Letter From the Director

My first thought was “OK, yet another literacy research panel.” My second thought, “I hope they are more expansive and inclusive than the National Reading Panel of twelve years ago.” Opening to the article and seeing portraits of the 16 new members, ranging from Gloria Ladson-Billings to Tim Shanahan, from Kris Gutierrez to Catherine Snow, from Kenji Hakuta to P. David Pearson, the panel’s chair, I felt reassured that this group could offer some critical and vital leadership to the field in this new era of Race To the Top (RTT) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). According to the article, the panel’s mission includes improving “professional development and classroom practice on the way to more equitable achievement…” and offering “constructive initiatives to change policy and practice where it matters—in districts and schools.” Reading between the lines of panel member quotes in the article, it occurs to me that an unstated agenda of the new panel is to assert the relevance of our professional organization to school literacy practices. This may seem obvious but in the new RRT and CCSS era we find ourselves in an environment where influential forces from outside of traditional educational spheres have leveraged their authority over the national educational agenda. Some believe this to be a good thing, perhaps long overdue. Others question the forces and the motivations behind the new agenda. Nevertheless, it is upon us. As classroom teachers, you now look into your student’s faces and in some way or another are left to consider: Should I trust these new standards; should I trust my state’s and school system’s interpretation of them? Or should I pursue a different path that I believe will better serve my students’ interests? There’s nothing new in that dilemma. But there is, now, both a greater sense of national mission (after all, these are our very first national standards, adopted with the belief that they will promote greater national prosperity) and the prospect for personal gain (your decisions and actions may lead to a nice bump in your salary next year).

In the Graduate Reading Education Program we strongly believe that your decisions over how to navigate the new RRT and CCSS terrain should be guided by the Literacy profession. So let your graduate education experiences and the Reading/Literacy profession serve as your GPS. You already know that our program is preparing you to be the very best classroom teacher, Reading Specialist, or Literacy Coach that you can be. Beyond our program, your professional organizations will continue to be relevant and illuminate a clear and consistent, research-based path to pursue with your students. Now, finally, to put it as clearly and directly as I can: If you are not already a member of the International Reading Association (IRA) or the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) then you should make it your first priority to join one or both of these important professional organizations.
Congratulations

Fall 2011 REED Graduates

Becky Adams
Lisa Bainer
Angela DiGiacomo
Karen Kulesz
Laura Lambert

Lauren Stefanovich
Kelley Taylor
Elizabeth Vance
Pamela Wellman
Laura Yeager

“Reading changes your life. Reading unlocks worlds unknown or forgotten, taking travelers around the world and through time. Reading helps you escape the confines of school and pursue your own education. Through characters – the saints and the sinners, real or imagined – reading shows you how to be a better human being.”
~Donalyn Miller, The Book Whisperer

Applying for Graduation

You MUST apply for graduation review, even if you do not intend to participate in the commencement ceremony. You can apply for graduation up to five months in advance through your Online Services account. To begin the process of graduation review, you will need to complete an application by July 4th for Summer 2012 (August Graduation).

Note: If you were "denied" graduation in a previous term, you must reapply for the term in which you will complete your requirements. Also, you must complete an application for each degree/program that you are completing (including certificates). For specific questions contact the Graduate School at 410-704-2501 or via email at grads@towson.edu.

Summer Registration Begins March 12
Fall Registration Begins April 4

Register for classes using Towson Online Services. To register, you must be enrolled at Towson and have a TU ID. Contact the Office of the Registrar/Registration with questions concerning registration. The office is located in the Enrollment Services Center, Room 223. The hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. You may also call 410-704-2701 or e-mail registration@towson.edu with questions.

“The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who’ll get me a book I ain’t read.”
~Abraham Lincoln
Meet Dr. Huggins

Dr. Huggins earned her elementary certification at Salisbury University, her Master's in Reading Education at Towson University, and her Doctorate in Urban Educational Leadership from Morgan University. In her 13 years of experience in Baltimore County Public Schools, she has served as a teacher in the areas of math, science, and language arts; as a reading specialist/coach in elementary and secondary schools; and as a literacy leader, grand coordinator and administrator. As an alumnus of Towson University, she was thrilled to return to teacher here full time first in the Elementary Education Department and now in the Graduate Reading Program. Her passions lie in serving her faith, her family and her profession. She has a special interest in the adolescent learner, particularly boys who struggle with literacy.

Dear GA’s...

Dear GAs, I’m about to graduate from the program. What exactly can I do with my degree? Sincerely, Stressed Job Seeker

Dear GAs, I just started the program. Can you tell me WHY I have to keep an electronic AND a hard copy of ALL my assignments??? I just DON’T understand! Sincerely, SERIOUSLY Freaked Out New Student

Dear GAs, When should I sign up for the permit list? Can you tell me more about the process of registering for the two clinics and seminar? Sincerely, Requesting Permission

Dear GAs, I’m about to graduate from the program. What exactly can I do with my degree? Sincerely, Stressed Job Seeker

Dear Seriously Freaked Out New Student, I just started the program. Can you tell me WHY I have to keep an electronic AND a hard copy of ALL my assignments??? I just DON’T understand! Sincerely, SERIOUSLY Freaked Out New Student

Dear Requesting Permission, When students begin the program, they have some flexibility to choose which courses they want to take and when. When students approach the end of the program, they are taking required courses. We established the permit list in order to accommodate students that are finishing up their final remaining required courses in the program. You can sign up for the permit list as soon as you know what semester you want to take REED 626, 726, or 729. The sooner you let us know, the better chance you will have in being allowed to register for their classes since there is a maximum number of students allowed in each section. When it is time to begin registering, we send a list of those students on the permit list to an administrative assistant who will grant permission to those students to register for their classes. A great time to inform us about when you want to be on the permit list is after you meet with your advisor and design your course of study.

Graduating from our program is also a great stepping stone for a doctorate degree.

Dear GAs, I just started the program. Can you tell me WHY I have to keep an electronic AND a hard copy of ALL my assignments??? I just DON’T understand! Sincerely, SERIOUSLY Freaked Out New Student

Dear Requesting Permission, When students begin the program, they have some flexibility to choose which courses they want to take and when. When students approach the end of the program, they are taking required courses. We established the permit list in order to accommodate students that are finishing up their final remaining required courses in the program. You can sign up for the permit list as soon as you know what semester you want to take REED 626, 726, or 729. The sooner you let us know, the better chance you will have in being allowed to register for their classes since there is a maximum number of students allowed in each section. When it is time to begin registering, we send a list of those students on the permit list to an administrative assistant who will grant permission to those students to register for their classes. A great time to inform us about when you want to be on the permit list is after you meet with your advisor and design your course of study.

Continue to contact the GAs with your questions at 410-704-5775 or at REED@towson.edu.
Certificate of Advanced Studies

A 30-unit post-master's program that helps you develop advanced knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of leading, redesigning and restructuring literacy education.

Degree Requirements
(15 units)
REED 751 – Language, Literacy, and Culture
REED 752 – Literacy Theory and Research
REED 660 – Integrating Technology in Literacy Instruction
REED 745 – Professional Development in Reading Education
EDUC 740 – Data-based Decision-Making for Curriculum and Instruction

Electives (15 units)
There is considerable flexibility in elective course selection in order to meet the needs of individual candidates. Suggested courses include the following:
REED 628 - Guided Reading
REED 632 - Word Study for Improving Literacy
REED 650 - Second Language Literacy
REED 651 - Instruction & Assessment for Second Language Learners
REED 652 - Introduction to Linguistics for Teachers of Language & Literacy
REED 670 - Adolescent Literacy
REED 710 - Multicultural Literature for Children and Adolescents
REED 712 - Critical Conversations in Early Literacy
ISTC 605 – Web-Based Instruction in Education
ISTC 663 – Applied Psychology of Learning
ISTC 667 – Instructional Development
ISTC 687 – Computer-Based Instruction
ISTC 700 – Assessment in Instructional Technology
ISTC 702 – Educational Leadership and Technology

Meet the new Reading Program Graduate Assistant

Laura Salvatore is a native of Martinsville, New Jersey. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary and Kindergarten Education at The Pennsylvania State University. Laura is a student in the Graduate Reading Program herself here at Towson University, and began in the summer of 2011. In her free time, she enjoys reading, baking, and spending time with her family and friends. Laura is thrilled to be working in the Graduate Reading Program and looks forward to continue working with everyone in the program!

“To read is to fly: it is to soar to a point of vantage which gives a view over wide terrains of history, human variety, ideas, shared experience and the fruits of many inquiries.”
~A C Grayling
Portfolio Requirements

**REED 601**: *Literacy Autobiography  
*Reading Program Evaluation  
**REED 609**: *Informal Assessment Report  
*Comparison of Test Results OR Emergent Literacy Assessment (2008)  
*Survey of School Literacy Assessments  
**REED 621**: *Disabled Reader Paper or Metacognition Paper  
*Conditions that Hinder Literacy Handouts and Reflection (2010)  
*Focused Case Study Report  
**REED 626**: *Final Case Report  
*Memo to Parents  
*Demonstration Lesson  
*Family Literacy Project (or from REED 726)  
**REED 663**: *Research-based Instructional Project  
*Text Set  
**REED 665**: *Curriculum Case Study  
*Curriculum Unit Plan  
**REED 745**: *(required for students who entered the program Fall 2008 or later)  
*Professional Development Project  
**REED 726**: *Reflection Journal  
*Parent Workshops Materials  
*Final Case Report  
**REED 729**: *Seminar Research Paper & Presentation  
*Portfolio Reflective Essay  

**ELECTIVES**:  
*Include one artifact from each of your three electives  
*Students should keep an electronic backup of all coursework, and it is required that students create both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the Portfolio. The electronic copy will be kept for our files. The hard copy of your portfolio must be presented at the Portfolio Gala held during your REED 729 course. *

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REED 626, 726, & 729 Permit List

REED 726 and 729 should be the final two required courses students take in the Graduate Reading Education program. Students who need only those two courses before graduation will be given priority when registering for those classes. In order to make sure students have completed the prerequisite courses, and to identify students who need only REED 726 and REED 729 prior to graduation, we will continue to utilize our permit lists. Also, students who are planning to take REED 626 are now required to inform the Graduate Reading Office of their intentions.

Therefore, we ask students to let the Graduate Assistants know when you plan on taking REED 626, REED 726 and REED 729. The sooner you contact the Graduate Assistants the greater your chances in gaining permission to enroll in the course.

Contact the Graduate Reading Education Program GA’s at 410-704-5775 in the Reading Program office, or via email at REED@towson.edu.

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A book is the only place in which you can examine a fragile thought without breaking it, or explore an explosive idea without fear it will go off in your face. It is one of the few havens remaining where a man’s mind can get both provocation and privacy.

~Edward P. Morgan
# Graduate Reading Education Programs
## Summer 2012 Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Session/ Dates</th>
<th>Day/ Room</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REED 601</td>
<td>Reading Theory and Practice</td>
<td>Huggins</td>
<td>5/29-8/3 plus online</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>5:00-8:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 632</td>
<td>Word Study</td>
<td>Murphy/Book</td>
<td>7/2-8/3</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>2:00-5:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 651</td>
<td>Instruction and Assessment of Second Language Learners</td>
<td>Martinez</td>
<td>7/2-8/1 (no class on 7/4)</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>5:30-8:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 651</td>
<td>Instruction and Assessment of Second Language Learners</td>
<td>Martinez</td>
<td>5/22-6/14 plus online</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>4:30-8:30 Howard Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 652</td>
<td>Linguistics for Educators</td>
<td>Snyder</td>
<td>5/30-6/27 plus online</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>5:30-8:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 660</td>
<td>Integrating Literacy and Technology</td>
<td>Stevens</td>
<td>6/19-7/12</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>4:00-8:30 Howard Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 660 (computer lab)</td>
<td>Integrating Literacy and Technology</td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>7/9-7/24 plus online</td>
<td>MTWTh</td>
<td>4:30-7:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 663</td>
<td>Strategic Use of Materials</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>5/22-6/28</td>
<td>TTh plus online</td>
<td>4:30-7:30 Howard County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 663</td>
<td>Strategic Use of Materials</td>
<td>Matos/Kolego</td>
<td>6/19-7/26 plus online</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>4:20-7:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 663</td>
<td>Strategic Use of Materials</td>
<td>Huggins</td>
<td>5/22-6/28</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>4:30-7:30 Baltimore County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 665</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Writing in the Content Areas, K-12</td>
<td>Mogge</td>
<td>6/25-8/1 (no class 7/4) plus extensive online</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>2:00-5:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 710</td>
<td>Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>Adkins</td>
<td>6/7-6/28 plus online</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>4:20-8:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REED 710/ EDUC 717</td>
<td>Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>Martens</td>
<td>June 20-22, 25-29 July 5-6, 9-10</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>9:00-12:15 PSY 1st floor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*indicates that special permission is required to enroll in the course
My dance teacher pressed into service a substitute to teach my rumba lesson. My teacher, a world-class competitive professional dancer, never tolerated my arrhythmic stumbling. She never cut me any slack. I tried to explain that I was a slow learner and needed more of an RtI approach. She would have none of it. I revealed that I had spent the first two years of my life in a half-body cast that now prevented me from moving like a normal person, especially on a dance floor. No sympathy. She just taught and expected me to learn (and I did).

Now, I was with a substitute, who when I struggled just purr, “How does this dance make you feel?” For the next hour she encouraged me to dance like I felt (not a pretty sight) with no attention to the formidable technical demands that I usually had to face. And I learned nothing!

So what to make of this sad tale of one man’s “incoordination,” and one valiant teacher’s unwillingness to make lessons easier than they needed to be? First, a more general example...

Back in the 1970s, psychologists wanted to know how children thought about stories. These “story grammar” investigations aimed to determine if kids used mental frameworks that summarized story structure. It was cool work.

Children could seemingly “remember” information that had been intentionally omitted by the researchers, and similarly, if the children were told stories out of sequence, their recalls tended to put events back into order. Memories appeared to be constructed from structural frameworks and not just rote recall.

As a result, story maps are now widely used. But here is where it gets interesting. There was an important flaw in the research.

You might think that story maps are popular because they teach challenging concepts. But you’d be wrong. Most story maps are more like the incomplete memories of young children than the content of stories. Instead of tiring to help kids to master the insights about stories that were hard, our now-simplified maps encourage them to focus on those things that don’t pose them much problem. “How does this dance make you feel?” we purr as they go on focusing on surface actions, ignoring the motivations and psychological reactions so critical to a deep appreciation of literature.

Common Core Standards

Over the past two years, the National Governor’s Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers developed a set of instructional standards. As of today, 45 states have adopted these standards that now will scaffold the literacy teaching of more than 85% of U.S. kids.

These standards are a real step forward. But there is one standard at each grade level that is keeping me up nights, the one that every reading teacher had better become knowledgeable about PDQ!

Reading educators have long argued for matching books to kids by difficulty level. We have claimed that it is essential that students work at their instructional levels. The driving force behind informal reading inventories, basal readers, leveled books, guided reading, and low readability/high-interest textbooks has been the fear of placing kids in texts that will be too hard to allow learning.

But the common core starts from a different premise: Their notion is that students will do better if required to read harder materials rather than easier ones. How can they so blithely reject what so many of us “know?”

Well, again, this is where the story gets interesting.

Studies have shown that over the past 70 years, school textbooks have grown easier. But despite this trend, each generation of teachers has been perplexed anew by kids who can’t read their textbooks, which has led to a further ratcheting down of text difficulty. One researcher even correlated these text difficulty declines to lowered performance on the SATs!

Truth be told, there is little research supporting matching kids with books, and there are even studies suggesting that teaching children from frustration level texts can lead to more learning than from instructional level ones.

InVEST IN YOUR FUTURE

as a STUDENT MEMBER

of the world’s premier literacy organization.

The International Reading Association can help you launch your career with a variety of resources and opportunities. As a member you’ll enjoy access to:

- Research that can contribute to your daily practice & professional growth
- Professional resources, including journals, books & videos, at discounted prices
- An international community of active professionals working together to improve literacy teaching & learning

JOIN NOW!

www.reading.org or 1-800-628-8508
**Reading Education Programs Graduate Assistants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Lawson</td>
<td>HH 107H</td>
<td><a href="mailto:REED@towson.edu">REED@towson.edu</a></td>
<td>410-704-5775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheri Muncy-Freeman</td>
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<td>410-704-5775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Salvatore</td>
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<td>410-704-5775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feel free to reach us by phone or email!

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**LATE BREAKING NEWS!**

There is **STILL** time to apply for the Graduate Reading Program Scholarship and the Mary Daniels Taylor Memorial Internship Scholarship. To do so, **please submit the following by February 20, 2012**.

1. A typed essay (200 words, double spaced) explaining “What influenced your desire to become a professional educator?”
2. A one-page resume.

In the e-mail, please include the semester(s) you will be completing the REED internship(s). Submit the above to coescholarships@towson.edu. Please contact Dr. Haverback with any questions at 410-704-3540 or hhaverback@towson.edu.

Also, check out these websites to learn more and apply for the Graduate Student Fellowship Award and Alumni Association Graduate Fellowship Fund.

- **Graduate Student Fellowship Award**, due **April 9, 2012**
  [http://grad.towson.edu/finance/fellowship.asp](http://grad.towson.edu/finance/fellowship.asp)

- **Alumni Association Graduate Fellowship fund**, due **May 1, 2012**
  [http://wwwnew.towson.edu/alumni/awards/graduate.asp](http://wwwnew.towson.edu/alumni/awards/graduate.asp)