

**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**

- **Dr. Martinez-Alba wins President's Diversity Award**
- **Reading Clinic**
- **Fall 2012 Schedule**
- **Books for Kids Day**

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## Letter From the Director

It is a long time until the end of the school year, so I want to share with you three inspirational items. To keep us afloat, I offer some thoughts on an event, an author who is a proponent of reading, and a colleague who extends her work beyond Towson University as she advocates for teachers.

March 7 marks World Read Aloud Day. World Read Aloud Day "creates a community of readers advocating for every child's right to a safe education and access to books and technology. By raising our voices together on this day we show the world's children that we support their future: that they have the right to read, to write, and to share their words to change the world." In 2010, 35 countries and 40,000 young people participated. In 2011, World Read Aloud Day reached 60 countries and all 50 states and 200,000 participants. This year's participants are still being tallied, but be sure to mark your calendar for this event in March 2013. In the meantime, cheer on your colleagues (and the parents of your students or clients) to do interactive reading alouds.

Spreading the word about the power of literacy is a task for all of us, including Walter Dean Myers, young adult author, who is the new Ambassador for Young People's Literature. His acceptance speech included the important point that reading is NOT optional! Mr. Myers says, "I think that what we need to do is say reading is going to really affect your life. You take a black man who doesn't have a job, but you say to him, 'Look, you can make a difference in your child's life, just by reading to him for 30 minutes a day.' That's what I would like to do." You might want to have your students check out the website that shows Mr. Myers surrounded by hundreds of books.

In our own M.Ed in Reading Education program, we also have someone who promotes literacy in expansive ways. She has received national recognition for her teaching and advocacy for teachers: Dr. Bess Altwerger recently was awarded the "Defense of Teaching" Award by the University of Arizona. If you see Dr. Altwerger, please congratulate her for this outstanding honor.

Closer to home, some stay inspired by continuing to learn

new ways of teaching. We are fortunate to be coupled with courses and colleagues in Educational Technology within our department, so that you can advance your use of technology for teaching literacy. First, if you have not already taken our own REED 660: Literacy and Technology, do it this summer. If you need more advanced courses, consider ISTC 605 Web-based Instruction. We have other very popular electives. One that is usually offered in the summer and the minimester is REED 710: Multicultural Literature for Children and Adolescents. We will again offer REED 632: Word Study, which is a great elective for folks who have never taught at the primary level. Finally, we hope that you will spread the word about our sequence of three ELL courses, REED 650, 651, and 652.

May you maintain the inspiration to be a passionate teacher of literacy,



Dr. B. P. Laster



## Congratulations Dr. Martinez-Alba!

Dr. Gilda Martinez-Alba recently received the 2012 President's Diversity Award. This award recognizes individuals and departments that have made efforts to foster greater awareness, understanding, and advancement of diversity and inclusiveness at Towson University. Congratulations!



**Dear GAs,  
I do not know who my advisor is. How can I find this out?  
Sincerely,  
Unadvised Student**

Dear Unadvised Student,  
When you log into Towson Online Services, select "Self-Service" followed by "Student Center." Your program advisor will be listed on this page, along with other important information like your current class schedule and financial information. You can also e-mail us and we can provide you with your program advisor and his/her contact information.

**Dear GAs,  
I am required to be at the Portfolio Gala. Do I REALLY need to RSVP?  
Sincerely,  
Unclear Etiquette**

Dear Unclear Etiquette,  
Even though you are required to be at the Portfolio Gala, we would still appreciate you RSVP'ing. Having an accurate number of attendees helps us plan

## Dear GAs...

enough seating and food for the event. As an added bonus, you will also have a name tag already created for you for when you arrive!

**Dear GAs,  
I'm about to graduate from the program. I will have state certification as a Reading Specialist when I complete my M.Ed. in Reading... right?  
Sincerely,  
Almost a Reading Specialist**

Dear Almost a Reading Specialist,  
Completing our program does not carry automatic state certification. If you are already a teacher, you can become endorsed as a Reading Specialist in the state of Maryland. There are three requirements in order to receive Maryland State Certification as a Reading Specialist:

1. Eligibility for teacher certification in early childhood, elementary, secondary, or special education.
2. Three years of classroom teaching experience.
3. M.Ed. in Reading from an ap-

proved program (e.g. Towson University's).

**Dear GAs,  
Personal issues have come up and I need to take a break from enrolling in graduate classes. What do I need to do?  
Sincerely,  
Life Happens**

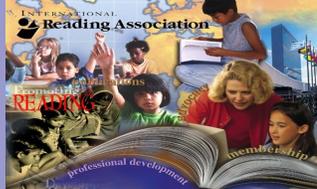
Dear Life Happens,  
If you choose to take a semester off due to personal reasons, you simply do not sign up for classes. You do not need to inform the Graduate School or the Graduate Reading Program that you will not be taking classes for the semester. When you are ready to take classes again, simply enroll in your classes on Towson Online Services. If you have not taken classes for a few semesters and are unable to enroll in classes online, you will need to contact Registration at 410-704-2701 or [registration@towson.edu](mailto:registration@towson.edu) in order to become reactivated.

Continue to contact the GAs with your questions at 410-704-5775 or at [REED@towson.edu](mailto:REED@towson.edu).

***"Every text is a lazy machine asking the reader to do some of its work."***

*~Umberto Eco*

**I** **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](http://www.reading.org) or 1-800-628-8508

# Reading Clinic

The Towson University Reading Clinic had an eventful and productive fall 2011 semester. Teachers in the four Clinic Internship courses provided one-on-one diagnostic reading assessment and instruction to forty students in grades one through eight who were enrolled in the Clinic. On Tuesday and Thursday evenings throughout the semester, Hawkins Hall was teeming with children, parents, and teachers having fun with reading. The students engaged in a variety of reading experiences and activities designed to increase both their reading proficiency and their love of reading.



Each evening the advanced clinic teachers also conducted workshops to help the parents learn strategies and activities so they can continue to support their child's literacy growth at home. Following a brief presentation of current research on reading topics which they helped select, the parents participated in hands-on activities related to each topic. The parents also had the opportunity to spend one Clinic session in the behind-the-glass observation room watching their children work with the teachers. Back by popular demand and just in time for holiday shopping we had a game night where the parents played commercially produced reading related games. At the end of the semester, the families joined the clinic teachers for a family night reading celebration to recognize the achievements of the students, parents, and teachers.

The clinic continued its outreach to the Cherry Hill Community of Baltimore City by supporting nine children and their parents from Arundel E/M School who participated in the clinic in the fall. The Arundel families travel together to the clinic each week on a Towson University shuttle bus accompanied by a teacher liaison from the school. The teacher, Michelle Vaughn, a graduate of our program, is a great advocate of the Reading Clinic who works tirelessly with the families to ensure that they have a good Clinic experience.

*Dr. Elizabeth Dicembre - Reading Clinic Director*



## 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](mailto:REED@towson.edu).

*Do you know someone who already has a Master's Degree?*

*Suggest a CAS in Reading Education!*

## 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 Conversa-

tions 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

**The CAS program has only a few requirements and many choices.**

**Contact Dr. Laster or Dr. Mogge to discuss available options.**

## 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](mailto:registration@towson.edu) with questions.



*“When you sell a man a book you don't sell him just 12 ounces of paper and ink and glue - you sell him a whole new life.”*  
 ~Christopher Morley

## What Children Living in Poverty *Do* Bring to School: Strong Oral Skills Let Them Talk!

Children from economically disadvantaged homes have far fewer words in their oral language repertoire than their counterparts from middle class homes (Hart & Risley, 1995). Research has also determined that children with a limited oral vocabulary struggled in school, particularly in learning to read and write, and that this effect is cumulative (Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1997). The assumption remains that a large and flexible oral vocabulary supports student achievement. Within the last decade there have been many books and studies presented on teaching academic vocabulary to all students from elementary through high school (Nagy & Townsend, 2012; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2011; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Hiebert & Lubliner, 2008). If there is one instructional strategy that teachers can implement to support the academic success of children, especially those in low socioeconomic communities, it is to let them talk (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998).

All too often the picture of students from low socioeconomic communities is that of children who are "without." They may be without a stable family constellation. They are characterized as being without the linguistic resources to communicate in school settings, to read school texts, and to write the genres valued by educators. They may be without the organizational and social behaviors that support school success. However, this is not a complete portrait of these children.

When seen from a strength-based perspective, these children are competent communicators in their families and in their communities where language is a medium to form social connections and to communicate needs, wants, and hopes. They may have mastered an oral

and/or written language that is different from English. They may have mastered an oral dialect. They know which language or dialect to use with different members of their families and communities to accomplish goals. Nevertheless, they may not exhibit these language competencies in the classroom if they perceive that their skills are not relevant or valued in this setting.

Classroom teachers, reading specialist teachers, and literacy coaches can establish classroom and school cultures in which all students feel that their home language is respected and appreciated. Centrally, all language is used for particular purposes (Snow & Uccelli, 2009). Educators can communicate the notion that school language is not better than the language children bring from home; rather, the language of school allows for communication of ideas that are complex and disciplinary in nature through specialized syntax and vocabulary (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). By incorporating many and varied opportunities for students to expand their oral language through class discussions in all curricular areas, through shared reading and writing, and through literature circles, for example, students can learn multiple ways to express their ideas and to learn academic language (Nagy & Townsend, 2012).

Teachers can model and encourage students at every level to use synonyms, add detail, and expand the imagery in their oral and written work. Teachers can also explore with their students the various sentence structures that convey the same meaning and then decide which is most appropriate for their current purpose. Thus, teachers are supporting all students' growth in using academic language that is composed of a specialized syntax as well as vocabulary (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). Using rich discussions will expand all students' vocabulary and will scaffold their reading and writing skills (Farstrup & Samuels, 2008). However, there will be purposes for reading and writing in which the use of a home language or dialect will add beauty and richness to the prose. In fact, the mark of a skilled academic What Children Living in Poverty Do Bring to School: Strong Oral Skills Let Them Talk! by Pamela A. Mason and Emily Phillips Galloway 30 Reading Today February/March 2012

[www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org) writer is the ability seamlessly utilize both formal and informal language as tool for communication.

Central to developing classroom contexts where rich oral language development occurs, is the establishment of a norm that promotes listening. Much has been made of teacher modeling in the literacy literature, followed by guided practice, and independent work. Understandably, teachers have taken this to mean that they must model and think aloud constantly. However, at times less is more, and teachers must also model what good listening looks like. This approach requires that students be explicitly taught to ask for clarifications, to respond to peers, and to benefit from the guided practice all as a means for establishing their agency and self-confidence as learners. Additionally, by listening to students summarize what they learned about a subject, respond to a piece of literature, or explain a process, teachers can informally assess their oral academic language. Using this data, teachers will be equipped to provide literacy activities, which rehearse or expand the academic language repertoire of their students. As professional learning communities or communities of practice, teachers can support each other's efforts to be thoughtful listeners in their classrooms.

Classroom teachers, Reading Specialist teachers, and Literacy Coaches can create academic environments that privilege the flexible and rich use of oral language regardless of the instructional curriculum being used. This is not an "add on," but it is an essential component of every effective lesson (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). Rich discussions will engage students in their learning, provide them with opportunities to try out ideas and to receive feedback from their peers and teachers, and expand their existing oral language skills to include those used in academic contexts.

~Written by Pamela A. Mason and Emily Phillips Galloway

This article was featured in the February/March 2012 issue of "Reading Today"



# Graduate Reading Education Programs

## Fall 2012 Class Schedule

Course #	Course Name	Instructor	Day/Room	Time
REED 601	Reading Theory & Practice	Mogge	T but mostly online	4:30-7:00 Baltimore "E"
REED 601	Reading Theory & Practice	Altwerger	T	4:20-6:50
REED 609	Reading Assessment	Beatty	T	Harford "A"
REED 609	Reading Assessment	Altwerger	W	4:20-6:50
REED 621	Reading Disabilities	Laster	T	4:20-6:50
REED 621	Reading Disabilities	Dolan	T	Baltimore "D"
REED 621	Reading Disabilities	Martinez-Alba	W	Howard "C"
REED 626*	Internship	Huggins	Th	4:20-6:50
REED 626*	Internship	Martinez-Alba	T	4:20-6:50 Baltimore "C"
REED 628	Guided Reading	Beatty	Th	7:00-9:20
REED 663	Strategic Use of Materials	Pitcher	Online	SMHEC
REED 663	Strategic Use of Materials	Huggins	W	4:20-6:50
REED 665	Reading & Writing in the Content Areas	Mogge	M + Online	7:00-9:20
REED 670	The Common Core State Standards: Policy, Politics, & Pedagogy	Altwerger	M	7:00-9:20
REED 670	Adolescent Literacy	Pitcher	Th	4:20-6:50
REED 726*	Advanced Internship	Dicembre	T	4:20-6:50
REED 726*	Advanced Internship	Dicembre	Th	4:20-6:50
REED 729*	Seminar in Reading	Laster	M	4:20-6:50
REED 729*	Seminar in Reading	Laster	M	7:00-9:40
REED 745	Professional Development in Reading	Dicembre	W	4:20-6:50
REED 745	Professional Development in Reading	Pitcher	W	4:20-6:50
REED 745	Professional Development in Reading	Beatty	W	Howard "B"

# 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

Handout

- \*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. \****

*“Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him.”*

*~Maya Angelou*



## 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) and **August 20th** for **Fall 2012** (January 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](mailto:grads@towson.edu).

## READING EDUCATION FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Bess Altwerger	HH404C	baltwerger@towson.edu	410-704-3188
Dr. Sharon Brown	SMHEC	sbrown@towson.edu	301-737-2500
Dr. Elizabeth Dicembre	HH102B	edicembre@towson.edu	410-704-4492
Dr. Shelly Huggins	HH102M	shuggins@towson.edu	410-704-2009
Dr. Barbara Laster	HH107H	blaster@towson.edu	410-704-2556
Dr. Gilda Martinez-Alba	HH107N	gmartinez@towson.edu	410-404-2480
Dr. Stephen Mogge	HH102P	smogge@towson.edu	410-704-5771
Dr. Sharon Pitcher	HH120B	spitcher@towson.edu	410-704-2895
Prof. Alyssa Zumpano	SMHEC	azumpano@towson.edu	301-737-2500

### Reading Education Programs Graduate Assistants

James Lawson	HH 107H	REED@towson.edu	410-704-5775
Sheri Muncy-Freeman	HH 107H	REED@towson.edu	410-704-5775
Laura Salvatore	HH 107H	REED@towson.edu	410-704-5775

*Feel free to reach us by phone or email!*

## Books for Kids Day Is Here!

It's hard to believe, but children in lower income homes have an average of 0-2 books in the home. They begin the third grade so far behind that it's almost impossible for them to catch up to the children from middle and upper income homes. One of the main reasons for this staggering statistic is that parents of lower income homes read to their children 70% less than those in middle income homes. But then again, how can a person even begin to think about buying a book, when it is a constant struggle just to put food on the table or pay the rent?

The new and gently-used children's books you donate will be distributed by the Baltimore Reads Book Bank to children who have no books of their own. Since its inception, the Baltimore Reads Book Bank has collected and distributed more than 1,400,000 books to teachers, schools, children and families in our community. The success of their efforts is due largely to the generous support of organizations and people like you!

### Goal:

- Collect 75,000 new and gently used books for schools, families and children who need books of their own.

### When & Where:

- Saturday, May 5th, 2012
- 9:00am-2:00pm, rain or shine!
- The parking lot of Poly Western High Schools on Falls Road at Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore.
- Exit 9 off I-83 (Jones Falls Expressway)

### How you can help:

- Donate your favorite new or gently used books on Books For Kids Day.
- Organize a book drive at your business, school, community center etc.
- Volunteer for book sorting.
- Send a donation to support family learning.

### For more information:

- Visit [www.booksforkidsday.org](http://www.booksforkidsday.org) & [www.baltimorereads.org](http://www.baltimorereads.org)
- Contact Mark Feiring at 410-752-3595 ext 1118 or [BookBank@baltimorereads.org](mailto:BookBank@baltimorereads.org)

