



EDUC 340: Disciplinary Literacy in Secondary Classrooms

Term: Fall 2026

Credits: 3.0

Lecture Times & Location: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30–10:45 a.m., Lovell Hall 110

Modality: In-Person

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Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Dr. Patricia Wu (Associate Professor of Teacher Education)
- **Email:** pwu@university.alkimi.ai
- **Office:** Lovell Hall 120
- **Office Hours:**
 - Monday & Thursday: 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. (In person, Lovell Hall 120)
 - Friday: 4:00–5:00 p.m. (Virtual via Zoom; link posted in Canvas)
 - Also available by appointment.

Course Description

Reading, writing, and discussion strategies for complex texts in the content areas, academic vocabulary, and supporting struggling readers and English learners in grades 7–12. EDUC 340 prepares secondary teacher candidates to teach reading, writing, speaking, and listening through the specialized habits and inquiry methods of their specific content disciplines (biology, chemistry, English, history, or mathematics). Moving beyond generic content-area reading strategies, candidates explore disciplinary literacy—how scientists critique empirical claims, how historians source and corroborate documents, and how mathematicians parse symbolic language. Candidates learn to evaluate text complexity, teach academic vocabulary, scaffold complex informational and multimodal texts, lead structured academic discussions, and support adolescent English learners and striving readers in grades 7–12.

Prerequisites

Admission to Teacher Education.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of EDUC 340, students will be able to:

1. **Differentiate Content-Area Reading and Disciplinary Literacy:** Examine how literacy demands diverge across academic disciplines, applying specialized reading and thinking heuristics unique to science, history, literature, and mathematics.
2. **Evaluate Quantitative, Qualitative, and Reader-Task Text Complexity:** Analyze complex informational, literary, and multimodal secondary texts using quantitative readability metrics, qualitative complexity rubrics, and adolescent reader considerations.

3. **Design Explicit Tiered Academic Vocabulary Instruction:** Identify and teach Tier 2 high-utility academic words and Tier 3 domain-specific technical vocabulary using morphological analysis, semantic maps, and context-based strategies.
4. **Implement Scaffolds for Secondary Comprehension and Writing:** Design close reading protocols, text-dependent questioning sequences, disciplinary annotation strategies, and writing-to-learn routines that scaffold adolescent literacy.
5. **Facilitate Evidence-Based Academic Discourse:** Plan and facilitate structured student-led classroom discussions (e.g., Socratic seminars, fishbowl debates, academic talk moves) that foster collaborative disciplinary sense-making.

Required Course Materials & Approximate Costs

1. **Buehl, Doug.** *Developing Readers in the Academic Disciplines*. 2nd ed., Stenhouse Publishers, 2017. Approx. \$45 print or digital.
2. **Fisher, Douglas, Nancy Frey, and John Hattie.** *Visible Learning for Literacy, Grades K-12*. Corwin, 2016. Approx. \$40 print.
3. **Total estimated cost:** \$65 to \$95.

Generative AI Policy (AI Level 2: AI Permitted with Disclosure for Specified Tasks)

In accordance with Alkimi University Academic Policies (Student Handbook §5.8), EDUC 340 operates under **AI Level 2**.

- **What is permitted:** You may use generative AI tools to locate open-source disciplinary primary source documents, brainstorm contextual examples for Tier 2 academic vocabulary, and proofread draft lesson plan descriptions for clarity and conciseness.
- **What is prohibited:** You may not use generative AI to write your text complexity analysis, author text-dependent questioning sequences, generate your disciplinary literacy unit plan, or complete weekly Canvas quizzes. Disciplinary literacy adaptations must reflect your own content-area pedagogical knowledge.
- **Disclosure:** All submitted text set projects, discussion lesson plans, and curriculum portfolios must include an AI disclosure statement detailing any tools used and how output was verified and adapted. If no AI tools were used, state: 'No generative AI tools were used in preparing this work.'

Grading Components and Weights

- **Midterm Examination 1:** 15% (In class, Thursday, October 1)
- **Midterm Examination 2:** 15% (In class, Thursday, November 12)
- **Multi-Text Set & Text Complexity Analysis Project:** 20% (Due Friday, October 23 at 11:59 p.m.)
- **Structured Disciplinary Discussion Simulation:** 15% (Due Friday, November 20 at 11:59 p.m.)
- **Weekly Disciplinary Literacy Canvas Quizzes:** 15% (Due Mondays at 11:59 p.m. in Canvas; lowest quiz score dropped)
- **Secondary Disciplinary Literacy Curriculum Unit & Portfolio:** 20% (Due by the end of the final exam period, Tuesday, December 15, 2026, 8:00–10:00 a.m.)

Grading Scale (Alkimi University Standard)

- **A:** 93–100% | **A-:** 90–92%
- **B+:** 87–89% | **B:** 83–86% | **B-:** 80–82%
- **C+:** 77–79% | **C:** 73–76% | **C-:** 70–72%
- **D+:** 67–69% | **D:** 60–66% | **F:** Below 60%
- **Extra credit:** No individual extra credit assignments are offered in this course.

Course Schedule (Fall 2026)

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
Week 1	Aug 27	The Adolescent Literacy Crisis and the Disciplinary Turn: Adolescent literacy landscape, moving from generic 'every teacher a reading teacher' slogans to Shanahan & Shanahan's disciplinary literacy framework. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 1–2</i>	<i>First day of classes: Wed Aug 26.</i>
Week 2	Sep 1, 3	Disciplinary Ways of Knowing and Reading: How disciplinary experts read: historical sourcing and contextualization, scientific claim-evidence corroboration, mathematical precision, literary criticism. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 3</i>	<i>Wed Sep 2: Add/section change deadline.</i>
Week 3	Sep 8, 10	Evaluating Secondary Text Complexity: Three-part text complexity model: quantitative measures (Lexile), qualitative dimensions (structure, language conventions, knowledge demands), and reader-task considerations. <i>Reading: Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, Ch. 2; CCSS Appendix A</i>	<i>Mon Sep 7: Labor Day (no classes). Wed Sep 9: Census date (last day to drop without a W).</i>
Week 4	Sep 15, 17	Building Curated Multi-Text Sets: Selecting diverse anchor texts, target texts, and accessible entry-point texts; integrating multimedia, infographics, and culturally sustaining secondary literature. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 4</i>	—
Week 5	Sep 22, 24	Teaching Academic Vocabulary Across Content Areas: Beck and McKeown's three tiers of vocabulary; morphological analysis (Greek and Latin roots), Frayer models, and contextual academic vocabulary routines. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 5; Fisher et al., Ch. 3</i>	—
Week 6	Sep 29, Oct 1	Close Reading and Disciplinary Text Annotation: First, second, and third reads; purpose-driven marginalia, dialectical journals, and text-dependent questioning hierarchies; Midterm Examination 1 in class. <i>Reading: Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, Ch. 4</i>	Midterm Examination 1 (in class).
Week 7	Oct 6, 8	Frontloading and Scaffolding Before Reading: Activating prior knowledge without preempting text inquiry; anticipation guides, visual schema builders, and concept previewing strategies. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 6</i>	—
Week 8	Oct 15	Guiding Comprehension During Reading: Reciprocal teaching (predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing), coding the text, graphic organizers, and think-aloud modeling by teachers. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 7</i>	<i>Oct 12–Oct 13: Fall break (no classes).</i>
Week 9	Oct 20, 22	Writing to Learn in Secondary Classrooms: Low-stakes formative writing routines: admit/exit slips, quick writes, learning logs, sentence expansion, and summary protocols. <i>Reading: Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, Ch. 5</i>	Multi-Text Set & Text Complexity Analysis Project due Fri Oct 23 at 11:59 p.m.
Week 10	Oct 27, 29	Formal Disciplinary Writing and Argumentation: Structuring disciplinary genres: scientific lab arguments, DBQ historical essays, mathematical proofs, and literary analyses; writing scaffolds and mentor texts. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 8</i>	—
Week 11	Nov 3, 5	Structured Academic Talk and Student Discourse: Productive talk moves, accountable talk, fishbowl discussions, Socratic seminars, philosophical chairs, and structuring peer deliberation. <i>Reading: Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, Ch. 4</i>	<i>Fri Nov 6: Last day to withdraw (W) or elect Pass/No Pass.</i>
Week 12	Nov 10, 12	Supporting Striving Readers in High School: Diagnostic reading assessment in secondary grades, fluency supports, reader motivation, and combating adolescent reading disengagement; Midterm Examination 2 in class. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 9</i>	Midterm Examination 2 (in class).
Week 13	Nov 17, 19	Scaffolding Secondary English Learners and Dual-Language Students: WIDA standards in secondary content, sentence frames, bilingual glossaries, visual scaffolding, and valuing	Structured Disciplinary Discussion Simulation due Fri Nov 20 at 11:59 p.m.

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
		home languages in disciplinary thinking. <i>Reading: Selected articles on secondary EL literacy</i>	
Week 14	Nov 24	Digital, Media, and Multimodal Literacies: Evaluating digital source credibility, lateral reading strategies, analyzing data visualizations, and multimodal composing in the secondary disciplines. <i>Reading: Buehl, Ch. 10</i>	Nov 25–Nov 27: Thanksgiving break (no classes).
Week 15	Dec 1, 3	Curriculum Unit Design Workshop: Synthesizing text sets, close reading protocols, vocabulary routines, and writing tasks into the comprehensive disciplinary literacy unit plan. <i>Reading: Selected sample unit portfolios</i>	—
Week 16	Dec 8	Course Synthesis and Secondary Literacy Leadership: Reflecting on teacher candidate literacy beliefs, collaborating with school media specialists, and finalizing the secondary unit portfolio. <i>Reading: Course review packet</i>	Wed Dec 9: Last day of classes. Thu Dec 10: Reading Day.
Finals	Dec 15	Secondary Disciplinary Literacy Curriculum Unit & Portfolio due by the end of the scheduled final exam period, Tuesday, December 15, 2026, 8:00–10:00 a.m.	No final examination.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Punctual attendance and active collaboration in literacy simulations and microteaching discussions are mandatory. In every class, candidates practice disciplinary reading heuristics, model think-alouds, and facilitate academic discourse protocols. If illness or an emergency prevents you from attending, notify Dr. Wu before class. More than two unexcused absences will lower your final course grade. Students who miss the first two class meetings without notifying the instructor may be dropped. Students may miss class for religious observance without penalty if they notify the instructor in writing within the first two weeks of the semester (by Wednesday, September 9, 2026). Absences for university-sponsored activities (athletics, performances, conferences) are excused with a letter from the sponsoring office at least one week in advance.

Late Work Policy

Assignments submitted after the deadline will incur a 10% deduction per calendar day up to three days. Submissions later than 72 hours will receive zero credit. Weekly Canvas reading quizzes must be submitted by Monday at 11:59 p.m.

Teacher Education Admission Prerequisite

Enrollment in EDUC 340 requires formal Admission to Teacher Education (at least 45 earned credits, 2.750 GPA, basic skills test, and background check). Secondary education candidates must achieve a grade of C+ or higher to satisfy degree and licensing requirements.

Final Exam Policy

EDUC 340 has no final examination. The secondary disciplinary literacy curriculum unit & portfolio takes its place. Nothing is due on Reading Day (Thursday, December 10, 2026).

Academic Integrity

Alkimi University is an academic community devoted to rigorous scholarship, open intellectual inquiry, and uncompromising ethical conduct. All students are subject to the regulations of the Alkimi University Academic Integrity Policy. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication of empirical data, and unauthorized submission of academic work generated by artificial intelligence—undermines the integrity of the university and carries severe disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions range from a failing grade on an assignment or exam to an administrative

course failure recorded as an 'XF' on the official transcript, academic suspension, or expulsion. Suspected violations are formally investigated and resolved through the Office of Academic Integrity in accordance with Faculty Handbook §6. For detailed information, consult the Office of Academic Integrity, Lovell Hall 315, (555) 555-0163, integrity@university.alkimi.ai.

Accessibility Services

Alkimi University is committed to providing equitable educational access and reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities, including physical, sensory, psychological, learning, and chronic health conditions. Students requesting academic accommodations must formally register with the Office of Accessibility Services, Harlan Hall 204, (555) 555-0155, access@university.alkimi.ai. Once approved, students will receive an official Faculty Accommodation Letter detailing approved accommodations. Students should present this letter to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, and at least one week prior to any exam or assignment requiring accommodation. Accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

Student Wellness and Mental Health

Your physical health, psychological well-being, and mental health are essential to your academic success. If you experience heightened stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, personal trauma, or academic burnout, free, confidential counseling and medical care are available through the Hollis Health & Counseling Center, located in the Hollis Center. Routine appointments are available Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. during the semester by calling (555) 555-0190 or emailing health@university.alkimi.ai. Urgent, 24/7 crisis psychological counseling is accessible immediately at (555) 555-0199.

Campus Student Support Services

- **Academic Advising Center:** Lovell Hall 101 | (555) 555-0158 | advising@university.alkimi.ai
- **Writing Center:** Whitcombe Library 3rd Floor | Free consultations on papers, reports, and research projects at any stage.
- **Whitcombe Library:** Whitcombe Library, Main Floor | (555) 555-0170 | askalibrarian@university.alkimi.ai
- **Hollis Health & Counseling Center:** Hollis Center | (555) 555-0190 | 24/7 Counseling Line: (555) 555-0199 | health@university.alkimi.ai
- **Secondary Disciplinary Literacy Resource Center:** Lovell Hall 120 | Curriculum text sets, mentor texts, and disciplinary lesson planning office hours with Dr. Wu.