

# **Graduate Reading and Literacy Programs Handbook**



*College of Education  
& P-16 Integration*

## **Reading and Literacy M.Ed. Reading Specialist Certification Program TxVSN Certificate Program**

Department of Bilingual and Literacy Studies

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**Please note: This handbook is meant to supplement, not replace, the Graduate Catalog and the Handbook of Operating Procedures. The Graduate Catalog and H.O.P. are your ultimate references for university policies.**

## **Our Mission & Vision**

### **University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Mission Statement**

To transform the Rio Grande Valley, the Americans, and the world through an innovative and accessible educational environment that promotes student success, research, creative works, health and well-being, community engagement, sustainable development, and commercialization of university discoveries.

### **College of Education and P-16 Integration Vision and Mission Statement**

The vision of the College of Education and P-16 Integration is to be the catalyst for educational success for individuals, families, communities, the region, and our society at large through thoughtful, culturally sustaining partnerships with our schools and communities, demonstrating responsiveness to a growing bilingual and biliterate population.

#### **Mission**

The College of Education and P-16 Integration's mission is to

- provide rigorous programs of study founded on the belief that scholarship and life experience are strengthened when integrated, that diversity in all its manifestations is a fundamental component of excellence in education, and that partnerships that foster authentic social and community engagement is vital;
- engage in continuous improvement through curricular and technological innovation in order to remain responsive to the changing educational and global reality;
- develop highly qualified, multi-culturally responsive and sustaining, innovative scholars, learning leaders, and education professionals who challenge the status quo and serve as change agents who make a difference by promoting social justice, embracing diversity in its broadest definition, inspiring thought leadership, and pursuing lifelong learning; and
- lead through evidence-based decision making and data literacy in order to share our story with the academic and broader research communities, as well as our public school partners, families, and policy makers.

## University Policies for Graduate Students

### **The Vaquero Honor Code**

#### Honesty, Integrity, & Respect

As members of a community dedicated to honesty, integrity, and mutual respect in all interactions and relationships, the students, faculty and administration of our university pledge to abide by the principles in the Vaquero Honor Code.

- **WE ARE HONEST**  
We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how any act of dishonesty conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.
- **WE HAVE INTEGRITY**  
We will make personal and academic integrity fundamental in all of our endeavors.
- **WE ARE RESPECTFUL**  
We act civilly and cooperate with one another for the common good. We will strive to create an environment and a culture in which people respect and listen to one another. We recognize a university is, above all, a place for the exchange of ideas, popular and unpopular. It is the one institution in society that encourages challenges to conventional wisdom. Consequently, we pledge to encourage the exchange of ideas and to allow others to participate and express their views openly.

Information on the Vaquero Honor Code, including how to report violations, can be found at:  
<https://www.utrgv.edu/studentlife/about/vaquero-honor-code/index.htm>

### **Scholastic Honesty and Plagiarism**

As stated in H.O.P. policy STU 02-100:

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student, or any attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism includes obtaining another's work and the unacknowledged submission/resubmission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work.

Scholastic dishonesty and/or plagiarism may result in consequences ranging from having to redo an assignment, failing a course, or being expelled from the university.

### **University Email**

Once admitted, all communication between the student and university personnel must be through university communication systems such as Vaquero email accounts or Blackboard.

### **Student Accessibility Services**

If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu). **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu).

### **Sexual Harassment or Assault**

In accordance with UT System regulations, UTRGV instructors are a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

### **Student Grievances and Complaints**

Students who have a complaints or grievances with UTRGV faculty or staff (not related to discrimination or grade appeals) may try to resolve these issues by a) attempting an informal resolution by meeting with the faculty/staff member and resolving the issue there, or b) pursuing a formal resolution by reporting the grievance to Vaquero Care Report It form online ([www.utrgv.edu/reportit](http://www.utrgv.edu/reportit)). Please see H.O.P. policy STU 02-200 for more information.

UTRGV prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination that will not be tolerated (see H.O.P. policy ADM 03-300). Any instances of sexual misconduct or discrimination should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinators. Visit <https://www.utrgv.edu/equity/> for more information.

Students may appeal final grades or decisions regarding academic standards. These appeals must begin with the course instructor. If not resolved, the student may appeal in writing to the department chair within one long semester after the disputed grade or decision is issued. The appeal may be elevated to the College Academic Appeals Committee and finally to the Dean of the College. Please see the Graduate Catalog for more information on grade appeals.

### **Academic Standing Policies**

In order to remain in good standing students must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA. A suspended graduate student may petition for readmission by submitting an appeal to the Graduate College to [gradappeals@utrgv.edu](mailto:gradappeals@utrgv.edu). Appeals will be forwarded to the Program Coordinator, Dean of the College, and finally to the Graduate College Dean. The decision of the Graduate College Dean is final.

Students should maintain continuous enrollment. Any student who sits out for a year or more must reapply to the program and, if readmitted, will fall under any new catalog requirements. Students who need to sit out for any reason should complete a leave of absence form.

Students must be enrolled in the semester that they graduate.

### **Incomplete Policy**

An incomplete is a temporary grade given only during the last ¼ of the term/semester and only if 1) the student is passing the course to date, 2) the student will not have completed the required coursework in the allotted time of a regular semester/summer session, and 3) the instructor determines that the reason given for needing an incomplete is valid. Incompletes are given due to major life circumstances, not because the student ran out of time to complete work.

A written agreement between the student and instructor specifying the work to be made up and the deadline for its accomplishment must be filed in the office of the department chair at the time that the 'I' is submitted. All work must be accomplished and the 'I' grade changed by the end of the first long semester after the incomplete was given.

### **Faculty Concerns about a Student**

If faculty see potential violations of the Vaquero Honor Code they can submit a report through the Vaqueros Care Report It system. These reports will be brought to the attention of the appropriate UTRGV office or department so that the situation can be resolved. Faculty who are concerned about a student's health or well-being can also use the Vaqueros Care Report It system in order to provide support to the student.

# Reading and Literacy M.Ed.

The Reading and Literacy Master's degree is a 30 hour online program designed for pre-K through grade 12 educators who want to learn more about the practical and theoretical aspects of reading and literacy education. People enrolled in the program gain a thorough understanding of the reading process, how children learn to read and how to assess and instruct a wide variety of readers in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts. Students choose one of four concentrations: reading specialist\*, biliteracy, digital literacy, or adolescent literacy/English.

Students in the program:

- Become more knowledgeable, confident, and competent teachers of reading and language arts.
- Explore literacy questions that directly relate to their teaching.
- Become literacy leaders in their schools, districts, and communities.
- Make connections with reading teachers from across the Rio Grande Valley.

The program admits new students each fall and spring semester.

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within one seven-year period. Work more than seven years old will not meet graduation requirements.

\*Students who wish to pursue K-12 Reading Specialist certification in the State of Texas must complete the UTRGV Reading and Literacy M.Ed. program, then apply for the Reading Specialist certification program.

## **Reading and Literacy M.Ed. Program Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Master of Education in Reading and Literacy is to increase scholarly and professional knowledge about literacy development, learning, and teaching in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts. The program provides graduates with a deep understanding of:

1. The ways that literacy is constructed socially, culturally, and ideologically in an increasingly globalized world.
2. Language and literacy development across multiple linguistic and cultural contexts.
3. Instructional design, delivery, and assessment in literacy education for students with diverse backgrounds including students from culturally diverse backgrounds, emergent bilinguals and multilinguals, transnational students, and those with reading difficulties or challenges.
4. Effective oral and written communication for scholarly and professional purposes; collaboration with administrators, literacy colleagues, parents/families, and community members; and leadership skills and techniques.



### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be able to comprehend and critically analyze research and theory related to literacy development and literacy education in pre-K-12 monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts.
2. Students will be able to design and assess appropriate literacy instruction for an increasingly multiliterate, multicultural, and multimodal world.
3. Students will understand the literacy-related needs of pre-K-12 students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including emergent bilinguals and multilinguals, transnational students, struggling readers, and students with learning challenges.

### **Admission to the Reading and Literacy M.Ed. Program**

Apply to the program through the Graduate College application website at [www.utrgv.edu/gradapply](http://www.utrgv.edu/gradapply). The application is not complete until all materials have been received. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Once the application is complete the program coordinator and Reading and Literacy faculty make admission decisions. Prospective students will be informed of the admission decisions as soon as possible after the application deadline has passed. Students who are denied admittance may appeal to the program coordinator.

The Graduate Office website will list the application deadlines for each semester; check the Graduate Office website for specific dates.

### **Requirements for Admission**

1. Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States or a recognized international equivalent in a similar or related field.
2. Official transcripts from each institution attended (must be submitted directly to UTRGV)
3. Undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0. If you do not meet the minimum undergraduate GPA criterion, the GRE General test is required. GRE test scores are valid for five years.
4. Written statement explaining why you want to be in this program and how it will help you meet your career goals (1-2 pages)
5. Domestic applicants who attended foreign universities or international applicants have additional requirements. Please see the Graduate Office website.

## Reading and Literacy M.Ed. Degree Plan

All students should meet with their program coordinator in their first semester to fill out and sign an official degree plan.

### Literacy Core—Required for All Students (12 hours)

RLIT 6309	Theoretical Foundations of Reading and Literacy
RLIT 6307	Sociocultural Foundations of Literacy
RLIT 6305	Conducting Literacy Research
RLIT 6345	Transnational and Immigrant Literacies

### Concentration—Choose One (12 hours)

#### Biliteracy

RLIT 6333	Biliteracy in the Classroom
RLIT 6334	Contemporary Topics in Biliteracy
RLIT 6311	Crossing Borders with Literature for Young People
RLIT 6313	Literacy Development and Language Study

#### Reading Specialist

RLIT 6313	Literacy Development and Language Study
RLIT 6329	Literacy Assessment and Instructional Decision-Making
RLIT 6330	Teaching Marginalized Readers
RLIT 6310	Children’s and Adolescent Literature

#### Digital Literacy

RLIT 6302	Digital Literacy and Adolescents
RLIT 6303	Digital Literacies and Diverse Learners
RLIT 6306	Assessment Practices in Digital Literacies
RLIT 6308	Digital Literacies and Leadership

#### English/Adolescent Literacy

RLIT 6351	Adolescent Literacy
RLIT 6320	Writing in the Reading Classroom
RLIT 6310	Children’s and Adolescent Literature
RLIT 6302	Digital Literacy and Adolescents

### Electives/Thesis

Six hours of literacy-related electives approved by advisor

or

RLIT 7300 Thesis I

RLIT 7301 Thesis II

TOTAL      30 hours

Any deviations from the degree plan must be formally approved with the appropriate paperwork and signatures.

### **Culminating Activity**

All students must complete a culminating activity in order to fulfill degree requirements for graduation. For some students this culminating activity is the successful completion of the thesis. All other students must successfully complete a culminating graduate portfolio. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate the scholarly and professional knowledge and growth of the student over the course of their graduate career. You must be enrolled in coursework during the semester that you complete your portfolio or thesis.

The student will add to their portfolio in four of the required literacy courses. Students will add three additional artifacts to their portfolio; two related to their chosen concentration and one open choice. In their final semester of coursework, the portfolio will be presented to program faculty for evaluation. Students must receive passing scores on the faculty evaluation in order to be eligible for graduation from the program.

### **Program Requirements Timeline**

It is the student's responsibility to keep track of program deadlines.

1. Apply online at [www.utrgv.edu/gradapply](http://www.utrgv.edu/gradapply). Check the Graduate Office website for application deadlines. You must be accepted by the Graduate School before enrolling for any graduate courses at UTRGV. However, acceptance into the UTRGV Graduate School does not ensure acceptance into the Reading and Literacy M.Ed. program.
2. Meet with your advisor in your first semester of coursework to complete an official degree plan.
3. If you plan to do a thesis, talk with your advisor soon after your first semester in the program. Refer to the Reading and Literacy Thesis Manual and the Graduate School thesis website for specific deadlines and procedures.
4. Two semesters before your anticipated graduation date go to the Graduate School and fill out an Application for Graduation. (e.g. If you intend to graduate in May, apply for graduation in the prior fall semester). If your graduation date changes later on, you will need to pay a fee and inform the Graduate School of your new intended graduation date.
5. During your last semester of coursework complete the culminating activity. This must be successfully completed in order to graduate from the program.

### **Thesis**

A thesis is a report of an independent research project that the student plans and implements. We highly encourage students in the Reading and Literacy M.Ed. program to choose the thesis option:

- A thesis allows the student to work independently while exploring a topic of interest.
- Thesis research adds to the knowledge base about reading and literacy; given the small amount of quality research with the local student population this information is critically needed.
- It gives the student research and writing experience while being supported by faculty.
- Students who intend to pursue a higher degree such as a doctorate should especially consider doing a thesis; many doctoral programs expect incoming students to have this sort of research experience.

Thesis work is supervised by a committee of faculty members. A thesis generally takes at least a year to complete. Candidates who elect to complete a thesis do not complete the culminating portfolio.

# Reading Specialist Certification Program

The six hour Reading Specialist Certification program allows graduates from the UTRGV Reading and Literacy M.Ed. program to pursue K-12 reading specialist certification in the State of Texas. Applicants must be Texas residents.

Because the Reading Specialist certification program leads to possible State of Texas K-12 Reading Specialist certification, it is governed by rules established by the Texas Administrative Code and the Texas Education Agency.

## Reading Specialist Certification Program Mission/Vision

The purpose of the Reading Specialist certification program is to produce highly knowledgeable and effective K-12 reading specialists who understand and support literacy development across multiple linguistic and cultural contexts through their work with children and collaboration with administrators, colleagues, parents/families and community members.

## Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to critically analyze research, theory, policy and programs related to literacy development and literacy education in pre-K – 12 monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts.
2. Students will be able to design and assess appropriate literacy instruction for an increasingly multiliterate, multicultural, and multimodal world.
3. Students will be able to design and implement appropriate literacy related professional development and leadership for all stakeholders of a school/district.

## Certification Plan

RLIT 6355 Reading Specialist

RLIT 6357 Practicum

TOTAL      6 hours

## **Application and Admissions**

Apply to the program through the Graduate College application website at [www.utrgv.edu/gradapply](http://www.utrgv.edu/gradapply). The application is not complete until all materials have been received. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Once the application is complete the program coordinator and Reading and Literacy faculty make admission decisions. Prospective students will be informed of the admission decisions as soon as possible after the application deadline has passed. Students who are denied admittance may appeal to the program coordinator.

The Graduate Office website will list the application deadlines for each semester; check the Graduate Office website for specific dates.

### Application Requirements

- Master's degree in Reading and Literacy from UTRGV
- Graduate GPA of at least 3.0
- Official transcripts from each institution attended
- Current teaching certification in Texas
- Documentation of two years of teaching experience as a certified teacher
- Personal interview
- Clear criminal background check
- Signed and returned acceptance letter

## **Practicum Policies and Requirements**

In order to become a certified K-12 Reading Specialist students must apply and be admitted to the Reading Specialist program. In the practicum course students must complete 160 hours of supervised practicum in a public school setting in Texas. Documented hours must include both small and whole group literacy-related work with students, conducting literacy assessments with children, and planning and implementing professional development with teachers.

As part of the practicum, students will have a school-based mentor. This mentor should be a certified Reading Specialist where possible and will take part in a training session as part of their mentoring responsibilities.

There are multiple requirements for the field based portion of the practicum courses. These are required by the Texas Administrative Code: Title 19, Part 7, Chapter 239, Subchapter C, Rule §239.82 and Title 19, Part 7, Chapter 228, Rule §228.35.

- Your field-based training must be focused on actual experiences related to the Reading Specialist standards.
- Your practicum must consist of a minimum of 160 clock-hours.
- You will need to verify contact with your UTRGV-based supervisor within the first three weeks of beginning your assignment.
- Your UTRGV-based supervisor will conduct a minimum of three observations; total observation time must be at least 135 minutes.
- The first observation must occur within the first six weeks of the assignment.

- The UTRGV-based supervisor will document instructional practices observed during the observation.
- The UTRGV-based supervisor will provide written feedback through an interactive conference.
- The UTRGV-based supervisor will provide a copy of the written feedback to your campus administrator within one week of the observation date.
- The UTRGV-based supervisor will provide informal observations and coaching as appropriate.
- As a part of your field based experience you will be required to keep a detailed log of each clock hour, which will be turned in at the end of the practicum. Practicum hours must be complete by the end of the university semester in which you take RLIT 6357.

### **Certification Policies and Requirements**

Students who complete all program requirements will become eligible for Reading Specialist certification.

#### TEXES Exam and Test Preparation

In order to become a certified K-12 Reading Specialist in the State of Texas, students must pass the Reading Specialist TEXES. There are test preparation materials for the Reading Specialist TEXES at: [http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML\\_FRAG/TX151\\_PrepMaterials.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX151_PrepMaterials.html)

Students will become eligible for the exam during RLIT 6355.

#### Certification

Students who have passed the TEXES and met all other program requirements can apply for Reading Specialist certification. Contact the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability for more information regarding the certification process and required application materials. It is the student's job to apply for certification. Please apply for certification as soon as you are eligible.

You must apply for certification within three years of program completion. If you apply after the three years has passed, you may be required to complete additional conditions before certification is approved.

# TxVSN Certificate Program

This 12 hour program prepares certified Texas teachers to teach and assess K-12 students in online contexts. The program is 100% online. Program completers will receive the Texas Virtual School Network Document of Completion.

All courses in this certificate program are part of the M.Ed. in Reading and Literacy (Digital Literacy Specialization) and can be used towards the completion of that degree.

## Admissions

Apply online at <http://www.utrgv.edu/gradapply>. Admission requirements include:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- Undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0
- Official transcripts from each institution attended (submitted directly to UTRGV)

## Certification Plan

Students will sign a certification plan during their first semester in the program.

RLIT 6302 Digital Literacy and Adolescents

RLIT 6303 Digital Literacies and the Diverse Learner

RLIT 6306 Assessment Practices in Digital Literacies

RLIT 6308 Digital Literacies and Leadership

TOTAL 12 hours

## **Course Descriptions**

### **RLIT 6301 Digital Literacies and Young Children**

This course focuses on digital literacies for linguistically and culturally diverse young children. Students research digital literacies, reflect on appropriate instructional practices and materials involving digital literacies, and explore how digital literacies can impact change in bilingual contexts.

### **RLIT 6302 Digital Literacy and Adolescents**

In this course students explore strategies to address multimodal literacy needs and practices of linguistically and culturally diverse adolescents across all academic disciplines. Metacognitive and collaborative strategies for bilingual adolescents' 21st Century success are addressed.

### **RLIT 6303 Digital Literacies and the Diverse Learner**

This course examines how linguistically and culturally diverse learners engage with digital literacies. Candidates understand: dyslexia, accessibility mandates, local-support personnel, online privacy, language, sociocultural contexts, and multimodal needs. They develop differentiated online lesson plans and interventions for diverse K-12 learners, ensuring equitable multimodal instruction and assessment.

### **RLIT 6305 Conducting Literacy Research**

Students design and implement a research study as they examine major traditions of literacy research, with a focus on contemporary research of interest to teachers and researchers in the Rio Grande Valley. Strategies in interpreting and analyzing the professional literature will also be emphasized.

### **RLIT 6306 Assessment Practices in Digital Literacies**

This course highlights reflective assessment and instruction in digital literacies. Candidates assess culturally and linguistically diverse learners using formal and informal assessments in online environments. Candidates develop leadership skills, create and teach an online course, and interact with parents and marginalized learners.

### **RLIT 6307 Sociocultural Foundations of Literacy**

Participants will explore how social, political, economic, and cultural forces shape beliefs about race, class, language, gender, and literacy. Implications for teaching, learning and educational change will be examined.

### **RLIT 6308 Digital Literacies and Leadership**

This course focuses on leadership in digital literacies and reflective practice in schools and programs serving linguistically and culturally diverse students. Students examine policy and research in organizational change, mentoring, and leading adult learners. Literacy and digital literacies program evaluation as well as parent and community involvement are highlighted.

### **RLIT 6309 Theoretical Foundations of Reading and Literacy**

This course examines major theories of reading and literacy and the influence of cognitive, sociocultural, multimodal and critical approaches to literacy on current understandings of how children and adults learn literacy in and out of school.

### **RLIT 6310 Children's and Adolescent Literature**

This course will provide a broad knowledge of quality children's and adolescent literature including theoretical perspectives and issues in the field such as transactional theory, critical literacy, multimodal experiences with literature, and issues of authenticity and representation. Participants will also engage with methods for using literature in the monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual literacy classroom.

### **RLIT 6311 Crossing Borders with Literature for Young People**

Participants will explore children's and young adult literature that crosses physical, cultural and linguistic borders. This includes multicultural and multiethnic literature, Latino literature, literature reflecting the



immigrant/transnational experience, and bilingual texts. Issues pertaining to cultural authenticity and representation, translation and language use, and global literature will also be discussed.

**RLIT 6313 Literacy Development and Language Study**

This course examines theories of oral language development in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts and the role of language as a foundation for literacy. Participants will explore phonology, morphology, orthography, syntax, and semantics. In addition, participants will explore instructional methods for teaching students how words and language works.

**RLIT 6320 Writing in the Reading Classroom**

This course examines the integration of reading and writing processes in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts. Participants will explore writing development, the interconnections between reading and writing, strategies for teaching writing in K-12 reading classrooms, and writing across the curriculum.

**RLIT 6329 Literacy Assessment and Instructional Decision-Making**

Participants will explore and critique formal and informal assessments suitable to the monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual literacy classroom. They will learn to develop or select, administer, and interpret appropriate assessments. Participants will also learn to make instructional decisions based on the results of these assessments.

**RLIT 6330 Teaching Marginalized Readers**

Participants learn cognitive, neurological, emotional, and sociocultural reasons some students face challenges with literacy, including fluency, comprehension, and motivation. Participants explore curricular structures and instructional strategies that build on student strengths to support students in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts.

Prerequisite: RLIT 6329

**RLIT 6333 Bilingualism in the Classroom**

This course explores how literacy develops in more than one language and how reading teachers support students' bilingualism and biliteracy skills in reading, writing and oral language proficiency.

**RLIT 6334 Contemporary Topics in Biliteracy**

This course examines the pedagogical practices in bilingual reading and writing classrooms that position emergent bilingual, multilingual, and transnational students' home language, knowledge, and experiences as valuable resources for literacy learning. Additionally, we will explore formal and informal policies and ideologies that privilege monolingual and monocultural practices.

**RLIT 6345 Transnational and Immigrant Literacies**

This course introduces the local and global literacy forms and practices of immigrant children, youth, and families, with special emphasis on the multilingual literacies of the U.S.-Mexico border region. Participants will study home, family, work, and community literacies of immigrant readers and writers. Participants will compare these to the literacies expected of learners in school settings, and identify curriculum, materials, and instructional strategies to help transnational and immigrant learners succeed in school.

**RLIT 6351 Adolescent Literacy and Disciplinary Learning**

Participants will examine literacy interests and needs of adolescents, including disciplinary literacy demands and the intersections of technology and literacy. This course introduces strategies to support disciplinary reading and vocabulary learning in monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual contexts.

**RLIT 6355 Reading Specialist**

Participants examine the multiple facets of the Reading Specialist, including identifying and working with marginalized readers, providing professional development and mentoring, program improvement and literacy leadership in schools and communities.

**RLIT 6357 Practicum**

Participants complete a supervised practicum at a public school in order to apply and integrate knowledge related to the Reading Specialist and/or Master Reading Teacher role.

**RLIT 7300: Thesis I**

In this course students begin work on their thesis under the supervision of a thesis committee.

**RLIT 7301: Thesis II**

In this course students continue work on their thesis under the supervision of a thesis committee.

Prerequisite: RLIT 7300

**RLIT 7100: Advanced Thesis**

Students may take this course for a continuation of thesis work. Registration requires approval from the student's academic advisor.

Prerequisites: RLIT 7300 and RLIT 7301

### Faculty Directory

Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

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## Resources and Support Services

### College of Education and P-16 Integration

- **Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability:** This office deals with Reading Specialist and Master Reading Teacher testing and certification.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/cep/educator-preparation-and-accountability/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/cep/educator-preparation-and-accountability/index.htm)
- **Facebook Page:** Our College of Education and P-16 Integration Facebook page.
  - [www.facebook.com/UTRGVCEP/](http://www.facebook.com/UTRGVCEP/)
- **Twitter Account:** @utrgvcep

### UTRGV

- **Office of Graduate Studies:** Get information about UTRGV graduate policies and apply online here.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/graduate/](http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/)
- **Graduate School Thesis Information:** Information about the thesis process.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-new-and-current-students/thesis-and-dissertation/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-new-and-current-students/thesis-and-dissertation/index.htm)
- **Graduate Catalog:** Program overviews, graduate policies, and course descriptions.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/en-us/academics/catalogs/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/academics/catalogs/index.htm)
- **Financial Aid:** Information about scholarships, grants, and loans.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/paying-for-college/financial-aid/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/paying-for-college/financial-aid/index.htm)
- **Library:** Library catalog and information; access to educational databases.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/library/](http://www.utrgv.edu/library/)
- **Campus Map:** How to get around the UTRGV campuses.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/student-resources/campus-maps/](http://www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/student-resources/campus-maps/)
- **Parking and Transportation Information:** Parking guidelines and how to get a parking permit.
  - [www.utrgv.edu/parking-and-transportation-services/parking-services/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/parking-and-transportation-services/parking-services/index.htm)

### Standards

- **Texas Reading Specialist Standards:** The state standards for Reading Specialists and the TEXES test framework
  - [http://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Educators/Preparation\\_and\\_Continuing\\_Education/Approved\\_Educator\\_Standards/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Preparation_and_Continuing_Education/Approved_Educator_Standards/)
- **ILA Standards for Reading Professionals:** The International Reading Association developed this set of standards for reading professionals.
  - <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/standards/standards-2017>
- **IRA/NCTE English Language Arts Standards:** The International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English collaborated on this set of standards for student learning in reading and language arts.
  - <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>

- **Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches:** Several professional organizations collaborated to develop these standards for reading specialists/literacy coaches in the upper grades.
  - <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/standards/standards-for-literacy-coaches>

### Professional Organizations

- **National Council of Teachers of English:** This is one of the largest organizations in the United States devoted to helping reading, writing, and literacy teachers at all levels.
  - <http://www.ncte.org/>
- **International Literacy Association:** This organization supports professional development and research related to the teaching of reading around the world.
  - <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/>
- **Learning Forward-The Professional Learning Association:** This organization focuses on professional development and mentoring.
  - <http://www.learningforward.org/index.cfm>
- **Literacy Research Association:** This organization disseminates new knowledge and research in literacy related fields.
  - <http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/>
- **Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts:** The Texas affiliate of NCTE.
  - <http://www.tctela.org/>
- **Texas Association for Literacy Education:** The Texas affiliate of ILA.
  - <http://www.texasreaders.org/>
- **Center for Applied Linguistics:** Information and tools related to language and culture.
  - <http://www.cal.org/>

### Other Resources

- **Purdue Online Writing Lab:** This website has extensive resources to support academic writing, including information on plagiarism, APA citations, and writing style.
  - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- **Master Reading Teacher TxMAT Preparation Resources:** Information and practice questions for the TxMAT.
  - [http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML\\_FRAG/TX085\\_PrepMaterials.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX085_PrepMaterials.html)
- **Reading Specialist TExES Preparation Resources:** Information and practice questions for the Reading Specialist TExES.
  - [http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML\\_FRAG/TX151\\_PrepMaterials.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX151_PrepMaterials.html)
- **Texas Education Association:** The state agency in charge of public education in Texas.
  - <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>