

Warner School of Education – University of Rochester
INNOVATIVE UNIT: READING AND LITERACIES

Guidelines for Reading and Literacies candidates

All Reading and Literacies candidates are required to design and implement innovative units in their practicum experiences. As in the case of lesson plans, we believe it is important in at least one case to make explicit your thinking processes about design, implementation, and assessment of strategies for working with students who have needs in literacy. The following guidelines explain the minimum required components we expect in innovative unit papers. This assessment, in conjunction with final practicum evaluations, will determine if a candidate will “pass” practicum. Assessment of the innovative unit paper will occur on two levels: 1) Candidate ability to design, implement, and analyze the unit as described in these guidelines, and 2) Candidate ability to address in the unit the relevant standards set by the International Reading Association and Warner School proficiencies. The rubric is divided into three parts and is included in this packet. Content area faculty may provide additional rubrics specific to that specialization.

Required Unit Components:

- 1. Introduction:** This section should provide a brief description of the unit that gives a context for the components of the unit, including an essential question and/or topic addressed if appropriate. Include a clear description of the context of implementation for the unit, including grade level, racial, ethnic and gender make-up of students and teachers, a description of the school and classroom, and whether the implementation occurred in the first or second practicum experience. Explain whether this is a unit you will implement or whether this unit is designed for the classroom teacher.
- 2. Theoretical framework:** Provide a clear, well thought out theoretical framework that both guides and provides a foundation for, the unit, using course readings (and outside readings where appropriate). Candidates should state their definition of literacy and their theory of learning. In other words, how does your definition of literacy and theory of learning frame the unit? This section should also include a clear rationale for the unit (e.g. why is this unit important? Why will student learning be meaningful and relevant in this unit?).
- 3. Goals/Professional Standards:** Describe the overarching goal/s of the unit and connect the goal/s to the larger curriculum in your or a classroom teacher’s class (e.g. an integrated curriculum in elementary or the specific content area in secondary). Discuss the International Reading Association and/or state standards this unit addresses. Make explicit the specific content addressed and connections to the theoretical framework, curriculum, and overarching unit goal/s.
- 4. Objectives:** Clearly articulate the specific unit objectives and connect these objectives to the unit goals and professional standards. Describe in detail the literacy objectives this unit addresses.
- 5. Assessment of Student Learning over Time:** Describe the multiple forms of assessment used across the unit. Include formative, summative, formal, and informal assessments. Explicitly connect your assessment to the theoretical framework, unit goals and objectives, and professional standards. In other words, how will your assessments help you scaffold student learning over time and how will you know you have accomplished your goals? How will your assessments inform instruction?
- 6. Pedagogy:** Describe the series of connected lessons and/or experiences in the unit. Include your detailed lesson plans for selected lessons in this section using the lesson plan format given to you.

Describe in detail how you will scaffold and support student learning over time, and address any relevant safety considerations. Describe the range of instructional practices and curriculum materials you will use, or that you will provide to the classroom teacher, to support literacy learning in this unit.

- 7. Unit Implementation:** Describe what happened when you, or the classroom teacher, implemented this unit, with particular attention to students' responses to its main activities. Reflect on what went well and what you would change in future implementations.
- 8. Analysis of student learning:** Report the results of a systematic analysis of what your students learned as a result of the unit, making explicit references to literacy goals and objectives, and using data from formal assessments and classroom observations (see number 5 above). Refer as appropriate to the assessment results and student work in an appendix to support your claims.
- 9. Unit Analysis:** This section is a detailed analysis of the implementation of the unit that brings together content, theory, and practice. Describe how you have integrated the components of the unit into a coherent whole that produces meaningful and relevant student learning and addresses the goals articulated in Part 2 and 3 of the rubric. Connect the unit implementation with the larger curriculum and theoretical framework described in the introduction.
- 10. Appendix:** Include: 1) text of key assignments and assessments, including rubrics or handouts given to students; 2) aggregate assessment data; 3) samples of student work with your comments.

What follows are the rubrics that will be used to evaluate this major assessment. You are expected to provide a self-evaluation of your work using these rubrics; your methods course instructor will do the same independently.

Warner School of Education – University of Rochester
READING AND LITERACIES INNOVATIVE UNIT

Scoring guidelines and rubrics

There are three parts to this evaluation:

Part I: Designed to evaluate the extent to which the candidate has fulfilled the requirements of this project, as outlined in the detailed description of the assignment. Failing to do so may require the candidate to revise or redo the assignment before he/she can pass the course.

Part II: Designed to evaluate the extent to which the candidate has met some key standards about planning and implementing instruction set by his/her professional organization.

Part III: Designed to evaluate the extent to which the candidate has met some key proficiencies identified as target for all Warner teacher candidates.

Please remember to complete all three parts. Each part has different rubrics, so please carefully review the instructions provided at the beginning of each part before scoring.

We expect both the candidate and the instructor to independently complete this evaluation.

Candidate's name: _____ **Evaluator's name:** _____

Evaluator's role: __ cooperating teacher; __ university supervisor; __ faculty advisor

Practicum experience: __ first __ second **Semester:** _____ **Course** _____

READING AND LITERACIES INNOVATIVE UNIT RUBRICS – PART I:

Please evaluate the extent to which the candidate has completed each component of the unit report as intended, using the following rubrics:

1. **Insufficient:** The criteria described are not met. In order to obtain a passing grade in this assignment, the candidate must redo all or part of the unit as directed by the course professor.
2. **Emergent/needs improvement:** The criteria described are partially met. Minor revisions in the paper are called for to address the shortcomings identified and should be completed before the candidate can “pass” this assignment.
3. **Basic proficiency:** The criteria described are essentially met. The Innovative Unit report can be used as evidence that the candidate is able to plan, implement and evaluate worthwhile instructional units.
4. **Outstanding performance:** The unit fully meets the criteria described and provides an outstanding example that the candidate is able to plan, implement and evaluate worthwhile and innovative instructional units.

Category	(1) Unacceptable/Insufficient	(2) Needs Improvement/Emerging	(3) Basic Proficiency	(4) Outstanding Performance	Score
1. Introduction	The description of the unit does not provide a context for the components of the unit and does not include an essential question and/or topic addressed. The description of the context of implementation is inadequate. The audience for the unit is not described (e.g. classroom teacher or candidate).	The description of the unit gives some context for the components of the unit and includes an essential question and/or topic addressed where appropriate. The description of the context of implementation is partial or incomplete. The audience for the unit is vaguely described (e.g. classroom teacher or candidate).	The description of the unit gives a sufficient context for the components of the unit and includes an essential question and/or topic addressed where appropriate. The description of the context of implementation is clear, but some specifics are not present. The audience for the unit is described (e.g. classroom teacher or candidate).	The description of the unit gives a clear context for the components of the unit and includes an essential question and/or topic addressed where appropriate. The description of the context of implementation is clear and rich and includes grade level, racial, ethnic, and gender make-up of students and teachers, a description of the school and classroom, and indicated to which practicum experience the unit applies. The audience for the unit is clearly described (e.g. classroom teacher or candidate).	

<p>2. Theoretical Framework</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is not articulated. Candidate has not adequately used course readings. The definition of literacy and the theory of learning are unclear. The rationale for the unit is not clearly stated with little or no articulation of the importance of the unit to meaningful and relevant student learning.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is somewhat articulated. Candidate has used some course readings where appropriate. The definition of literacy and the theory of learning are unclear. The rationale for the unit provides some articulation of the importance of the unit to meaningful and relevant student learning.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework sufficiently guides, and provides a foundation for, the unit. Candidate has used course readings where appropriate. There is both a definition of literacy and a theory of learning with some connections to the larger curriculum. The rationale for the unit sufficiently explains the importance of the unit to meaningful and relevant student learning.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is clear and well thought out. It clearly guides, and provides a foundation for, the unit. Candidate has used course readings and has included some outside readings where appropriate. There is both a definition of literacy and a theory of learning. The rationale for the unit clearly explains the importance of the unit to meaningful and relevant student learning.</p>	
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Category	(1) Unacceptable/ Insufficient	(2) Needs Improvement/Emerging	(3) Basic Proficiency	(4) Outstanding Performance	Score
3. Goals/ Professional Standards	The overarching goal/s and/or larger curriculum are not adequately described and no connections are made. The specific goals for the unit are not adequately described. Few, if any, links to a discussion of the IRA standards this unit addresses are provided. There are no connections to the content addressed, the theoretical framework, curriculum, theoretical framework and overarching unit goal/s.	The overarching goal/s and the larger curriculum are described but the connections are unclear. The specific goals for the unit are vaguely described. Some links to a discussion of the IRA standards this unit addresses are provided. There are a few connections to the content addressed, the theoretical framework, curriculum, theoretical framework and overarching unit goal/s.	The overarching goal/s and connections to the larger curriculum are sufficiently described. The specific goals for the unit are sufficiently stated and are linked to a discussion of the IRA standards this unit addresses. There are some connections to the content addressed, the theoretical framework, curriculum, theoretical framework and overarching unit goal/s.	The overarching goal/s and connections to the larger curriculum are clearly articulated. The specific goals for the unit are clearly stated and are explicitly linked to a thorough discussion of the IRA standards this unit addresses. Explicit connections to the content addressed, the theoretical framework, curriculum, and overarching unit goal/s are richly described.	
4. Objectives	Specific unit objectives are not clearly stated and connections between these objectives and the unit goals and professional standards are not described. Detailed literacy objectives are not described.	Some specific unit objectives are stated and connections between these objectives and the unit goals and professional standards are briefly described. Detailed literacy objectives are vaguely described.	Specific unit objectives are articulated and connections between these objectives and the unit goals and professional standards are sufficiently discussed. Detailed literacy objectives are described.	Specific unit objectives are clearly articulated and connections between these objectives and the unit goals and professional standards are thoroughly discussed. Detailed literacy objectives are richly described.	
5. Assessment	The multiple forms of assessment used across the unit are not described and do not include an appropriate range of assessments. Assessments are not connected to the theoretical framework, unit goals and objectives, and professional standards. How assessments will facilitate	The multiple forms of assessment used across the unit are described somewhat and include either formative/summative or formal/informal assessments. Assessments are loosely connected to the theoretical framework, unit goals and objectives, and professional standards. How assessments will facilitate the scaffolding of student	The multiple forms of assessment used across the unit are sufficiently described and include formative, summative, formal, and informal assessments. Assessments are connected to the theoretical framework, unit goals and objectives, and professional standards.	The multiple forms of assessment used across the unit are described in detail and include formative, summative, formal, and informal assessments. Assessments are explicitly connected to the theoretical framework, unit goals and objectives, and professional standards. How assessments	

	the scaffolding of student learning over time is not described, nor is how assessment will inform instruction.	learning over time is unclear, as is how assessment will inform instruction.	How assessments will facilitate the scaffolding of student learning over time is stated, as is how assessment will inform instruction.	will facilitate the scaffolding of student learning over time is described in detail, as is how assessment will inform instruction.	
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Category	(1) Unacceptable/ Insufficient	(2) Needs Improvement/Emerging	(3) Basic Proficiency	(4) Outstanding Performance	Score
6. Pedagogy	The series of connected lessons and/or experiences in the unit are poorly described. Some lesson plans are included (with few relevant materials, e.g. rubrics, handouts, etc.) and are not consistent with the lesson plan format given. Strategies for scaffolding and supporting student learning over time are not mentioned, and relevant safety considerations are not addressed. Instructional practices and curriculum materials to support literacy learning are inadequately articulated.	The series of connected lessons and/or experiences in the unit are vaguely described. Selected lesson plans are included (with most relevant materials, e.g. rubrics, handouts, etc.) and are somewhat consistent with the lesson plan format given. Strategies for scaffolding and supporting student learning over time are unclear, and relevant safety considerations are minimally addressed. Some instructional practices and curriculum materials to support literacy learning are articulated.	The series of connected lessons and/or experiences in the unit are described. Sufficiently detailed lesson plans of selected lessons are included (with some relevant materials, e.g. rubrics, handouts, etc.) and are consistent with the lesson plan format given. Strategies for scaffolding and supporting student learning over time are described, and relevant safety considerations are addressed. A range of instructional practices and curriculum materials to support literacy learning are mostly articulated.	The series of connected lessons and/or experiences in the unit are thoroughly described. Detailed lesson plans of selected lessons are included (with all relevant materials, e.g. rubrics, handouts, etc.) and use the lesson plan format given. Strategies for scaffolding and supporting student learning over time are richly detailed, and relevant safety considerations are addressed. A wide range of instructional practices and curriculum materials to support literacy learning are explicitly articulated.	
7. Unit Implementation	Unclear description of what happened when the unit was implemented, with little attention to students' responses to its main activities. Includes no reflection on what went well and what he/she would change in future implementations.	Some description of what happened when the unit was implemented, with particular attention to students' responses to its main activities. Includes some reflection on what went well and what he/she would change in future implementations.	Good description of what happened when the unit was implemented, with particular attention to students' responses to its main activities. Candidate reflected on what went well and what he/she would change in future implementations.	Clearly describes what happened when the unit was implemented, with particular attention to students' responses to its main activities. Candidate reflected in detail on what went well and what he/she would change in the future.	

8. Analysis of Student Learning	Analysis of student learning is absent and there is no reference to unit goals and objectives. There is little or no supporting evidence in student work.	Analysis of student learning is present but not systematic or complete and there is little reference to unit goals and objectives. Supporting evidence in student work is inconsistent.	Systematic analysis of student learning with sufficient reference to unit goals and objectives. Includes sufficient analysis of assessments that is supported by evidence in student work.	A thorough systematic analysis of student learning with explicit reference to unit goals and objectives. Includes clear and succinct analysis of multiple forms of assessment that is supported by evidence in student work.	
9. Unit Analysis	Analysis of the implementation of the unit that brings together content, theory, and practice is not articulated. How the candidate integrated the components of the unit into a coherent whole that produces meaningful and relevant student learning is not described. Connections between the unit implementation and the larger curriculum and theoretical framework are not mentioned.	Analysis of the implementation of the unit that brings together content, theory, and practice is somewhat articulated. How the candidate integrated the components of the unit into a coherent whole that produces meaningful and relevant student learning is unclear. Connections between the unit implementation and the larger curriculum and theoretical framework are mentioned with some detail.	Analysis of the implementation of the unit that brings together content, theory, and practice is sufficiently articulated. How the candidate integrated the components of the unit into a coherent whole that produces meaningful and relevant student learning is described. Connections between the unit implementation and the larger curriculum and theoretical framework are adequately described.	A richly detailed analysis of the implementation of the unit that brings together content, theory, and practice is clearly articulated. How the candidate integrated the components of the unit into a coherent whole that produces meaningful and relevant student learning is thoroughly described. Connections between the unit implementation and the larger curriculum and theoretical framework are clearly described.	
10. Appendix	Few of the suggested items are included.	Most suggested items are included.	All suggested items are included.	All suggested items are included and some additional evidence added.	

WARNER INNOVATIVE UNIT EVALUATION FORM

Candidate's name: _____ Evaluator's name: _____
 Semester: _____ Course # _____

Part II: IRA Standards for READING & LITERACIES teacher candidates

Based on the innovative unit paper submitted, evaluate the extent to which the candidate provided evidence of meeting the specific IRA standards listed below, using the following rubrics:

n/a: Not observable – The topic, level or context for the unit was not appropriate for providing evidence for this standard. (*Whenever this option is not acceptable – e.g., you must provide your assessment – we have indicated it by blackening the corresponding cell*)

1. **Insufficient** – i.e., this standard was not met.
2. **Emergent** – i.e., there is only partial evidence that this standard was addressed or the standard was only partially addressed; more evidence is needed before determining proficiency with respect to this standard.
3. **Basic proficiency**– i.e., the lesson plan provide sufficient evidence of addressing this standard at least at a basic level
4. **Outstanding performance** – i.e., the lesson plan provides an excellent example of addressing this standard.

To arrive to this overall evaluation, please refer to the more detailed explanations provided by IRA for each specific standard (see http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/reports/professional_standards.html).

IRA Standards:	n/o	1	2	3	4
2.0 Instructional Strategies and Curriculum Materials. <i>Candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction: As a result, reading specialist/literacy coach candidates:</i>					
2.1 Support classroom teachers and paraprofessional in their use of instructional grouping options. They help teachers select appropriate options. They demonstrate the options and explain the evidence-based rationale for changing configurations to best meet the needs of all students.					
2.2 Support classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in the use of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices. They help teachers select appropriate options and explain the evidence-base for selecting practices to best meet the needs of all students. They demonstrate the options in their own (and demonstration) teaching.					
2.3 Support classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in the use of a wide range of curriculum materials. They help teachers select appropriate options and explain the evidence base for selecting practices to best meet the needs of all students. They demonstrate the options in their own teaching and in demonstration teaching.					
3.0 Assessment, Diagnosis, and Evaluation. <i>Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading instruction. As a result, reading specialist/literacy coach candidates:</i>					
3.1 Compare and contrast, use, interpret, and recommend a wide range of assessment tools and practices. Assessments may range from standardized tests to informal assessments and also include technology-based assessments. They					

demonstrate appropriate use of assessments in their practice, and they can train classroom teachers to administer and interpret these assessments.					
3.2 Support the classroom teacher in the assessment of individual students. They extend the assessment to further determine proficiencies and difficulties for appropriate services.					
3.3 Assist the classroom teacher in using assessment to plan instruction for all students. They use in-depth assessment information to plan individual instruction for struggling readers. They collaborate with other education professionals to implement appropriate reading instruction for individual students. They collect, analyze, and use school wide assessment data to implement and revise school reading programs.					
3.4 Communicate assessment information to various audiences for both accountability and instructional purposes (policymakers, public officials, community members, clinical specialists, school psychologists, social workers, classroom teachers, and parents).					
4.0 Creating a Literate Environment. <i>Candidates create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments. As a result, reading specialist/literacy coach candidates:</i>					
4.1 Assist the classroom teacher and paraprofessional in selecting materials that match the reading levels, interests, and cultural and linguistic background of students.					
4.2 Assist the classroom teacher in selecting books, technology-based information, and nonprint materials representing multiple levels, broad interests, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.					
4.3 Demonstrate and model reading and writing for real purposes in daily interactions with students and education professionals. Assist teachers and paraprofessionals to model reading and writing as valued lifelong activities.					
4.4 Use methods to effectively revise instructional plans to motivate all students. They assist classroom teachers in designing programs that will intrinsically and extrinsically motivate students. They demonstrate these techniques and they can articulate the research base that grounds their practice.					

WARNER INNOVATIVE UNIT EVALUATION FORM

Candidate's name: _____ **Evaluator's name:** _____
Evaluator's role: __ cooperating teacher; __ university supervisor; __ faculty advisor
Practicum experience: __ first; __ second **Semester:** _____

INNOVATIVE UNIT RUBRICS PART III: Warner proficiencies

Please evaluate the extent to which the unit plan and its implementation provides evidence that the candidate has achieved the following proficiencies set by the Warner School as targets for all teacher candidates, using the following rubrics:

1. **Insufficient** – i.e., this proficiency was not met.
2. **Emergent/needs improvement** – i.e., you found some evidence that the candidate demonstrated this proficiency, but it was only partial or inconsistent.
3. **Basic proficiency** – i.e., you found evidence that the candidate demonstrated this proficiency at the minimum acceptable level.
4. **Outstanding performance** – i.e., the unit provided an excellent example that the candidate has achieved proficiency in this area.

We realize that in some cases you may not have had the opportunity to gather pertinent information for all proficiencies listed below. Therefore, we have given the option, whenever appropriate, for you do indicate “n/o” (“not observed”) to clearly distinguish this situation from the one where you had the opportunity to observed relevant behavior and found it lacking. There are some proficiencies, however, for which this is not an option since your evaluation is critical to assessing the candidate on that particular dimension – as indicated by a blackened cell corresponding to the “n/o” option.

<i>Selected Warner School proficiencies as they could be observed in the unit:</i>	<i>n/o</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
(WS 1.2) The design of the unit reflects a good understanding of the key concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of the subject matter(s) addressed in the unit.					
(WS 1.3) The goals set for the unit and their discussion address some important principles and concepts delineated in professional, New York State, and Warner School Teaching and Curriculum standards.					
(WS 1.4) The unit included learning experiences that made the subject matter meaningful and relevant for all students in the class.					
(WS 2.2) The unit design and its analysis demonstrate that the candidate understands that all students construct knowledge through active engagement in culturally valued activities.					
(WS 2.3) The unit included learning experiences that took into consideration the students' developmental level and drew on the strengths and resources available in students' prior experiences, as well as the school, family, and community contexts in which they live.					
(WS 3.4) The unit included learning experiences that were culturally relevant and addressed the strengths and needs of all students.					
(WS 4.2) The design and implementation of the unit included a selection or innovative teaching and learning strategies and classroom structures, appropriate to achieving the learning goals set for this unit.					

(WS 4.4) The unit took advantage of the potential of technology to support student learning, as appropriate to the goals set for the students.					
(WS 5.3) The activities in the unit and the classroom environment fostered student motivation and learning and the creation of a “community of learners.”					
(WS 6.3) The design and implementation of the unit employed appropriate and effective modes of communication to make the ideas accessible to all students and foster inquiry.					
(WS 6.4) The unit activities incorporated oral, written, visual, and electronic texts as appropriate to facilitate interaction and communication, and provide support for all students’ critical analysis of such texts.					
(WS 7.1) The unit’s activities are appropriate to pursue the learning goals identified (which in turn are consistent with professional and New York State standards).					
(WS 7.2) The unit has a well-defined and high quality plan, which was adequately implemented with appropriate modifications as suggested by the feedback received during the implementation.					
(WS 8.2) Appropriate assessment and evaluation strategies were used to monitor, assess and provide guidance to student learning, including some that are embedded in authentic learning activities and have real audiences and purposes.					
(WS 8.3) The candidate was able to use assessment data to inform instruction by making explicit links in the unit analysis between his/her teaching and student performance, and by either making immediate adjustments in the unit or suggesting changes for future implementations.					
(WS 8.4) Positive effect on the students’ learning is demonstrated through the aggregated data and samples of student work included in the unit report.					
(WS 9.2) The unit analysis demonstrates the candidate’s ability to reflect on his/her practices, constructively use critiques of his/her practice, and draw from theories and research results, in order to make necessary adjustments to enhance student learning.					
(WS 10.1) The unit design sought out and built on parental and community involvement as appropriate.					

Comments: