

Department of Language Education

Documentation for PhD Program Requirement Change & Course Name Change Request

Rationale for PhD Program Requirement Change

The Language Education department is comprised of three related but quite different programs in Literacy/Reading, English Education and Second Language Education. Currently, only two departmental courses are required as part of the doctoral major (i.e. *L600 Issues in Language Education* and *L700 Seminar in Language Education Research*). We propose to add to these two a third required course (i.e. *L601* which will be re-titled: *Theoretical Issues in the Study of Language & Literacies*.)

The rationale for this change is to highlight the shared theory and knowledge base among the program areas and to add cohesiveness to the doctoral program. Students and the department will benefit from increased opportunities for collaboration and more cohesiveness in doctoral research across the areas. This change will not add to the total doctoral course credit requirements, though it will slightly limit student choice of courses in the major area. Department faculty approved re-titling, revising, and making *L601* a required companion course to *L600*.

Rationale for Using *L601* as the third required course

The following is the course description for *L601* from the current Graduate Bulletin:

CURRENT COURSE DESCRIPTION

Reading Research for Practitioners: *A seminar devoted to interpreting theoretical positions and research data for application to curricular and instructional planning. Current research literature is explored for varying research procedures, methodologies, data reporting techniques, and interpretation of conclusions. Focus is on consumer applications.*

L601 was originally designed and approved for individuals doing graduate work in the department who intended to work as consultants to school districts and needed additional professional development. As such, they required practice in knowledgeably “consuming” education research and not in producing it. *L601* has not been offered in years, and EdS students who would have taken this course take *L700* instead.

As a department, we recognize that a one course introduction is inadequate to introducing doctoral students to research in language and literacy and to preparing them to become stewards of the field of language and literacy research. They need an understanding of the history and foundational ideas of the field, as well as the skills to assess, critique and to judge which ideas to keep and which to reject.

We propose re-titling *L601* to *Theoretical Issues in the Study of Language & Literacies*, changing the course description, and requiring our doctoral students take a two course sequence *L600-L601* to better prepare them to be effective stewards.

PROPOSED COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theoretical Issues in the Study of Language & Literacies: Explores traditional understandings of literacy, current theories of multiple literacies, and theoretical issues in research on diverse literacies. Particular attention paid to shifting theoretical perspectives and methodologies that have been employed to construct our current understandings of literacies from anthropological, sociocultural, and political perspectives.

Faculty Staffing

Literacy Education tenure-track faculty will teach *L601*. This course requires no extra staffing as it is simply a name change and course revision.

Integration with Existing Programs

L601 will be required for all PhD, available for EdS, and recommended for some advanced MS students.

Implementation Time Line

L601 is based on a course that was successfully taught as an elective *L630*. An undated pilot version of *L601* will be taught Spring 2007 as an elective for current graduate students.

Documented Program Faculty and/or Department Chair Review and Approval

A sample syllabus, course description, and plan to require *L601* were reviewed in department meetings in Spring 2006 and approved in September 2006 at the Language Education Department meeting.

Mary Beth Hines, Chair of the Language Education Department, has signed the Course Change Request, thereby approving this change.

Please contact Peter Cowan (pcowan@indiana.edu or 856-8278) if you have any questions.