MEMO

To: College of Education Curriculum Committee
From: Bruce Murray, Ph.D.
Coordinator of Reading Education, Dept. of Curriculum and Teaching
Re: Request for course addition of CTRD 1000, Critical Reading
Date: January 21, 2009

Background information
CTSE 1030, Developmental Studies: English Language Arts, was originally designed in the 1980s as a remedial course. Dr. Terry Ley developed the course to meet the needs of student athletes with marginal reading skills, and given his great skill, Dr. Ley was able to make academic headway with some very talented athletes who went on to illustrious professional careers.

At the request of the Athletic Department and with their support, we revised the course CTSE 1030 and offered two sections of that course during Summer Semester 2008. Enrollment was 21, with 13 students in one section and 8 in the other. Students attending CTSE 1030 were moderately successful in meeting the goals of the course. For example, on a pretest vocabulary usage measure, students' average scores were markedly below scores from a control group of Elementary Education majors. At posttest, students' scores were on par with the Elementary Education majors' scores.

Remedial courses are not eligible for academic credit at Auburn. Without academic credit, the motivation for students to succeed with the course has been low, and the motivation of coaches and academic advisors in the Athletic Department to enroll student athletes in the course, given NCAA requirements, is waning. Unless student athletes are earning sufficient credit hours to make significant progress toward graduation, they may lose NCAA eligibility. As a result, when we offered CTSE 1030 again in Fall 2008, no students enrolled.

A distinction between remedial and bridging courses
At other institutions, remedial courses do not receive academic credit, but students must achieve benchmark scores on exit exams to be eligible for regular English composition and literature courses. This "gate-keeping" function of remedial courses does not exist at Auburn University; students admitted to AU can freely enroll in English courses. As a result, the motivation inherent in working toward admittance through the "gate" is absent here. In lieu of an entrance requirement, students tend to work more faithfully at assignments and make greater achievement with the motivation of earning grades and course credit.

I investigated related course offerings at Southern Union Community College. Southern Union lists two reading courses in their catalog: RDG 085, Developmental
This course is designed to assist students whose placement test scores indicate difficulty with decoding skills, comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Students must make an “S” grade to exit the course or the will be required to repeat the course. This is a lab and/or Web-based course.

You will be required to purchase a computer code to complete the course. The code can be purchased from the bookstore or online at the MyReadingLab website (http://myreadinglab.com). You must have a code by the second class.

1. Vocabulary
2. Main Idea
3. Patterns and Organization
4. Purpose and Tone
5. Critical Thinking
6. Reading Textbooks
7. Graphics and Visuals
8. Reading Rate
9. Memorization and Concentration
10. Note Taking and Highlighting
11. Test Taking

Required readings

Students will be able to work on the course material at their own pace. It is possible to finish the course before the end of the semester.

**Practice in each topic (20%)**: There will be a practice section in each topic of the course. You must make a minimum grade of 70% on the practice to complete the topic.

**Test in each topic (20%)**: There will be a test in each topic of the course. You must have a minimum grade of 70% on the test to complete the topic.
Skills Tests (60%): There will be four major tests in the course. The tests will be taken after completing the following topics:

- Test 1 - Vocabulary, Main Idea, Patterns and Organization, and Purpose and Tone
- Test 2 - Critical Thinking, Reading Textbooks, Graphics and Visuals, and Reading Rate
- Test 3 - Memorization and Concentration, Note Taking and Highlighting, and Test Taking
- Test 4 - Required readings – Reading Level

The tests will not be taken on the computer. You will need a green scantron for each test. You will be able to take each test twice. The higher grade will be recorded in the grade book. Suggested dates for completing the tests in order to finish the course in one semester are:

- Test 1 - January 23, 2009
- Test 2 - February 20, 2009
- Test 3 - March 27, 2009
- Test 4 - April 24, 2009

Grades will be given based upon S = 70 – 100%, U = below 70% and IP. You will receive an IP if you do not finish the course in one semester provided you have completed through Test 2 in the course material. If you are on financial aid, a grade of IP may affect your benefits. You will need to check with the Financial Aid office for details.

Students are expected to attend each class session and arrive on time. Students should bring paper and a writing utensil to every class. Students will be able to access the course from any Internet capable computer. This Internet access should be in addition to coming to class. Students that do not attend class regularly miss the benefit of the instructor’s assistance.

For various reasons, you may find it necessary to withdraw from this course. If you wish to receive a “W” for the course, you should complete the appropriate paperwork in the registrar’s office on or before April 6, 2009.

The College and the Alabama State Board of Education are committed to providing both employment and educational environments free of harassment or discrimination related to an individual’s race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability. Such harassment is a violation of State Board of Education policy. Any practice or behavior that constitutes harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 state that qualified students with disabilities who meet the essential functions and academic requirements are entitled to reasonable accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to provide appropriate disability documentation to the College.

All forms of dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, and furnishing false information to the college could result in disciplinary action.
Reading II, and RDG 114, Critical Reading for College. I contacted Lydia Brawner, the instructor for these courses. Mrs. Brawner sent me the syllabus for RDG 085 (see attachment). She stated in her e-mail, "RDG 085 is the only one we offer, and placement is based on a score of 75 or lower on the COMPASS test. Frankly, it's not a very good course. We've tried lots of different approaches—classroom only, classroom and lab combo, and just lab-based—and right now we use a program called MyReadingLab. It doesn't adequately address the real weaknesses of most of our students." Mrs. Brawner said that Southern Union does not currently offer RDG 114, and she is not sure if it has ever been taught. Thus, CTRD 1000, Critical Reading, would not duplicate efforts at Southern Union, nor would it use the prevailing model of students working independently under computer-assisted instruction.

CTRD 1000, Critical Reading: A collegiate-level reading course
Our projected course CTRD 1000, Critical Reading, is not aimed at remediation. We plan rigorous, collegiate-level instruction and reading to equip students with cognitive tools for reading expository text. These tools include versatile and challenging vocabulary and comprehension strategies for recognizing main ideas and supporting details. Recognizing the arrangement of text ideas allows readers to read critically to assess authors' arguments. Our aim is not to provide a remedy for deficient skills, but to empower students to read strategically and critically at collegiate levels, bridging the gap between high school and college reading.

CTRD 1000, Critical Reading, would be credit-earning course, without the stigma of remediation and thus able to motivate the sustained effort required for bridging the gap between high school and college. By analogy to MATH 1000, ordinary achievement in vocabulary and comprehension strategies is not a deficiency, but some underclassmen need an intermediate course to consolidate knowledge needed for higher-level coursework. CTRD 1000 supplies that intermediate course for beginning university students making the transition to much higher levels of reading and writing.

Efforts have been made to quantify the chasm between the demands of high school and collegiate reading. An SAT verbal score of 450, considered minimal for collegiate reading success, corresponds to a Nelson-Denny grade equivalent of 14.4 (Whimbey, 1987). More successful college readers probably need to be reading at about a 15th-grade reading level. This represents a 3-year leap above the 12th grade reading levels expected in high school. A study of 51 college social science texts found a mean readability level of grade 15.5 (Townsend & Wilkie, 1983).

Given that readers have to step up roughly three grade levels in readability from high school to college texts, it is not accurate to say that students who have difficulty making this transition have a deficiency or need remediation. Rather, they would benefit from a bridging course assisting this steep transition in reading challenge.
Because this course is based on a solid foundation of experimental research in teaching reading comprehension strategies and in rich, extended instruction for vocabulary ownership, we are confident that CTRD 1000 will provide a bridging opportunity for students making a transition from high school reading into college reading. This is in keeping with the Retention Initiative for disadvantaged student groups. While our initial clientele is likely to consist of student athletes, given the early sponsorship in course development from the Athletic Department, we expect the course to eventually provide opportunities for a wide range of Auburn University students, just as MATH 1000 currently supports these students' transition into collegiate mathematics.

We plan to differentiate CTRD 1000 from a developmental reading course in one other way. As a culminating activity in the course, students will apply their growing reading strengths in a guided reading of a classic novella, H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine*. This gripping book, written in 1895, offers strenuous vocabulary challenge, gripping adventure, and a timeless moral perspective on a future of ecological and human peril. It will be the first step for many readers into a book-length journey in collegiate reading.

Here is the catalog description we propose: Strategies for reading expository text, with emphasis on vocabulary learning and text structures, toward goal of critical evaluation of evidence for authors' main-idea claims.

In CTRD 1000, Critical Reading, students will gain familiarity with versatile and challenging vocabulary authors use to express high-level concepts. At the same time, they will examine how authors structure texts to reveal these concepts through explicit and implicit main-idea statements supported by evidential details signaled by structure cues. All strategies will be practiced with modeled, guided, and independent readings of passages from collegiate-level text. As students come to recognize authors' arguments as composed of main ideas supported by evidence, they will learn to evaluate whether the evidence adequately supports authors' claims, enabling critical reading.
RAD 284. MR PHYSICAL PRINCIPLES. 5 hrs.
PREREQUISITE: RAD 250, RAD 251.
This course provides knowledge of magnetic resonance physical principles of image formation. Emphasis is on instrumentation, fundamentals, artifacts, and quality control to include sequence parameters and options. Upon completion, students will demonstrate a knowledge of basic MRI physics.

RAD 285. MAGNETIC RESONANCE CLINICAL EDUCATION. 4 hrs.
PREREQUISITE: RAD 250, RAD 251, RAD 284.
This course provides the essential clinical experiences for magnetic resonance imaging. Emphasis is on the development of skills and competencies of MRI imaging procedures, data acquisition, and image processing. Upon completion, students will be able to demonstrate practical application of MRI imaging procedures.

READING (RDG)

RDG 085. DEVELOPMENTAL READING II. 4 (1) hrs.
This course is designed to assist students whose placement test scores indicate serious difficulty with decoding skills, comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Students must make an "S" grade to exit the course or they will be required to repeat the course. This is a lab and/or Web-based course.

RDG 114. CRITICAL READING FOR COLLEGE. 1-4 hrs.
This course is designed to enhance critical reading skills. Topics include voluntary enrichment, reading flexibility, metacognitive strategies, and advanced comprehension skills, including analysis and evaluation. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate comprehension and analysis and respond effectively to material across disciplines.

REAL ESTATE (RLS)

RLS 101. REAL ESTATE PRINCIPLES. 4 hrs.
PREREQUISITE: Program approval.
This course presents the basic principles of real estate practice as viewed by real estate brokers and salesmen, with emphasis on such subjects as brokerage, evaluation, property management, real estate law, public control, finance, etc. The course fulfills the study requirements to prepare the student for the salesman’s examination given by the Alabama Real Estate Commission.

RLS 102. REAL ESTATE PRACTICES. 2 hrs.
PREREQUISITE: RLS 101 and program approval.
This 30 hour post-license course is required for Alabama real estate salespersons whose licenses were originally issued after October 1, 1993. Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the licensee will have met the post-license educational requirements to obtain a permanent Real Estate Salesperson’s License. This course has also been approved for 12 hours of continuing education credit by the Alabama Real Estate Commission.

SOCIOLOGY (SOC)

*SOC 200. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY. 3 hrs.
This course is an introduction to the vocabulary, concepts, and theory of sociological perspectives of human behavior.

SPANISH (SPA)

*SPA 101. INTRODUCTORY SPANISH I. 4 hrs.
PREREQUISITE: As required by program.
This course provides an introduction to Spanish. Topics include the development of basic communication skills and the acquisition of basic knowledge of the cultures of Spanish-speaking areas.