

**Annual Report
2018-19 Academic Year
University of Alaska Southeast School of Education**

M.Ed. Reading

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SPA: International Literacy Association

1. Program Overview

1.1. Degrees, diplomas, certificates, and/or minors and the mission and goals of each. Source: UAS Catalog.

The graduate programs in Reading offer a Masters of Education (M.Ed.) in Reading-Reading Specialist and a Graduate Certificate (and Alaska State Endorsement) in Reading

The M.Ed. in Reading program is designed specifically to deepen K-12 teachers' pedagogical content knowledge with the aim of improved student (K-12) literacy achievement. This program is delivered in face-to-face and e-Learning formats so that it is possible to complete the degree while teaching in one's own district. Technological tools facilitate course delivery, communication, and research. Enhancements include streamed video, braided discussions, audio conferencing, video reflections, and use of Internet resources. Students in the reading program focus on developmental, cognitive, and sociocultural aspects of reading acquisition, instruction, and assessment. Professional and caring attitudes and beliefs about teaching lead to responsive and rigorous instruction in reading and literacy for all K-12 students, including those who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Accomplished teaching professionals promote collaboration with students, colleagues, parents, families, and the larger community to improve literacy learning and student achievement in their contexts. Students prepare an exit portfolio in line with the goals of the School of Education and the program standards of the International Reading Association to demonstrate levels of knowledge and pedagogy commensurate with the skills and dispositions of highly competent advanced teaching professionals.

All reading courses are delivered via synchronous methodology, meeting once a week for two hours using Blackboard Collaborate. Additional professional interaction related to professional readings is required via a discussion board. One course requires participants to travel to Juneau for a summer supervised practicum course, where they study instruction and assessment, demonstrate their practical skills for assessment, and receive feedback to improve their pedagogical practice.

The Reading M.Ed. serves teachers throughout the state of Alaska who wish to know more about teaching reading and literacy, either to do a better job within the classroom assignment they already have, or to become a reading specialist. Reading specialists draw students school-wide who are struggling in reading achievement to provide extra instruction, and/or they coach teachers to improve their knowledge of instructional techniques to better serve the students they are teaching. The role of the reading specialist has been shifting nationally from solely that of additional instructor to being an instructional coach, or a mix of both. The UAS M.Ed. Reading program has shifted its content to reflect these professional trends and appropriately prepare its graduates.

The UAS Reading M.Ed. serves an important role in the State of Alaska. The ability to read effectively is a student’s cornerstone to success. Those students who struggle with reading become frustrated and often do not wish to or are unable to complete a K-12 education. Alaska’s K-12 reading scores are dismally lower than they should be. While many people assume that initial preparation for teaching should be sufficient training for a teacher to teach reading effectively, this is not the case. Especially in Alaska, students come to school with varied needs, and teachers require a depth of understanding that requires a substantial period of learning time.

Teachers need continual learning to be effective in matching reading and writing instruction to student needs. Reading specialists are needed to act as coaches with classroom teachers in their building or their district, to facilitate the professional change needed by each teacher in order to provide effective reading instruction to their K-12 students. Additionally, data indicate that the participation in a sustained community of practice, such as graduate work, supports teacher retention.

2. Program Student Learning Outcomes

Each course throughout the program has specific learning outcomes aligned to the below standards that inform the overarching learning outcomes for the program as a whole.

International Reading Association 2010 Standards

STANDARD	ELEMENTS
Candidates understand the theoretical and evidence-based foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.	1.1 Understand major theories and empirical research that describe the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and sociocultural foundations of reading and writing development, processes and components, including word recognition, language comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading-writing connections.
	1.2 Understand the historically shared knowledge of the profession and changes over time in the perceptions of reading and writing development, processes, and components.
	1.3 Understand the role of professional judgment and practical knowledge for improving all students’ reading development and achievement.
Candidates use instructional approaches, materials, and an integrated, comprehensive,	2.1 Use foundational knowledge to design or implement an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced curriculum.

balanced curriculum to support student learning in reading and writing.	
	2.2 Use appropriate and varied instructional approaches, including those that develop word recognition, language comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading-writing connections. Reading specialists may have responsibilities for teaching students who struggle with learning to read and must also be able to support teachers in their efforts to provide effective instruction for all students. McKenne and Stahl (2009) define <i>reading</i> as including word recognition, language comprehension, and strategic knowledge....
	2.3 Use a wide range of texts (e.g., narrative, expository, and poetry) from traditional print, digital, and online resources.
Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading and writing instruction.	3.1 Understand types of assessments and their purposes, strengths, and limitations.
	3.2 Select, develop, administer, and interpret assessments, both traditional print and electronic, for specific purposes
	3.3 Uses assessment information to plan and evaluate instruction.
	3.4 Communicate assessment results and implications to a variety of audiences.
Candidates create and engage their students in literacy practices that develop awareness, understanding, respect, and a valuing of differences in our society.	4.1 Recognize, understand, and value the forms of diversity that exist in society and their importance in learning to read and write.
	4.2 Use a literacy curriculum and engage in instructional practices that positively impact students' knowledge, beliefs, and engagement with the features of diversity.
	4.3 Develop and implement strategies to advocate for equity.
Candidates create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, instructional	5.1 Design the physical environment to optimize students' use of traditional print, digital, and online resources in reading and writing instruction.

practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments.	
	5.2 Design a social environment that is low risk, includes choice, motivation, and scaffolded support to optimize students; opportunities for learning to read and write.
	5.3 Use routines to support reading and writing instruction (e.g., time allocation, transitions from one activity to another; discussions, and peer feedback.
	5.4 Use a variety of classroom configurations (i.e., whole class, small group, and individual) to differentiate instruction.
Candidates recognize the importance of, demonstrate, and facilitate professional learning and leadership as a career-long effort and responsibility.	6.1 Demonstrate foundational knowledge of adult learning theories and related research about organizational change, professional development, and school culture
	6.2 Display positive dispositions related to their own reading and writing and the teaching of reading and writing, and pursue the development of individual professional knowledge and behaviors.
	6.3 Participate in, design, facilitate, lead, and evaluate effective and differentiated professional development programs.
	6.4 Understand and influence local, state, or national policy decisions.

3. How Data Are Collected

Assignments aligned with the learning outcomes (ILA 2010 Standards) are designed with corresponding rubrics. These assessments are directly linked to standards. Program data are collected at several junctures, according to CAEP and ILA. (NOTE: The program will be transitioning to the ILA 2017 Standards beginning Summer 2020).

The assessments most recently used for reporting and analysis are as follows:

1	Licensure assessment, or other content-based assessment	Foundations Essay	EDRE674	Early program
2	Assessment of Content Knowledge	Portfolio	EDRE698	End of program
3*	Assessment of Candidate ability to plan instruction	Practicum Observation and Classroom Research Project	EDRE676 (EDRE 680)	Mid-Program

			Beginning SU 2020)	
4*	Assessment of internship, practicum, or other clinical experience	Teaching Video & Reflection Project (series)	EDRE677 (EDRE 681 Beginning FALL 2020)	Mid-program
5*	Assessment of candidate effect on student learning	Instructional Case Study	EDRE676	Mid-Program Review
6	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Engaging Striving Readers Assignment	EDRE678	Mid-Program
7*	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Colleague Coaching Case Inquiries	EDRE 696	Capstone Course
8*	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Independent Professional Inquiry	EDRE 696	Final Assessment

**Courses in which these assessments are aligned will not be offered in the 2019-20 school year.

		1	1	1	2	2.	2.	3.	3.	3.	3.	4.	4.	4.	5.	5.	5.	5.	6.	6.	6.
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
1	Foundations Statement	X	X		X																
2	Portfolio	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Instructional Planning			X	X		X								X	X					
4	Teaching Video & Reflection Project				X	X											X			X	
5	Diagnostic & Instructional Case Study			X				X	X	X	X										
6	Colleague Coaching Cases																		X		X
7	Independent Professional Inquiry																		X		X

8	Engaging Striving Readers						X						X	X						
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3. Data Collected

Data are collected from each course. The data sources listed in the above eight assessments inform SPA evaluation. Additionally, student grades and qualitative responses to mid-semester reflections and end of course reflections are drawn on to continue to refine and improve practice.

EDRE 675, EDRE 676, EDRE 677, and EDRE 696 provide a sequence of practicum experiences, both in-person and via distance. EDRE 676 and 677 were not offered during the 2019-20 school year. EDRE 676 has been redesigned as a 6-credit hour course, beginning in Summer 2020, and EDRE 677 was assigned a new number, EDRE 681, beginning Fall 2021.

These courses have been increasingly designed to scaffold students’ inquiry into practice and layer on additional analytical tools. The data students have been collecting and analyzing has indicated growth in both praxis and understanding of action research. The discussion below, however, incorporates the analysis of these additional data sources.

4. Data Evaluation

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Program:

Overall, data indicate that candidates are able to meet the standards (IRA 2010). Because each of the candidates is a practicing teacher, opportunities to try out the ideas examined in the courses in real time, is a powerful learning tool. This field-based approach to the entire program, and the opportunity to continually apply theory and practice is essential.

Each course has at least one or more field-based assessments. As we have moved forward, additional opportunities to engage in video practicum experiences (instructional, coaching, and leadership) continues to deepen students’ ability to reflect on practice and these experiences. Transcription and analysis of classroom discourse has added a layer to this analytical process. These inquiries have supported and extended teachers’ proficiencies, as indicated by the data.

Data Table 4: Teaching Video and Reflection Project

	2018-19
Exceeds	8
Meets	1
Not Met	0

The most compelling data continue to be surfacing related to issues of teacher confidence in relation to praxis. I have been analyzing teachers' descriptions of their practice, as well as their descriptions of their leadership capabilities to continue to determine what additional sources and experiences might continue to build this.

A. Content Knowledge

Summary of the Findings

In multiple assessments (including the Foundations Essay and Portfolio) evidence indicated that students needed a stronger understanding of not only the different Foundational Theories (IRA Standard 1) that shape the field, but the ways in which these theories influence research, and the ways in which they have been in conversation with one another over time. Policy influences that have resulted from these different theories have also been underrepresented in course content, as evidenced by students' demonstrated understandings.

Changes Made or Planned For

Course texts have been adjusted to provide a wider and deeper range of readings. Reflective reading response journals in four of the courses (EDRE 671, 674, 675, 679) have provided additional support for students' processing of the readings, as well as a space for increased interaction with instructors and classmates. These reading journals take the form of dialogue journals with the instructor and with classmates; they have shown good results in increasing the depth of in-class discussion, and serve as prewriting for different writing tasks. Students' comments indicate that they are seeing the value of the journals both as preparation for each individual course, and as a resource for review as they craft their final portfolios. For the 2019-20 school year, a reading journal component was also added to EDRE 678, based on candidate feedback regarding the value of the process. In EDRE 675, an added layer of peer-to-peer engagement and knowledge building was added as candidates respond to one another's journals weekly.

Additionally, an increase in time spent examining theories of adult learning and systems thinking (IRA Standard 6) The addition of an Independent Professional Inquiry in the EDRE 696 course creates an opportunity for students to identify and implement a project that benefits a specific need at their site. Students have been enacting these assignments at their sites and have incorporated ideas such as: Curriculum design committee leadership, professional learning sessions, set up of communities of practice/professional learning committees at their sites, etc. For the 2018-19 school year, there was an increased focus on state and national policy in EDRE 696, which allowed for deeper responses to Standard 6 of the final portfolio.

Continued emphasis on developing proficiencies to be an instructional coach or program leader continues to be an area of focus, in addition to the role of an interventionist. Increasing the amount of preparation for these experiences, has been a goal for the past three years (based on observed quality in products and not only the scores). Additional

video analysis (for both the mentoring work and the professional development design) has provided additional opportunities for feedback and analysis, while also providing opportunities for increased discussion and connection to research.

B. Professional Knowledge, Skill and Dispositions

Summary of the Findings

Candidates' professional knowledge has been strong throughout the assessments, and an area of growth is the continued connection between theory and practice. Because I noticed that students have needed more support with reading of research studies and theoretical papers, I've built in some additional supports during class meetings for close reading and shared responses, along with mini-lessons on how to access and make meaning of research articles and reports. With deeper understandings of foundational theories, teachers are able to continue to explicitly connect their judgment and the instructional decisions they make to the research they are engaged with in course work. The reading journal provides one avenue for this as an ongoing and regular practice.

Text selection and analysis remains a challenge as so many teachers are working with scripted curricula in the state (IRA 2.3). Disciplinary literacy opportunities (especially science and social studies) continue to add to the possible ways students can incorporate literacy throughout their school days. Opportunities for candidates to engage in the selection and analysis of texts that they will use with their students has shown increased depth in understanding in selecting curricular materials. However, data collected from a key assessment (Engaging Striving Readers Project) indicates an increase in proficiency.

Engaging Striving Readers Assignment (Standard 4.1) / 80 out of 100 (early program)	2018-19 n= 10
Exceeds	8
Meets	2
Not Met	0

Changes Made or Planned For

The mid-program dispositions assessment (planned in former year's annual report) will be added Summer 2020, since the course in which it will be administered was not offered during Summer 2019.

Support for looking at student work and practice while using protocols is continuing to be expanded (IRA Standard 2).

The recurrence of assignments that ask candidates to compile and analyze text sets (additional opportunity added to EDRE 675 for Spring 2019 and continuing forward), has allowed these candidates to not only see the value of analyzing curricular materials, but also become more confident in their ability to do so.

C. Student Learning

Summary of the Findings

Growth in student learning is evidenced as we look at the assessments from early in the program to those later in the program. Students' grades throughout the program also indicate that students' learning and performance is ongoing. However, because these are graduate-level courses, students tend to show the most growth in academic writing skill, ability to apply learning, and growth in understandings that are documented in students' ability to plan and implement instruction based on what has been learned. These experiences are scaffolded over the course of the program.

Looking across the students' analyses of these videotaped instructional experiences provides evidence of growth not only in designing and enacting instruction, but in being able to analyze and reflect on these classroom practices.

Changes Made or Planned For

The summer practicum course is a course that includes additional opportunities for coaching and leadership, kidwatching and data collection, text selection, and curriculum design. These capacities are continually developed from the mid-point of the program through the candidates' progression through EDRE 677 (EDRE 681 in Fall 2020) and EDRE 696. The Summer practicum course was not offered in the Summer of 2019, but will be offered in Summer 2020 with an increased number of candidates prepared to participate in the course.

Growth in candidates' capacity to provide one another with effective feedback on instructional practices, as well as their capacity to ground their instructional decisions in student data has been apparent.

Course assessments and students' grades are directly tied to the IRA 2010 Standards. Students are supported to revise and resubmit assessments that do not meet the standards, to insure that student learning is commensurate with course content.

5. Future Plans

The 2017 International Literacy Association Standards, which are intended for adoption by all programs by 2020, place a heavier emphasis on practicum experiences. These can be supported by continued use of video data (as the standard indicates that remote technologies can play a part in this). The allocation

of credit hours for the three-week intensive practicum course (EDRE 680) should also feed into this increased emphasis.

Beginning with the summer course offering (EDRE 671) and continuing throughout the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school year, as each course is being revised, course outcomes are continually being refined to match the outcomes of these revised standards.

This program, like other M.Ed. programs, isn't generally filled to capacity without some form of external funding for teachers' tuition. The 2018-19 school year and the 2019-20 school year saw an increase in candidates moving through course sequences. Additionally, creating a staggered sequence for the summer practicum has consolidated numbers for candidates who are ready for this final sequence of courses, and will allow for more robust course enrollment throughout the 2020-21 school year across classes.

The program received national recognition in 2016, and remains a recognized program.

Changes in process based on Standard Revision

The 2017 International Literacy Association Standards, which are intended for adoption by all programs by 2020, place a heavier emphasis on practicum experiences. These can be supported by continued use of video data (as the standard indicates that remote technologies can play a part in this), and also by allocating appropriate credit hours for the EDRE 676 Summer Practicum Course. This course met for (more than) the required amount of time for a six-credit course, but had been offered as a 3-credit course until Summer 2018. By removing the EDET (educational technology course) from students' course sequence, this has kept the credit hours the same for the program, while also compensating students appropriately for the immense amount of work the summer practicum course demands. By addressing technology in multiple and varied ways throughout the program, candidates will be better prepared to meet the ILA standards regarding technology integration specifically as it relates to literacy development (see below).

A specific focus throughout the program that supports candidates' success and efficacy in different practicum experiences is supported through peer and instructor feedback, regular cycles of inquiry, and analysis of practice (both in-person and through videotaped classroom experiences). The ILA (2017) standards place value on the role of technology as a means for professional learning and feedback cycles, acknowledging that video increases opportunities for engagement, communication and reflection among stakeholders.

Literacies (plural) and Digital literacies in particular are focused on throughout the program, as outlined in the ILA (2017) Standard document. Candidates examine ways of incorporating and supporting students' responsible engagement with digital texts and digital tools.

Standard 4, previously "Diversity" outlines more focused attention on "Equity" in the 2017 Standard. In both EDRE 671 and EDRE 674, readings have been tailored to match this increased focus. For example, Critical Race Theory, Critical Literacy Theory, and a focus on meeting the

needs of students for whom English is an additional language are all given more attention throughout the courses. This emphasis on Critical theories has been bolstered, and will continue to be attended to, particularly in the Language, Reading, and Culture course, EDRE 671.