reflection Question in Appendix G).

Scores and Averages for the Lecture Section

Most of the students earned a high grade in Lecture: 26 earned on A in the course, 4 earned a B, and one earned a D. The one unsuccessful student was suffering from anxiety and depression (by her statement) that interfered with attendance and completion of assignments.

Rather than focus on individual students, I have grouped students by their final grade and looked at the average score the grouped students achieved on categories of assignments. There were four categories of assignment in Lecture: three written reports (5 pages, each) worth 40 points each; five quizzes worth 10 points each; 4 in-class reflections worth 5 to 10 points each; and one strategy demonstration worth 10 points. Additionally, 5 bonus points were awarded for perfect attendance, and 5 penalty points were applied for each unexcused absence. The table below shows the group means for each category of assignment.

Table 1

Summary of Means, by Category of Assignment, Grouped by Final Grade in Lecture

Grade in course	Number of students	Group mean for 3 written reports	Group mean for 5 quizzes	Group mean for in-class reflections	Group mean for strategy assignment	Attendance bonus	Attendance penalty
A+	7	99.1	99.2	100	100	6 students	
A	12	92.5	94.8	98.4	100	4 students	1 student
A-	7	90.8	87.2	93.2	100		1 student
B & B-	4	87.5	88.2	85.2	83		3 students
D-	1	91.6	65	40	0		1 student
Points possible for the category		120 (3 x 40)	50 (5 x 10)	25 (1 x 10, 3 x 5)	10 (1 x 10)	5 (0 absences)	-5 (2 absences) -10 (3 absences) -25 (6 absences)

Reading across each row, one can see that students' scores on reports, quizzes, and reflections are similar within a group. There does not seem to be one kind of assignment that is harder than the other kinds. However, the quiz scores show a drop to B+ in the A- group. The range for quiz scores is 40 to 50, and the overall average for the class is 46.1 out of 50, or 92.2 percentile. The format for each quiz is: four questions on assigned readings are provided the week before the quiz; three questions appear on the quiz; and students write a paragraph-length response to two of them. The result depends upon preparation; the questions cannot be answered from general knowledge. Students who score low usually omit part of the answer, showing a general rather than a focused preparation.

The in-class reflections are largely completion scores; the aim is to give students an opportunity to process their tutoring experiences in relation to the text book information, in relation to their peer consultations, and in relation to their own history with teaching. The overall average for the class is 23.5 out of 25, or 94 percentile.

For students earning a B or below, each student earned a 0 for either a missed in-class reflection or a missed quiz, not made-up (other students did make up quizzes). With only 205 points in the course, omission of a 10 point quiz produces a drop of 5% of the final score, and omission of a 5 point reflection drops the final score by 2.5%. Four of the students at a grade of B or below also received a penalty for excessive absences; -5 points for 2 absences, -10 points for 3 absences, and -25 points for six absences. Thus absence from class impacted scores for work completed in class, and impacted final grades as well.

Every student earned an A on at least one of the three written reports, and 93.5% of the students (29/31) earned an A on two of the three written reports. Even students who earned a B or below in the course, earned grades of A on two of the three written reports. This suggests that the students were all capable of producing a complex written assignment, requiring analysis and synthesis, with a high level of organization and written expression.

Students did improve their scores across the three written reports. The table below shows the average score per group on each of the reports. The column in italics represents the revised scores for students who chose to resubmit assignment one. Although one low-scoring student was invited to resubmit assignment two, she did not resubmit; and no one was invited to resubmit assignment three.

Table 2

Summary of Means for Written Reports, Grouped by Final Grade in Lecture

<u>Grade in course</u>	<u>Number of students</u>	<u>Group mean for assignment one</u>	<u>Group mean for revised assignment one</u>	<u>Group mean for assignment two</u>	<u>Group mean for assignment three</u>	<u>Group mean for three written assignments combined</u>
A+	7	95	97.5	100	100	99.1
A	12	82.5	88.3	95	95	92.5
A-	7	72.5	82.3	95	95	90.8
B & B-	4	72.5	78.8	87.5	97.5	87.5
D-	1	90		90	95	91.6
Possible points		40		40	40	120

The relatively low scores on assignment one suggest that it was harder than the other two written reports. The students were asked to report results of their initial assessments, write three goals for instruction based upon those assessments, and write an instructional plan for the semester for each of the goals. When I look at my feedback for assignment one, I see that tutors made errors in interpreting the assessments, in developing goals and rationales, and in developing their plan for instruction. The most common error in assessment was misinterpreting the outcome of their Benchmark reading assessments, generally because they did not consult the chart provided to them. The common error in writing goals was to over-estimate what is achievable in a semester. The common error in writing their instructional plans for the semester was to omit mention of PALS-1, PALS-2, and the writing curriculum, SRSD. Students who did this were usually following a model written by a friend from a previous semester when those materials were not required.

I have already revised the chart students consult to determine Benchmark assessment results, to make the interpretation more obvious. I should be able to address the problems with

goals and instructional plans by asking students to practice scoring higher and lower quality reports in class according to the rubric, before they write their own reports. That will provide an opportunity to discuss what a reasonable goal is, and what needs to be included in the instructional plan. Samples of the other two reports can also be scored in class before they write their own report.

In general, I believe that the assignments for Lecture are appropriate. They address the objectives of the course, provide a variety of ways to demonstrate learning, do not “tilt” the scores in favor of one kind of assessment, and seem to carry appropriate weights. Students who prepare for the quizzes and attend class are rewarded, and students who don’t prepare and miss class have consequences.

Scores and Averages for the Practicums

Most students also earn a very high grade in Practicum. Of the 63 students enrolled across four sections, 29 earned an A+ (99-100), 31 earned an A (94-98), one earned an A-, one earned a B+, and one earned a D-. The tutors are scored by six different supervisors using a rubric for observation of teaching and a rubric for evaluation of lesson plans. Teaching contributes 57% of the practicum grade (130/228 points), lesson planning contributes 28% of the grade (63/228), and progress monitoring contributes 15% of the grade (35/228). This distribution reflects the value we assign to the different activities.

The table below shows the mean score for observations, for lesson plans, and for progress monitoring for each of the four Practicum sections. The observation grades are uniformly high, except for section 004, which contains the student who scored D- for the course. The lesson plan grades show a little more variation, but are still in the A range for each section. Progress monitoring is essentially a completion grade for data compiled across the tutoring sessions; the

only way to miss points is to omit something. The range for each item shows that the supervisors are actually evaluating student performance. Setting aside the 0 in each category in section 004, the lowest observation grade was 4.7 out of 13 points, and the lowest lesson planning grade was 2.31 out of 7 points.

Table 3
Means and Range for Observation, Lesson Planning and Progress Monitoring Grades, Grouped by Section of Enrollment

<u>Section</u>	Means, Observation <u>grades</u>	Range, Observation <u>grades</u>	Means, Lesson Planning <u>grades</u>	Range, Lesson Planning <u>grades</u>	Means, Progress <u>Monitoring</u>	Range, Progress <u>Monitoring</u>	Overall points and <u>class means</u>
001	12.81/13.0	4.7-13.0	6.61/7.0	2.31-7.0	4.99/5.0	4.5-5.0	221.3/228
	98.54%		94.42%		99.8%		97.06%
002	12.86/13.0	11.23-13.0	6.72/7.0	5.83-7.0	4.89/5.0	1.0-5.0	221.12/228
	98.92%		96%		97.8		96.98%
003	12.88/13.0	10.92-13.0	6.63/7.0	2.50-7.0	4.99/5.0	4.5-5.0	221.35/228
	99.07%		94.71%		99.8%		97.08%
004	12.31/13.0	0.0-13.0	6.63/7.0	0.0-7.0	4.74/5.0	0-5.0	215.99/228
	94.69%		94.71%		94.8%		94.73%
Points possible for the category	130 (10 x 13)		63 (7 x 7)		35 (7 x 5)		228

It is possible that the rubrics contribute to the very high scores. The observation rubric has 22 indicators in 7 categories of performance. Categories are Preparation (3 points), Implementation of Instruction (7 points), Feedback (4 points), Pacing (4 points), Learning Environment (1 point), Teaching growth (1 point), Evaluation and Assessment (2 points). A student can receive a 1, .5, or 0 on each indicator. In practice, a student gets a 1 on every indicator unless a flaw is observed, and even then the score is likely to drop only to .5. A zero would be rare, unless the indicator is a clear yes/no situation, such as “lesson plan is displayed.”

If the instruction during an observation doesn't allow for display of an indicator (such as transitions), credit is given for the unobserved indicator. If a tutor lost a half-point on four different indicators, he would still score 20/22 on the indicators, or 90.9%, which would translate to 11.8 points out of 13. Because we have so many indicators, it is difficult to generate a truly low score.

Tutors are highly supported for lesson plan writing: the overall structure is provided, examples are provided, and language for activity descriptions for parts of the lesson plan is provided. The component that produces most difference in scoring is the tutor's presentation of data on student performance in the previous lesson, and rationale for reviewing content or moving ahead in the current lesson. We also expect to see tutors constantly updating their content for teaching, such as titles of books taught, vocabulary words prepared for instruction, selection of sight words, steps in the process of essay writing. Supervisors score according to the lesson plan rubric; there are 24 indicators, scored as present (1) or absent (0). Students write two lesson plans per week, and are scored on one of them. Each lesson plan grade is worth only 7 points; so missing an indicator or two (out of 24) has little impact on the lesson plan grade for the week, or on the overall grade for the course.

Even though the scores in Practicum are high, in general they are realistic. The tutors invest effort into their planning and teaching. They focus on understanding expectations and producing the lesson plans and instruction that the rubrics call for. They try to do everything correctly, and then they go beyond expectations to devise innovative and creative approaches to reach their children. I attribute this high commitment to their desire to jump in to teaching. Many of them have self-identified as teachers for years, and tutoring is their first opportunity to

experience the full range of teaching tasks. They bring great energy, focus, and determination to the undertaking.

Child Learning and Student Grades

For this section, I consider only students enrolled in my Lecture, since I don't know the exact instruction provided to students enrolled in the other section of Lecture. I am looking for a relationship between students' grades and the progress their child makes in tutoring.

To be admitted to tutoring, a child has to score a year or more below expected on some aspect of literacy, usually reading, recorded as a "DRA level" (Developmental Reading Assessment level). Thus it makes sense to view their progress in terms of "years below grade level." Because the grade level of the child advances by half a year from beginning to end of tutoring, a child who makes half-a-year's gain in DRA level will end up just as far below expected at the end of the semester as he was at the beginning. The only way to reduce the gap is to make more than half-a-year's progress in a semester. For the 31 students in my Lecture class, 15 children achieved more than half-a-year's growth in a semester, with two year's growth in the semester the biggest gain. Thirteen children improved from .2 to .5 year's growth in the semester; and 3 children did not advance in DRA level but did improve words correct per minute (WCPM). The table below shows the amount of improvement in DRA level the children achieved, reported as portions of a year's progress.

Table 4

Amount of Improvement in Reading, Reported as Portion of a Year's Progress

Children who finished tutoring with the same or greater "years below grade level"		Children who finished tutoring with fewer "years below grade level"	
Growth in DRA level, in years	Quantity of children	Growth in DRA level, in years	Quantity of children
0	3	.70	2
.20	4	.80	2
.30	2	1	6
.40	2	1.2	1
.50	5	1.5	2
		1.7	1
		2.0	1

Of my seven students with an A+ in lecture, three moved their student up a year or more in reading; two maintained their student's "years below grade level" (at 1 year and at 2 years below grade level); and two increased their student's "years below grade level" (from .5 to 1 year below, and from 1.5 to 2 years below grade level). In general, the tutor's grade in lecture or practicum did not account for the child's growth in DRA level. When the tutoring list is sorted by tutors' final grades in lecture or practicum, children who experienced more than half-a-year's growth, children who maintained their level, and children who ended up farther below grade level, are intermixed throughout the list. What does seem to make progress harder for a child is (a) being already 2.5 or more years below grade level; or (b) being at very low DRA levels such as DRA 8 and below. Both could indicate substantial challenge in basic reading skills, leading to very slow progress with decoding.

Tutoring Curriculum Surveys: Phonemic Awareness, PALS-1, PALS-2

The Tutoring Curriculum surveys were completed in-class, in both Lecture sections, in week fourteen. They were administered through Qualtrics survey software. Students were instructed to complete only the surveys that matched the curricula they taught.

Phonemic Awareness Survey results (49 tutors completed the survey).

As part of their initial assessments, tutors administer the Phonological Awareness Skills Screener (PASS), which contains 10 subtests focused on rhyming, segmenting, blending, or deleting sounds or syllables. We asked tutors, “On the PASS, which subtests did your student score less than 80%?” Two subtests were most difficult: phoneme deletion (34 children scored below 80%) and phoneme segmentation (31 children scored below 80%). The next most difficult tests were rhyme production (16 children), phoneme recognition (13 children), and syllable segmentation (9 children). The other subtests were easy for most children, with few scoring below 80%: syllable deletion (5), phoneme blending (4), rhyme recognition (3), syllable blending (3), and word discrimination (2).

Our instructions to the tutors was to teach phonemic awareness (PA) four days and then switch to PALS-1 or PALS-K for word work; or to teach phonemic awareness for two days and then switch to word sorts from Words Their Way if their student scored at “inflected endings” or above on the Spelling assessment. Additionally, all tutors were instructed to continue phonemic awareness in flex time if PA instruction was appropriate to their child. This is the first time we required tutors to teach some phonemic awareness; previously we have provided resources but left it as an optional activity. We hoped that the tutors would become comfortable with the materials, discover how important PA instruction is to their child, and continue on their own. Sixteen of the tutors taught PA for the required four days and then stopped, eight taught PA for two or three days; and more than half of the tutors (25 of 49) taught additional PA lessons. Six tutors taught PA “every day.” One tutor said, “I did phonemic awareness and skills during every flex time--and added more after assignment 2 when I realized this was a critical area for him.” Another commented, “At least 10, likely more. We altered the format of my lessons to include

10 minutes of phonemic awareness activities (what was flex time) about midway through the semester.”

One of the resources we provide for phonemic awareness is lists of words to use for 14 separate phonemic awareness skills, contained in the “pink packet.” We asked tutors “Which activities did you use from the pink packet?” In general, tutors selected activities that addressed the weaknesses identified on the PASS test; for example, Omitting Sounds (used by 20 tutors), Changing Sounds (14 tutors), and Omitting Syllables (16 tutors) resemble the Phoneme Deletion subtest on which 34 children scored below 80%. Tutors (21) also taught Rhyming Words, Identifying Sounds (20), and Blending (19), which correspond to Rhyme Production, Phoneme Recognition, and Phoneme Blending on the PASS test.

Another resource we provided for phonemic awareness is the Sound Play lessons in PALS-K. They include materials for first and last sound identification, rhyming, segmenting and blending. The lessons include pictures that stand for words, and boxes that stand for sounds. Tutors would have to print the lesson pages from a PDF posted on Canvas, or display them on a computer screen during tutoring. Most of the tutors (35 out of 49) stated that they did not use the PALS-K materials. Seven tutors reported using PALS-K; one for rhyming activities, one for syllable activities, one for lesson 34 only, and four for extended lessons (17-24; 40-60; 46-56; 63-70). To cover so many lessons, these tutors must have been in the group who taught phonemic awareness “every day.”

PALS-1 Survey results (45 completed the survey).

Forty-five tutors reported using PALS-1 with their child. One started with lesson 1, suitable for an Emergent speller. Twelve started with lessons 6 to 24, corresponding to Early Letter Name spellers working on short vowels and CVC works. Twenty-one started with lessons

31 to 45, corresponding to Middle Letter Name spellers working on digraphs and blends. Eight started with lessons 46 to 48, corresponding to Early Within Word spellers working on long vowel spelling patterns. Three started on lessons 53 to 63, corresponding to Middle Within Word spellers working on “other vowels” such as diphthongs aw, ou, ow. Tutors whose children scored above Middle Within Word on the Spelling Inventory did not use PALS-1; they used Words Their Way word sorts instead.

Students stated that they used the spelling inventory to determine where to start PALS-1 instruction; 29 “looked at what my student struggled with on the spelling inventory and found the lesson that matched that.” Three said they used the PASS test, but perhaps they meant the spelling inventory because it is not clear how the PASS test would generate a starting point for PALS-1. Five students consulted their supervisor or instructor. Overall, 82% reported that their starting point was correct, 6% were unsure, and 12 % said it was incorrect. Tutors wrote that they quickly moved to easier or more difficult lessons when they found they had started at an incorrect level.

Many tutors (21) stated that the primary benefit of PALS-1 is that it taught letter sounds and the sounding out of words. Tutors (11) also praised it for teaching phonemic awareness. Ten said it caused students to slow down and take the time to sound out words, and seven stated it taught a strategy for sounding out words by blending the letter sounds. Nine tutors said the story reading helped with fluency, and five praised it for providing more practice with sight words. Three said their tutee loved being able to earn points, two liked the correction procedure because it encouraged the child to read the words on the page or start over, and one stated that the curriculum was fun for the child and he loves to do it.

Tutors also reported challenges when working with PALS-1. Several commented that they didn't know where to start the lessons; however, forty reported that they started at the correct lesson. Thirteen students commented that the routine can get very repetitive and boring for the children. Eight tutors reported that their child was frustrated by particular parts of the lesson: finger counting of sounds, sight word phrases, the stories, or having to read stories again. Four tutors said their child gets frustrated when told to start over, and four wrote of the points as a challenge: they are motivating, but some students were distracted by them.

When reporting the child's response to PALS-1, twelve tutors said that their child enjoyed doing PALS-1, but six said that their child was bored because it was so repetitive. Twenty tutors said their child liked or loved earning points and getting rewards. Nine tutors stated PALS-1 helped their child learn specific skills: sounds, letter-sound combinations, sounding out words, spelling, fluency, motivation, self-monitoring, and greater independence while reading.

Tutors were general satisfied with the check-out procedures: 55% said the procedure worked well, 30% were "passive," and 15% were critical. "Works well, just pick it up and put it back." The one inconvenience was not having the book available at home while they were lesson planning; however, several said they learned to photograph the next lesson before turning the book back in. Despite that inconvenience, 71% said they definitely or probably would not want to buy the book themselves, primarily due to the cost and uncertainty if they would ever use it again. Only 18% thought they might be willing to buy the book, and 10% said probably yes.

PALS-2 Survey results (43 completed the survey).

In response to the survey question about the benefits of PALS-2, many tutors (25) named the correction procedure as a benefit, stating "She enjoyed correcting my mistakes." Fourteen

tutors praised partner reading, and eleven named coaching as a benefit, as “My student was very focused when he was the coach.” Comprehension was the second most-named benefit; 19 tutors stated that PALS-2 helps improve comprehension. Tutors (10) described the benefit of retell: “Knowing that he was going to have to retell made him pay attention to the words.” Tutors (10) also praised paragraph shrinking because it “helped my student summarize the main idea.” Prediction relay was named by nine tutors, who said “My student loved the prediction relay because he likes to see if he is right.” Five tutors mentioned growth in fluency, and four said their student enjoyed reading with another tutee. Three tutors said students had fun “pretending they were the teacher,” and two praised the program for being structured and systematic.

Of the 43 tutors who responded to the PALS-2 survey, all said they taught partner reading and retell, and 41 said they taught paragraph shrinking. However, only 27 got to the final strategy of prediction relay; they either ran out of instructional days because their student needed more time with the earlier strategies, or they decided to try a different reading strategy to finish out the tutoring session.

All tutors trained their children in the strategies for five weeks, with the tutor acting as the partner reader/coach. Ten of the tutors reported using child pairs for the next three or four lessons. One tutor who switched to child pairs said it was not successful because her child was shy and embarrassed to make and catch mistakes. The others said “it went well.” Of the tutors who did not move to child pairs, most said there was an advantage to using the teacher as the partner: the teacher could see what the child can do and needs to work on, or “we needed more time to build skills,” or “there was no reason to interrupt what was working just fine.” Eleven tutors cited characteristics of their child as a reason not to move to child pairs: three said the child was not mature or had attention issues; three said the child was very shy and would shut

down; three said the child was more comfortable working with the teacher; and two said the child was still struggling with the procedures.

Ten tutors said they might have moved to child pairs but could not find a match to their child's DRA level within their tutoring session. One wrote, "That never happened, we were given the option but most people opted out of PALS 2 and there was no one left in my tutee's DRA." Two tutors stated that "it would have helped to start earlier." However, nineteen tutors stated that they chose not to seek child pairs because they believed it was beneficial to stay with the tutor as partner. Both personal choice and logistical difficulties contributed to the high number of tutors (33 out of 43 who completed the survey) who did not switch to child pairs. I should comment that I was absent on the week when tutors were invited to arrange for child pairs and I was unable to assist them. One set of supervisors encouraged tutors to find partners, and the other set did not. All of the child pair match-ups were in the sessions in which the supervisors assisted the tutors to find partners, so more encouragement and assistance might have made a difference to the other tutors as well.

Tutors also wrote of the challenges of teaching the PALS-2 curriculum. The most common complaint (19) was the quantity of procedures and complexity of the lessons. One tutor wrote, "We wouldn't get through half the lesson and the time would be up." Another said, "A focus on teaching the procedures takes away from my student's reading time;" and a third said, "so many procedures to memorize." Four tutors stated it was too many skills to remember and their student could not remember the strategies. Nine wrote that their student needed more time to learn each strategy. Tutors also disliked the script, which they found to be wordy and not student-friendly. "I was more worried about saying the script right than helping my student." Despite finding the separate strategies "beneficial," tutors reported challenges for each strategy:

six said, “He struggled with identifying mistakes;” four said, “He struggled during the retell part;” and seven commented on “the difficulty of saying the paragraph’s main idea in ten words or less.” Finally, three tutors stated that PALS-2 was not useful for their student because “it was so centered on comprehension but fluency and accuracy were bigger targets for my student.”

Tutors were asked if they used the scripts from the PALS-2 book chapters posted on Canvas, used the condensed lesson plans posted on Canvas, or adapted the scripts on their own. Most tutors (47%) used the condensed lesson plans, while 33% adapted the scripts on their own most of the time, and 21% used the scripts from the book chapters most of the time. Tutors (7) criticized the scripts for sounding unnatural, robotic, or cold, and said their student couldn’t follow the meaning. Other tutors (7) said the scripts had too much information, were wordy, or were overwhelming for their student. Seven tutors said the lessons worked well when they used their own words to actually teach the content. The condensed lesson plans posted on Canvas sparked a lot of praise: students said they were easy to follow, easy to locate and add to their lesson plan, “very nice” that they were provided, and “convenient that we could use exactly what was provided to teach our tutees.” Students who chose to teach from the book chapters also praised the clear sequence of instruction. One commented, “Using the PALS-2 chapters let me know what I should be teaching, and they were easily accessible. I seldom switched up what was going on so she got the full effect of PALS-2.”

Each of the four strategies in PALS-2 is first taught using sample texts contained in an Activity Packet; however, the readings in the packet are too hard for many of the Reading Center children. We asked tutors if they used the Activity Packet or books from the Reading Center library to teach the strategies; 19% said they used the packet and 81% used books from the Reading Center library. In addition to finding materials at the child’s DRA level, tutors favored

using library books so they could match student's interests and include students in selecting the books. "My student LOVED going to the library to pick out her own books, so this was not a problem." Tutors commented that books were easy to find, easy to use, checking books in and out was a simple process, and that adapting the lessons to their selected books just "wasn't a problem."

Finally, we asked the tutors if it would have been more convenient to purchase their own copy of PALS-2. Sixty percent said "definitely not;" 19 % said "probably not;" 12% said "maybe," and 9% said "probably yes." No tutor said "definitely yes." The main reason for "definitely not" was the additional cost (\$44), but many tutors said that everything they needed was already provided on Canvas. "All of the information that I needed was posted on canvas. It was also very convenient to be able to copy and paste what was posted and put it into a document before adjusting. With a textbook you would be unable to do this."

Mid-Semester Survey Responses (29 Lecture Students Completed the Survey)

The mid-semester survey is administered in-class in week eight, and collected through Socrative.com. I am reporting only on the survey completed by my Lecture students.

Students were asked, "The most challenging part of this course is . . ." Six students said there is too much work to get it all done, and three said there is too much information to keep it all straight, including too much content covered in each class. Additionally, six students said there were too many instructional routines, too fast at the start of the semester. They felt lost the first time they tried a routine, sometimes forgot what they were supposed to do despite good preparation, and had trouble if the training was either too close to implementation or too far in advance of use.

Thirteen students wanted more preparation on instructional routines before they implement them. They wanted more opportunity to practice in class (not just see a demonstration), more training on PALS-2, including understanding the purpose of the routines, and more week-by-week coaching on just exactly what they should be doing in tutoring now (“just in time” instruction, not getting ahead of or behind their need to know). Slowing down the pace of introducing new routines would be helpful: “I would like for the course to be a little less fast paced so that I can digest what all the material is that is being presented in front of us. It feels very rushed especially with all the readings and then implementation into tutoring especially when we have to teach new material to our tutees when we just learn things on the fly.”

Fourteen students reported concerns with lesson plans. Some wanted more explicit training on writing objectives and rationales, and one suggested supplying models of successful student-written lesson plans (beyond the Instructor-written lesson plans already provided for lessons 1-5). Several stated that the scripted writing (SRSD) and reading (PALS-2) curricula are too wordy and needed to be rewritten for their student. Two wrote of uncertainty about what to do next for their student, and needing more time with their supervisor to talk this through. Two stated they couldn’t get through all of the sections of the lesson in an hour. Several wanted more flexibility in pacing, to give their student more time for specific tasks. Seven students said they needed greater variety of curriculum and more flexibility to teach to their student’s needs. They also said there was too much routine and they wanted freedom to innovate and use their own ideas. Students wanted additional resources for spelling, decoding, and reading comprehension strategies for inferences.

Students also wanted help with motivating students and creating engagement; and they wanted help with behavior management. Students asked if I could build-in an opportunity for 10-minute conferences with the Professor for problem-solving; I was able to implement that the next class period.

Regarding the writing assignments in lecture class, students want more information about what is expected, with more models and more time spent on the rubrics. For the learning disability essay, a student suggested that we work through sample case studies in class so students learn what data to look at and how to connect it to the descriptions in the readings. Several asked for more time in class to work on the big assignments and ask questions of the instructor. One commented, "I feel that when assignments and projects are discussed, many students are overwhelmed and do not even know where to start to ask questions." I already had scheduled in-class work time for assignment two and three, so this request was easy to meet, although it may be harder to find the time for assignment one.

Regarding the timing of the lecture class, students stated that it was too late at night and they had trouble keeping engaged. One suggested meeting twice a week instead, and one wanted the class moved to Monday in order to focus on the upcoming week. [Note: Department and Advising office require the course to be scheduled as is, so these suggestions won't be implemented.]

End of Semester Reflection (51 Completed the Reflection)

In week fifteen, students write a final in-class reflection on the sources of development most important to their growth as a teacher, and how their experiences at the Reading Center have helped them integrate their teacher identity. This semester I added a request: "Finally, suggest topics or content that we should add to the course to help you become the kind of teacher

who changes the world.” Students in both Lecture sections completed the reflection. The responses are collected through Socrative.com.

There were 13 responses asking for more flexibility in lesson planning. Five students wanted to bring in activities and resources they had encountered in classrooms and believed would be beneficial for their student. Two students wanted to get away from so much scripted instruction. One wanted to opt out of PALS-2 as not useful for her student, three wanted more variety in the writing curriculum, one wanted to include literacy instruction her student needed that was not part of the lesson plan, and one wanted more flexible use of instructional time to better serve her student. Two included teacher-made games and engaging activities (visuals and kinesthetics) in place of scripted instruction that did not work for their student. Finally, one stated that the lesson plans are over-written and could be simplified.

Students wrote strongly about feeling stifled by the lesson plan. ”I would have loved to try some of my own activities and scripts when working with my student instead of having to do Pals 2 or word sort.” Another student wrote, “I think that as future teachers we should begin to practice ways to use outside resources in order to help individual children based on their needs. When most of the material is given, it makes it hard to really develop those skills.” A third said, “There are so many things that I would have loved to try with my student! I'm not sure that all of them would have worked out, but I think that the process of working through and getting to try new things is part of becoming a teacher.”

There were 14 responses asking for additional literacy strategies. Five students wanted other writing options, primarily to add creativity and variety to the instruction. Two of those suggested semester-long projects co-written by teacher and student, to build relationship as well as writing skill. Three students stated they needed a spelling curriculum because that was a

major area of need for their student (Note, PALS-1 displaced Words Their Way this semester; it focuses mainly on phonemic awareness and decoding for word study, not on spelling patterns). Two students wanted to spend more time on fluency instruction instead of PALS-2. More resources were requested for each of these areas of literacy instruction: reading comprehension for non-fiction texts; phonics; additional sight word routines; and higher-order-thinking skills added to reading comprehension strategies.

There were 7 responses asking for course content about behavior. Five students wanted instruction in lecture on ways to manage and shape their child's behavior. Two asked for instruction on motivation, and many others asked for resources to build relationship and engagement (see below). One wanted course content about diversity, one wanted content about helping children deal with their emotions, and one wanted content on how to counter bullying and teach respect.

There were 10 responses asking for more relationship-building and engagement resources. Three tutors wanted to add relationship-building to the first day of tutoring by including games, trust-building activities, and getting-to-know you activities to replace some of the assessments. Two students wrote about the pressure they felt to get through a full lesson plan on a daily basis, and the negative impact that had on their opportunity to connect to the student. One tutor took extra time at the beginning of the lesson to talk with her student, saying "This is so important to build our relationship and to use this relationship to progress his learning, but it is also excellent time for establishing expectations for the day and doing a little bit of character development." One tutor asked for more suggestions of fun activities and games to better engage the student while still meeting goals, and another tutor reported that she had moved to teacher-constructed games and activities when she found the provided curriculum did not engage her

student. Four students suggested changes in instruction that would build a stronger relationship across the semester: a semester-long “About Me” journal passed back and forth between teacher and child; a semester-long storybook co-written by teacher and child and presented to the child at the end; semester-long reading of favorite books to each other; and a weekly 10 minutes given to support the child’s homework from school, thereby creating stronger connections between school, home, and the Reading Center.

Six students wanted more content about becoming “the kind of teacher who changes the world.” They wanted more personal testimony about teaching from their UNL faculty, with more encouragement and inspiration to become great teachers. “Sharing with us your lives, your passions, your vision, and the truth of your lives! That is what we need, to encourage us and to tell us the big picture of teaching! Tell us about good teachers who have impacted you, etc.” One suggested that we read articles and books about teachers who have changed the world, and another said “it would be a great idea to elaborate on what it means to be a great teacher and one that will change so many lives.” In addition to reading about teachers, a student suggested that we also include readings about people who struggled with a learning disability in school but become successful in life.

Four students wanted more opportunities to learn from their peers. Two suggested extensions of the peer-discussions already in place in lecture class, by providing “situations or hypothetical classroom problems and allow the peer groups to discuss what they would do and to find a solution collaboratively.” Two students suggested building in an opportunity for tutors to observe their classmates teaching. Although this occurs already when a child is absent, some students never get to observe because their child is never absent. A student wrote, “There may be a technique that would work well with my student that I could implement if I saw it done.”

Planned Changes

The objectives, activities, and assessments for Lecture appear to be well aligned, and the students' scores show similar performance across the kinds of assessments. Although the written reports are challenging because of the quantity of analysis and synthesis they require, the students are able to complete them successfully. The first report is the hardest: I have already revised the chart for interpreting Benchmark assessments, to help the students be more accurate in their interpretation. I will implement in-class scoring of strong and weak sample reports to give students a better understanding of the criteria for a good report; I can do this for each of the written reports. For the Learning Disabilities essay (assignment two), I will bring in case studies and ask students to work through the data in their small groups in order to give them experience relating data to the definitions of learning disabilities. The quizzes, in-class reflections, and strategy demonstration I will leave in place. They help students to process the readings and relate them to their tutoring.

The quantity of lesson plans and tutoring sessions in Practicum cannot be changed. We already scaffold the students' entry to tutoring by providing five pre-written lesson plans and adding new instructional routines one at a time. Students asked us to slow down the pace so they can absorb what they are learning; this is a request we have been hearing for a long time. I will look at stretching out the introduction of routines even more, in order to provide more opportunities for students to practice in Lecture before implementing in tutoring. I will also work with my graduate assistant this summer to create video-taped models of administering the initial assessments and some of the teaching routines: a PALS-1 lesson, the first few PALS-2 lessons, the first few SRSD writing lessons, and routines for phonemic awareness, sight words,

word sorting, and vocabulary instruction. We will try to create YouTube videos of instruction that we can add to Canvas so students can view and review them.

The observation and lesson plan rubrics for Practicum pose a challenge. The content is good and they alert students to characteristics of good planning and instruction. However, the large number of indicators make it difficult to generate a low grade. I would like to consider rubrics used in other Reading Centers. I will ask members of the Reading Center Study Group of the Literacy Research Association to share their rubrics with us, and then consult with my Reading Center colleagues here.

I want to keep the approach to phonemic awareness instruction that we piloted in spring semester. I want everyone who teaches grades four and below to include at least four PA lessons, and everyone who teaches grades five and six to include at least two PA lessons; and then tutors continue as appropriate to their child. This is the first semester tutors have taught many PA lessons; I believe it is because we required them to try it and we showed them the central role of phonemic awareness in learning to read.

I want to keep PALS-1 for teaching basic reading skills. Students suggested that we move it forward in the calendar so we are not introducing PALS-1 and PALS-2 so close to each other. That is easy to do, but it means that the phonemic awareness lessons will have to crowd some other part of the lesson plan since we had them in “word work” preceding PALS-1.

PALS-2 is valuable but needs some adjustments. Students found even the “condensed lesson plans” I wrote from the scripts in the book chapters, to be too wordy and complicated. I will try to simplify them this summer. We also should direct students to translate the given scripts into language their child can understand and follow. Tutors need to pace the lessons to their child’s learning, and tutors need to spend less time teaching procedures and more time just

using the procedures so the child can do more reading. That will be tricky because the tutors don't know the procedures themselves; but I will see what we can do to help them.

This summer we will be teaching PALS-2 to child-pairs because we are accepting two children for each tutor and are making an effort to match the children by DRA level or by subtests of the Woodcock Mastery Reading Test before we accept them. However, matching children during fall and spring semesters is challenging because children may be at very different levels within a tutoring session. However, I will try again and expect that if we schedule it earlier in the calendar and provide more support for finding a match, more tutors will try child pairs for PALS-2.

One tutor declared on the PALS-1 survey, that PALS-1 was a waste of time for her child because it was too easy. Three tutors declared on the PALS-2 survey, that PALS-2 was a waste of time for their children because they excelled at comprehension and should have been spending their time on fluency work instead. All of these tutors could have shifted to different instruction if they had spoken up. Other tutors lamented that they didn't get a chance to try out activities they thought would be useful to their child, complained about too much routine and said they felt stifled by the lesson plan. In order to provide a way for students to opt out of instruction that is a mismatch to their child, I am going to devise an "Exit ticket" for tutors to fill out every two weeks in Practicum, asking them to evaluate the suitability of their instruction and whether or not they want to make a change. Tutors would then consult with their Practicum Supervisor and Lecture Instructor about the proposed change. Note that we meet to design singular instructional plans for individual tutors and tutees already; this just provides a mechanism to make sure that all who need an adjusted lesson plan, get the opportunity.

The next topics represent new content for the course. Students asked for a behavior-management unit to help them understand difficult behavior and design effective intervention. They also want a motivation and engagement unit and resources, and they want information on helping children deal with emotions. I will be asking colleagues in the Special Education department to help us design this content.

Another set of resources students asked for is games, trust-building, getting-acquainted activities for day one and across the semester. I am highly interested in this topic and will undertake to assemble resources and introduce them to the tutors.

Finally, students asked for more content on what it means to be a great teacher and to impact the lives of children. I am highly interested in this topic too and will begin to investigate resources.

What I learned Through the Portfolio Process

I have good student-input tools in the mid-semester survey and end-of course reflection. It was valuable to spend more time than usual on reviewing the feedback and grouping responses into themes to see the prevalence of different concerns.

Some concerns have been with us a long time, like too much information, too much work, too fast. We have done a lot to support the students but haven't solved this yet. Spacing out the introduction of new routines and providing models via YouTube videos may help.

The tutoring-materials surveys on phonemic awareness, PALS-1 and PALS-2 were easy to construct and administer. They took time to analyze, so I would want to do surveys like this only occasionally. I was pleased to learn that the tutors found the curricula benefitted their

children and our procedures for accessing the materials were effective. It is useful to know that they strongly object to buying their own copies of PALS-1 and PALS-2.

I have enough areas of new development to keep me busy for the next couple of years. I will be consulting others about observation rubrics, and behavior, engagement, and emotion units. I am excited by two new topics: developing a bank of games, trust-builders, relationship-building activities to promote connection, engagement, and motivation while still teaching the curriculum; and figuring out what pre-service teachers need to know and do in order to become the kind of teachers who change the world.

Appendix A

Teaching Framework Matching Goals, Activities, and Assessments

Concern or Course Objective	Course Activities	How will I assess this?
Delivering and interpreting assessments to identify specific areas of difficulty and to monitor progress.	Students assess an assigned child using Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments (reading); Words-Their-Way Spelling Inventory; Curriculum-Based-Measurement Writing Assessment; and Phonological Awareness Skills Screener.	Students write a report that includes: Summary of Initial Assessment Results; Goals for Instruction; Instructional Plans for reading, spelling, and writing; and a Details of Assessments chart.
Using effective instructional techniques (such as explicit instruction and strategy instruction) to deliver intensive interventions to students with special needs.	Textbook readings on explicit instruction and on major topics of literacy instruction; instructor demonstrations of teaching strategies; student writing of 23 lesson plans for teaching literacy skills; practice in delivering instruction by tutoring an assigned child for 23 sessions.	Quizzes on selected textbook chapters; students serve as discussion-leader for a small-group discussion of textbook readings, with prepared handouts and strategy demonstrations; weekly observation of student's teaching and evaluation of lesson plans by practicum supervisors.
Identifying factors associated with reading and writing difficulties/disabilities and characterizing procedures for identifying these students.	Beyond-the-textbook readings on major topics of reading and writing disabilities; instructor lectures on dyslexia and learning disabilities; in-class activities to review and apply concepts about reading disabilities.	Students write an essay stating whether or not they think their child has a learning disability, citing the readings and evidence from assessing and working with the child. In-class written reflections on the child they are tutoring, in light of the readings on disabilities.
Selecting and adapting evidence-based practices for specific students.	Students collect data on child performance in reading, writing, and word work; and decide when to reteach and when to move forward based on data; students shape their instruction to the needs of the specific child. Students try a variety of	On-going peer consultations during lecture class, on student-posed problems in teaching; in-class written reflection on teaching based on these consultations; in-class reflection on how their experiences at the

	<p>curricular materials and approaches, including PALS-1 and PALS-2 for reading and Self-Regulated Strategy Development for writing.</p>	<p>Reading Center have contributed to their teacher identity.</p>
<p>Developing instructional goals to meet specific needs of students.</p>	<p>Students write goals and instructional plans after the initial assessments. Students conduct progress monitoring in reading fluency, writing elements, sight word knowledge, and vocabulary learning. Students assess children in reading, writing, spelling, and vocabulary at the end of the semester.</p>	<p>Students graph progress in literacy skill across the semester and provide evidence of monitoring. Students write a final child study report summarizing the final assessments, evaluating progress on the literacy goals for the semester, and making recommendations for future instruction.</p>

Appendix B

Course Syllabus and Calendar

University of Nebraska-Lincoln SPED 415/815: Reading and Writing Disabilities—Elementary Spring 2018

Lecture Days/Times: Wednesdays 7:05-9:15 PM

Location: 127 BKC

Instructor:

Dr. Judith Wilson

202B Barkley Center

(402) 472-5481

jwilson39@unl.edu USE THIS EMAIL (not my gmail) to contact me

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00-4:00, or by appointment

Class and practicum must be taken concurrently.

Note: This is the syllabus for the course only. You will receive two separate grades: one for the course and one for the practicum. However, you should connect both syllabi as you prepare. The course and the practicum are designed to work together. Some course time will be devoted to preparing students to practically apply teaching and assessment techniques in the practicum.

Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize students with various types of reading difficulties, possible causes, and appropriate assessments, interventions, and teaching strategies. **It addresses the needs of struggling readers, who are reading one or more years below expected level.**

Students will learn to use evidence-based practices to teach students with reading difficulties, and to use both formal and informal assessments to guide instructional decision-making. The course will also cover reading instruction for special populations of students, such as severely delayed readers and English language learners. In addition, students will learn about specific learning disabilities in the areas of reading and writing.

Course Goals

This course is designed to teach state of the art practices in assessment and instruction for ensuring all students have the best opportunities to learn critical reading and writing skills. Individuals completing this course will demonstrate competency in:

1. Identifying factors associated with reading and writing difficulties/disabilities and characterizing procedures for identifying these students.
2. Delivering and interpreting assessments to identify specific areas of difficulty and to monitor progress.

3. Developing instructional goals to meet specific needs of students.
4. Selecting and adapting evidence-based practices for specific students.
5. Using effective instructional techniques (such as explicit instruction and strategy instruction) to deliver intensive interventions to students with special needs.

***Required Texts**

Vaugh, S., & Linan-Thompson, S. (2004). Research based methods of reading instruction: Grades K-3. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ISBN: 0-87120-946-7)

Bear, D., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnson, F. (2015). Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction. (5th or 6th Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Allyn & Bacon (ISBN: 9780137035106)

Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) Online: K-6 Subscription. Code for discounted purchase will be provided during the first class meeting.

*Additional readings will be made available on Canvas.

Live Text

An active LiveText membership is a required resource for this course because at least one assignment must be submitted electronically using this online platform. LiveText is used by the College of Education and Human Sciences to demonstrate the quality of our academic programs, improve the teaching and learning process, and monitor student mastery of professional competencies. You can use your account for secure online storage of all of your academic work and to create digital documents such as electronic portfolios or reflective journals, which can be shared with prospective employers or other parties.

You can purchase your membership online with a credit or debit card at <https://www.livetext.com/misk5/c1/purchase>. Please select the Field Experience Edition (\$113) as you will need this option when you student teach. LiveText will be a required resource in several different courses throughout your program, and you can use the same account for any course that requires it for up to five years, so you only need to purchase the account one time. If you already have an active LiveText membership, you do not need to purchase another one. After five years, you can choose to extend your membership for your personal use.

Overview of Assignments

1. Report of Assessments, Goals, and Instructional Plan:

You will write a report of the initial assessments for your student, your interpretation of the assessments, your goals for the student and a brief plan for instruction

2. Learning Disability Essay: You will write a 3-page paper providing your opinion about whether your student has a learning disability. You will need to present a short definition of the disability, evidence from working with the child (assessments, observations, etc.), and references from the readings and lectures to support your opinion.

3. Child Study Report

You will write a final report for the parents of your tutee. The report will include assessment results and interpretation, summary of instruction provided, and recommendations.

Evaluation

Handouts explaining each assignment and scoring rubrics will be given for the following:

Assignment #1		
Assessments, Goals, and Instructional Plan		40 points
Assignment #2		
Learning Disability Essay		40 points
Assignment #3		
Child Study Report		40 points
In-class written reflections (5 x 5 points)		25 points
Quizzes (5 x 10 points)		50 points
Strategies Demonstration (1 x 10 points)		10 points
Total		205 Points

You will be given a grade for lecture and a grade for practicum. They are not combined.

Grades will be calculated based the percent of points earned out of the total possible points. The following percentages will apply:

A+ = 99 - 100%	B = 83 - 86%	C- = 70 - 72%
A = 93 - 98%	B- = 80 - 82%	D+ = 67 - 69%
A- = 90 - 92%	C+ = 77 - 79%	D = 63 - 63%
B+ = 87 - 89%	C = 73 - 76%	D- = 60 - 62%

Course Policies

Please be sure to check your email and Canvas at least once daily. This will be my primary method of communicating with you. Except for changes that substantially affect implementation

of the grading, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Attendance - Required

- ***Excused absence:*** You are permitted **ONE** excused absence. I will count an absence as excused if you contact me prior to class (an email will suffice). I recommend that you get the contact information of someone in this class so you can get detailed notes if you have to miss class.
- ***Unexcused absence:*** Any absence from class without contacting me first is considered unexcused. Absences beyond your one excused absence are considered unexcused. Each unexcused absence will reduce the final grade by 5 points.

Professionalism

- ***General Behavior*** - You are expected to exhibit professional behavior, including being on time for class, returning from breaks on time, being focused and on-task, and participating actively.
- ***Confidentiality*** - All information about your tutee is confidential and cannot be shared without written permission from the child's parents or legal guardians. We will sometimes share information in class, which is held to the same confidentiality standards
 - If you overhear confidential information, treat it in the same professional manner.
- ***Technology*** - Cell phones are not permitted in class. Please make sure they are off and put away.
 - If you have special need of technology for learning purposes, please let me know and I will do my best to accommodate any needs.

Late Assignments

- Turning in assignments late will result in a reduction of points for that assignment.

Academic Dishonesty

- Failure to maintain academic ethics/honesty, including avoidance of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and falsification will result in zero points awarded for a particular assignment or test, and may result in an "F" in the course, charges being issued, hearings held, and/or sanctions being imposed.

UNL Course Policies:

Academic Freedom.

Over the course of this semester we may address a variety of controversial topics including matters of race, gender, culture, religion, morality, sexuality, and violence. You have a right to believe whatever you believe about such matters and are encouraged to express your views on all matters relevant to the course, even if others in the class may be offended or upset by those views. You also have the right to express disagreement with whatever views I, or others in the class, express. Finally, you have the right to decide whether or not to modify your views. Your grade in the class will be based on understanding and reasoning, not on your opinion.

Civility.

Individuals are expected to be cognizant of what a constructive educational experience is and be respectful of those participating in a learning environment. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action.

Academic Dishonesty.

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community including you. To further serve this end, the University of Nebraska—Lincoln supports a Student Code of Conduct, which addresses the issue of academic dishonesty.

Diversity.

The University of Nebraska—Lincoln is committed to a pluralistic campus community through Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska—Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Lecture

Practicum

Week/ Date	Topics	Readings Due in Class	Assignments Due
Week 1 Jan. 8-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Training • Course Resources, Lesson Plan Templates 	No Readings	
Week 2 Jan. 15-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administering and Scoring Assessments • Phonemic Awareness (Vaughn Ch. 2) • Preview Lesson 1 	<p>WTW Chapter 1 (pp. 10-15)</p> <p>WTW Chapter 2 (pp. 25-35)</p> <p>Vaughn Chapter 2 (pp. 8-16): Phonemic Awareness</p>	
Week 3 Jan. 22-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Assignment 1, Assessments, Goals, & Instructional Plans • Preview Lessons 2 & 3 	<p>SRSD Online: Overview and Stage 1</p>	
Week 4 Jan. 29- Feb. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Assessment Scores • Preview Lessons 4 & 5 	<p>SRSD Online: Stages 2 and 3</p> <p>Recommended: WTW Ch. 3 (pp. 49-65)</p>	<p>Bring <i>Words Their Way</i> to class to identify first word sort (<i>for students at or above Late Within Word: students at or below Middle Within Word will do PALS-1 instead</i>)</p>

M/T Session	W/Th Session
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview • Center Tour • Student Information Sheet • Activity Worker signatures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Tutee File • Meet Supervisors • Set up Google Docs Folders • Assign Introduction Letter
<p>MLK DAY</p> <p>NO MONDAY OR TUESDAY PRACTICUM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select & Preview Assessments • Continue to read tutee file • Upload Introduction Letter to Lesson Plan folder
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running Records Training • Confirm all Assessment Materials are in hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 1: Upload 8pm night before • Assessments • Meet with Supervisor after tutoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 2: Upload 8pm night before • Assessments • Begin Sentence Combining • Begin Sight Word Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 3 • Begin Guided Reading; use KWL or Story Map and Instructional level DRA books • Begin Flex Time

<p>Week 5 Feb 5-8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Strategies • Preview Lessons 6 & 7 • Begin writing LP 6 in class 	<p>SRSD Online: Stage 4</p> <p>Recommended: WTW Read the chapter that matches your child’s spelling stage.</p>	<p>Bring Photocopies of Assessments to Class (to turn in)</p> <p>Assignment #1 Due to Canvas 11:59 p.m. Thursday Feb. 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 4 • Begin Fluency Warm Up & Running Records • Begin SRSD Writing or Sentence Writing Curriculum • Phonemic Awareness (2 or 4 lessons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 5 • Phonemic Awareness (2 or 4 lessons)
<p>Week 6 Feb. 12-15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies Demonstration A-Phonics and Word Study • Explicit Instruction & Teaching Strategies • SRSD Stages 2, 3, 4 • Introduce Peer Consultations: bring questions next class 	<p>Canvas: Anita Archer, <i>Explicit Instruction</i>, Ch. 1</p> <p>Vaughn, Ch. 3: Phonics and Word Study</p>	<p>Quiz 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 6 • Begin Goals and Objectives • Begin Vocabulary Instruction • Phonemic Awareness OR Word Sort #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 7 • Phonemic Awareness OR Word Sorting • Begin PALS-2: Introduction to Partner Reading OR B-M-E Reading Strategy
<p>Week 7 Feb. 19-22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Consultation • Strategies Demonstration B–Fluency • Dyslexia • Introduce Assignment 2, Learning Disabilities Essay 	<p>Vaughn, Ch. 4: Fluency</p> <p>Canvas: Shaywitz, <i>Overcoming Dyslexia</i>, Chapter 7</p>	<p>Quiz 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 8 • Begin PALS-1 or PALS-K OR continue with Word Sorting • PALS-2: Partner Reading Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 9 • PALS-2: Introduction to Retell
<p>Week 8 Feb 26- March 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Consultation • Strategies Demonstration C –Vocabulary • The Simple View of Reading • Teaching Strategies 	<p>Vaughn, Ch. 5: Vocabulary</p> <p>Canvas: The Simple View of Reading</p>	<p>Quiz 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 10 • PALS-2 Begin child-pairs • PALS-2: Partner Reading & Retell Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 11 • PALS-2: Partner Reading & Retell Practice • Parent Conferences

<p>Week 9 March 5-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Consultation • Strategies Demonstration D–Comprehension • SRSD Stage 5 • Begin writing PALS-2 lessons in class 	<p>SRSD Online: Stage 5</p> <p>Vaughn, Ch. 6: Comprehension</p>	<p>Quiz 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 12 • PALS-2: Introduction to Paragraph Shrinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 13 • PALS-2: Paragraph Shrinking Practice • Progress Monitoring for Writing
<p>Week 10 March 12-15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Consultation • Severely Delayed Reader and Nonreader • SRSD Stage 6 • Begin writing last two days of PALS-2 lessons in class 	<p>SRSD Online: Stage 6</p> <p>Canvas: Severely Delayed Reader and Nonreader. pp. 479-483 and 488-504</p>	<p>Assignment #2 Learning Disabilities Essay Due to Canvas 11:59 p.m. Thursday March 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 14 • PALS-2: Partner Reading, Retell, Paragraph Shrinking Practice <i>Write your own lesson from “Day 9” in PALS -2 book</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 15 • PALS-2: Introduction to Prediction Relay <i>Write your own lesson from “Day 10” in PALS -2 book</i>
<p>Week 11 March 19-22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPRING BREAK 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO PRACTICUM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO PRACTICUM
<p>Week 12 March 26-29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Consultation • Causes and Correlates of Individual Differences • Teaching Strategies 	<p>Canvas: Causes and Correlates of Individual Differences in Reading Ability</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 16 • PALS-2: Prediction Relay Practice <i>Write your own lesson from “Day 11” in PALS -2 book</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 17 • PALS-2 Putting It All Together <i>Write your own lesson from “Day 12” in PALS -2 book</i>
<p>Week 13 April 2-5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important Principles of Instruction for Delayed Readers • Introduce Assignment 3, Child Study Report 	<p>Canvas: Important Principles of Instruction for Delayed Readers. pp. 218-240</p>	<p>Quiz 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 18 • Begin new Reading Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 19
<p>Week 14 April 9-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Assignment 3, Child Study Report, in class 	<p>No Reading</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 21 (Final Assessments)

<p>Week 15 April 16-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Final Assessments (Bring to Class) • Final reflection and evaluation • Peer Review, draft of Child Study Report 	<p>No Reading</p>	<p>Draft of Child Study Report Due in Class</p> <p>Assignment #3 Due to LP folder, 11:59 pm Friday April 20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 22 (Final Assessments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP 23 • Parent Conferences
<p>Week 16 April 23-26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit Interviews 	<p>No Reading</p>	<p>Final Version of Assignment #3 Due to Canvas at end of Exit Interview</p>	<p>Exit Interviews: Bring Laptops Details of Assessments (paper copy) handed in at end of Exit Interview</p>	
<p>Week 17 April 30-May 3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO FINAL EXAM</p>				

Appendix C

Phonemic Awareness Survey Questions

1. On the PASS, which subtests did your student score less than 80%?
2. How many days did you teach phonemic awareness activities? (Pink sheets and PALS-K)
3. Which activities did you use from the pink packet?
4. Which lessons did you use from PALS-K?
5. Between the packet, lecture, and information from your supervisor, how prepared did you feel to teach PA?
6. How beneficial do you feel phonemic awareness instruction was for your child?

Appendix D

PALS-1 Survey Questions

1. On which lesson in PALS-1 did you start?
2. How did you determine the starting point?
3. Do you feel the starting point you chose was correct?
4. What do you see as two benefits of teaching from PALS-1? Please respond in 3 to 4 sentences.
5. What do you see as two challenges of teaching from PALS-1? Please respond in 3 to 4 sentences.
6. What has been your child's response in general to the PALS-1 curriculum? Please respond in 3 to 4 sentences.
7. On a scale from 0-10, how satisfied are you with the check-in/check-out procedures with the PALS materials?
8. Please explain your choice to the previous question and any other thoughts about your experience with the check-in/check-out of PALS-1 materials.
9. Do you think it would have been more convenient to purchase your own copy of the PALS-1 curriculum (\$40)? Please explain your answer.

Appendix E

PALS-2 Survey Questions

1. What do you see as two benefits of teaching from PALS-2? Please respond in 3 to 4 sentences.
2. What do you see as two challenges of teaching from PALS-2? Please respond in 3 to 4 sentences.
3. What sample reading materials did you use to model the PALS-2 strategies?
4. How much of a problem was either using the provided stories (i.e. Forgetful Faye) or locating your own?
5. Please explain your response to the question above.
6. How closely did you follow the scripts in the PALS-2 chapters?
7. How much of a problem was either using the scripts, condensed lesson plans or adapting your own?
8. Please explain your response to the question above.
9. Do you think it would have been more convenient to purchase your own copy of the PALS-2 curriculum (\$44)? Please explain your answer.
10. Select which strategies you have taught from PALS-2. Select all that apply.
11. In what format did you teach the strategies from PALS-2 after the first three lessons? Tutor as partner/coach. Child pairs as partner/coach.
12. Please explain why you chose tutor as partner/coach in 2 to 3 sentences.
13. Please explain some of the benefits and challenges of using child pairs as partners/coaches in 2 to 3 sentences.

Appendix F

Mid-Semester Survey Questions

1. The most important thing I've learned in the course so far . . .
2. The aspect of this course that is most helpful to my learning is . . .
3. The most challenging part of this course is . . .
4. One thing that the instructor could do to improve my learning in the course is . .
5. One thing I need in this course that has not been covered or could be added is ...
6. Please comment on how well the course readings tie in with class requirements, discussions, and small group work.
7. Please offer any ideas you might have about how I could make this course be better for you.

Your comments, questions, and ideas are welcome.

Appendix G

Final Reflection Question

Please describe the sources of development that you consider most important to your growth as a teacher so far. Then describe how your experiences at the Reading Center have helped you integrate your teacher identity. Please tell us your program of study so we can understand your context and references. Finally, suggest topics or content that we should add to the course to help you become the kind of teacher who changes the world.