# Course Syllabus

# Fall 2012

**Course**: Teaching English Language Arts II (CTSE 4160)

**Instructor**: Brandon Sams, Assistant Professor of English Education

**Prerequsites:** Admission to Teacher Education, CTRD 5030 and CTRD 5710

**Office**: 5052 Haley Center

**Office Phone**: 844-8286

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[brandon.l.sams@gmail.com](mailto:Brandon.l.sams@gmail.com) (alternate)

Email is the best way to contact me. I will do my best to respond within 6 hours; and, at most, 24 hours.

**Office hours**: **Mon & Wed: 10-11am.** Other hours by appointment.

**Virtual office:** Via Skype, by appointment.

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**Texts:**

Burke, J. (2008). *The English teacher’s companion: A complete guide to classroom,*

*curriculum, and the profession, 3rd Edition*.Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (Required)

Blau, S. D. (2003). *The literature workshop: Teaching texts and their readers*.

Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (Optional)

Additional articles available on Canvas (see course schedule for authors and titles)

**Course Goals:**

The following are formal statements based on standards of the Alabama Code for Teacher Education about what you should be better able to do—during internship and beyond—as a result of your participation in our course.

**Prospective teachers will be able to**:

1. Establish a positive learning climate for students so that they become valued and contributing members of an effective classroom community.
2. Create an environment in which individual experiences with and responses to texts are respected and where students are encouraged to view texts from a variety of perspectives.
3. Select a variety of texts (materials and resources)—print and nonprint; literary and nonliterary; textbooks and trade texts; technological—which are appropriate for students from diverse backgrounds and with different skill levels and which are fitting to educational goals developed from standards set by local, state, national and professional agencies.
4. Use the *Alabama Course of Study: ELA* and the Alabama Graduation Examination objectives for Reading and Language as resources for planning curriculum for ELA classes 6-12.
5. Plan appropriately for whole-class and small-group reading of (and/or viewing of, listening to) teacher-selected texts, including setting goals and determining time necessary; determining resources and instruction needed (including appropriate use of technology); deciding on appropriate student activities; and determining appropriate assessment and evaluation.
6. Plan appropriately for individualized, self-paced, and self-selected reading.
7. Use a variety of strategies such as cooperative learning, discussion, discovery, problem-based learning, and direct instruction in your teaching of the English language arts.
8. Vary your teaching roles such as instructor, facilitator, coach, listener, and evaluator.
9. Alter your teaching plans appropriately based on student responses, teacher observation, and formal and informal assessment.
10. Use a variety of informal and formal means of assessment and evaluation.

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# Expectations & Policies:

I expect students to attend all scheduled class meetings, arrive on time and not leave early, come prepared, and contribute by participating in discussions and activities.

**Absences**. The university considers certain absences to be “excused,” and I abide by university guidelines. For what constitutes excused absences, see the latest edition of the Student Policy eHandbook; the URL is [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies).

If you have to be absent, please follow procedures teachers do. That is, just as teachers make arrangements ahead of time for a known absence, so, too, you must make arrangements ahead of time for a known absence. Just as teachers must notify their schools as soon as possible for an emergency absence such as illness, so, too, you must notify me as soon as possible for an emergency absence such as illness. Send me an email or phone my office.

To discuss an absence, see me during office hours, or check with me by email. (See below, “Make-up work.”)

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| A single absence will not alarm me; repeated absences will, especially for students who are so near to internship. Being present—and involved—are the signs of maturity and professionalism. |

**Tardies**. Make every effort to be on time for class in Haley. Coming in late, no matter how quiet you try to be, will be a disruption. Again, a single tardy will not set off alarm bells; a pattern of tardies will.

**Absences from fieldwork at OHS/OMS**. You must make every effort to be present, and on time, in your assigned classroom on fieldwork days. If you are ill, however, you must contact one of your teammates so he/she can let the teacher know, plus you must contact me. You are also responsible for 1) getting a teammate to substitute for you (if you are responsible for teaching) and 2) making up the missed field day *on your own time*.

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| **NOTE**. Being tardy to AJH on a fieldwork day is not professional behavior and will not be tolerated. |

**Make-up work**. If you are absent, you are still responsible for turning in work that’s due and for finding out about material presented and assignments made. As per the Student eHandbook, you are the one responsible for initiating and turning in make-up work for an excused absence. To help you in this regard, prompts for quick writes, quizzes, and other such in-class activities will be posted after class.

**Note**: Full credit will not be given for work missed due to an unexcused absence.

**Late work**. I do not give full credit for work turned in late. Work is late if it’s not ready at the start of class on the specified due date.

**University rules**. I abide by all university rules, including those concerning academic honesty and harassment/discrimination.

**Accommodations**. Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096.

# Contingency statement

If there is an emergency and I am to be absent from class, I will make every effort to send you an email message ahead of time (or have one sent to you by a departmental assistant).

If the university closes for emergency or crisis situation, I may have to modify the syllabus, the course plans, and other assignments. If this happens, I will replace the original syllabus with one having an addendum. I’ll do the same to assignments already published.

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**Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

1. **Daybook: 20%**

Your daybook will be a central component of class and your field experience. Think of your daybook as a “thinking book” where you collect bits and pieces of your thinking (about reading, teaching, your field setting, yourself in relation to these). We will use writing to learn in this class, and the daybook is the main place where you will store your writing. A daybook serves many purposes, many of which are determined by you, the keeper. We will be intentional about using the daybook in class, meaning we will frequently write in class in the daybook as a way to gather our thoughts about or reflect on a reading, a discussion, a field experience. Whereas a portfolio is akin to the final product of thinking (a nicely arranged, vacuumed, decorated living room, for example), a daybook is more like a messy closet – even so, if kept well, the daybook is indespenseable to good thinking and good teaching. There are many ways to organize a daybook. We will discuss this in class. We will also discuss assessing the daybook.

2. **Fieldwork Experience: 20%**

Opelika Middle School and Opelika High School will be the two host schools for our methods class. You will begin your school visits in mid-September, two days per week (W&F) and continue this pattern until early November. During your school visits, you are expected to comport yourself professionally – which means *being* *on time, dressing appropriately, coming prepared to observe and/or participate as a teacher; being in dialogue with your teacher about your role*.These aspects of professionalism will constitute your field experience grade. We will discuss this in much richer detail as the time for field experience approaches. Keep in mind that when you are out in the schools, you are representing Auburn University, this department, and me. You are also opening or closing possibilities for this department to partner with host schools in future years. Your professionalism really, really matters. Your daybook will be the place where you reflect on what you see and what you plan to do (and do) in the classroom.

3. **Portfolio: 20%**

The portfolio will be a collection of items that represent your best thinking, your best (or not so good) doing, and your reflections on what you’ve learned in class and in the field. The specific items that constitute the portfolio will evolve as our work over the term takes shape; generally, these items will include copied pages from your daybook that represent your best thinking (about the readings, in response to quick writes done in class, in response to your fieldwork setting); selected reflective letters; selected lesson plans that emerge out of your work in the classroom; and a practice PWS (professional work sample, required by the State of Alabama during your internship). **Ideally,** we will collect portfolio items gradually throughout the semester so you are not rushing to finish at the end.

4. **Class Participation:** **10%**

Class participation is very important for your learning, the learning of your peers, and mine. You show your participation in class in the following ways: being on time; bringing necessary books and readings to class; bringing your daybook always; participating in instructional activities designed by me and your peers; asking questions and contributing to class discussions; participating on Canvas when prompted to by me or your peers. Excessive absences and tardies will lower your class participation score.

5. **Reflective Letters:** **10%**

Every two weeks (see course schedule), you will send me a reflective letter about what you are learning. Questions you can consider when writing the letter include: What am I starting to re-think about teaching, reading, or literature? What am I excited about? What is troubling me? Given what I am learning, what questions now seem most important? You should incorporate lines of thought from your daybook, from course readings, from class discussions, or from field experience. Send these letters to me in an MS word file via email. Each letter needs to be at least 500 words. Letters are due to me by 11:59pm on the due date. *If your email is not working or your computer malfunctions, give yourself enough time to drop off a hardcopy to my office bin (on the door).*

6. **Discussion/Teaching Leaders: 10%**

In groups of two or three, you will sign up for serving as the discussion/teaching leaders for one of the topics on the syllabus (for example, “Teaching Poetry” or “Gender and Reading”). On this class day, you and your partner(s) will design a 20-30 minute mini-lesson on the assigned reading for the day. The only requirement is that you find a way to incorporate the daybook into your mini-lesson. For example, one way I will frequently incorporate the daybook is by *writing into the day*. This is a way for you to respond to one or two posed questions raised by the reading, to gather your thoughts in writing, before discussing in small groups or whole class. You may choose to do something similar in your mini-lesson design. I would encourage you to experiment in your mini-lessons with other *registers* *of meaning* than analytical (explanation) – try getting your audience to move around, collaborate, use their bodies, use poetry, drawing, acting, etc. You may also bring in other “texts” (such as videos, poems, images) that help us understand a key concept from the reading. As I mentioned in class, you may take a cue from Burke himself and try out an activity that he recommends to help us, as a class, better understand a concept. *After your lesson, I will ask you, individually, to send me an email in which you reflect on your lesson and how it went (more specific questions to come).*

7. **Poem of the Day: 5%**

On most of the days that we are meeting in Haley, one or two students will bring a “poem of the day” to share with the class. I use *poem* somewhat loosely to mean any art object that can provoke an aesthetic experience, such as a poem, a piece of music, a piece of art, an image, a piece of pottery. Novel and short stories – while aesthetic objects – are too long to be experienced in a brief moment. The poem you select and bring can be a favorite, one that you don’t understand, one that facsinates you, or one that you would like to teach. If you bring a poem or an image, please bring copies appropriately sized for the class so that we can paste them into our daybooks (more on this in class). See the handout so that you can sign up for a day to share your *poem.*

8. **Gathering Resources: 5%**

In groups of two or three, you will sign up to gather and present an additional resource, typically an academic article, regarding the day’s topic (“Teaching the Novel” or “Race, Language, and Culture” for example). You should choose this resource from the professional journals in the field of English Language Arts Education. These resources, primarily, are the following: *English Journal*, *English Leadership Quarterly,* and *Voices from the Middle*. Choose a resource that has been published within the last seven years (2005-2012). For your in-class presentation of the resource, please prepare a handout that includes

* A brief summary of the article (including the key questions the author pursued and the relevant findings and practices the author recommends).
* A section that addresses “what we should do now” as recommended in or inferred from the resource. What two or three things do we, as English teachers, need to consider/do when working with students, designing curricula, etc…
* An “I’m still wondering about” section – what question(s) does this resource raise for you? What does it leave unanswered?

Prepare a handout small enough so that we can paste it into our daybook. So, concentrate on concision and clarity.

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**Course Schedule**

(subject to adjustment as needed)

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Readings Due** | **Assignments Due** |
| 8/17 (F) | Introduction  Syllabus | None | \*Buy Daybook for Monday |
| 8/20 (M) | The Things We Carry | None | Stories of Experience (One of reading, One of Teaching) \*\* compose in Daybook |
| 8/22 (W) | Curriculum Struggle | Labaree “Public Goods, Private Goods” (40 pgs) | None |
| 8/24 (F) | The Future of English Ed | Yagelski, “Stasis and Change” (10 pgs)  Burke, Introduction, p. xiii-xxiii (10 pgs) | None |
| 8/27 (M) | What is learning? What is reading? | Blau, “Stories from the Classroom.” (12 pgs)  Burke, Ch. 2, p. 3-24  \*\*optional, Burke, Ch. 1, p. 1-2 | \*\*Poem of the Day (Megan Waldrop)  \*\* **reflective letter 1** |
| 8/29 (W) | Reading in School; **Teaching Poetry** | Burke, Ch. 4, p. 32-45, 79-90, figures 4.19-4.21 | \* POD (Kristina Passi)  \*Discussion/Teaching Leaders (Katie Copper-Cody Brakeman)  \* Resource (Bart Hartsoe- Megan Waldrop) |
| 8/31 (F) | Gender and Reading | Burke, Ch. 17, p. 388-399  \*\*Silin, “Reading, Writing, and the Wrath of My Father.” (9 pages) | \* POD (Hilary Collins, Alexandra Davis)  \*D/T leaders (Caitlin Howell - Lindsey Wilkins)  \* Resource (Ashley Loyd-Ally Nelson) |
| 9/3 (M) | Labor Day | No Class | ----- |
| 9/5 (W) | Difference: Race, Culture, Reading | Burke, p. 400-408  \*\* Selections from *Dreamkeepers* by Gloria Ladson-Billings | \* POD(Nicole Mitchell, Katie Grizzard)  \*D/T leaders (Frances Barber-Holli Renfroe)  \* Resource (Lindsey Wilkins-Leslie Carpenter) |
| 9/7 (F) | Teaching the Novel | Burke, Ch. 4, pgs. 49-74 | \* POD (Ashley Loyd, Barak Ingram)  \*D/T leaders (Katie Grizzard-Hilary Colins-Allie Davis)  \* Resource (Katie Grizzard-Hilary Collins-Cody Brakeman) |
| 9/10 (M) | Teaching Drama | Burke, Ch. 4, pgs. 74-79  \*\* Reading TBA | \* POD (Ally Nelson, Tara Johnson)  \*D/T leaders (Ally Nelson-Ashley Loyd)  \* Resource (Holli Renfroe-Frances Barber)  \*\* **reflective letter 2** |
| 9/12 (W) | Critical Thinking, Critical Literacy | Burke, Ch. 9, 238-265 | \* POD (Lindsey Wilkins, Melody Reaves)  \*D/T leaders (Blair Kerby-Caitlin Keith)  \* Resource (Caitlin Keith-Blair Kerby) |
| 9/14 (F) | Vocabulary/Grammar | Burke, Ch. 5-6, 113-150 | \* POD (Jonathan Guarin, Meagan McLelland)  \*D/T leaders (Nicole Mitchell-Melody Reaves-Barak Ingram)  \* Resource (Barak Ingram-Nicole Mitchell-Melody Reaves) |
| 9/17 (M) | Education of English Language Learners | Burke, Ch. 16, 377-387  “NCTE Position Paper on the Role of English Teachers in Educating ELLs” | \*POD (Laine Moore, Sarah Cook)  \*D/T leaders (Kristina Passi – Bart Hartsoe)  \*Resources (Laine Moore-Jonathan Guarin) |
| 9/19 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 9/21 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 9/24 (M) | Writing (about Literature) | Burke, Ch. 7, p. 151-206 | \* POD (Frances Barber, Holli Renfroe)  \*D/T leaders (Jonathan Guarin-Laine Moore-Megan Waldrop)  \* Resource (Meagan McLelland-Katie Copper-Caitlin Howell)  \*\***reflective letter 3** |
| 9/26 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 9/28 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/1 (M) | Unit Design | Burke, Ch. 10, p. 266-283  Alabama Course of Study: ELA | \* POD (Caitlin Keith)  \*D/T leaders (Meagan MCLelland-Leslie Carpenter)  \* Resource (Sarah Cook-Tara Johnson) |
| 10/3 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/5 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/8 (M) | Assessment | Burke, Ch. 11, p. 284-317  Alabama Course of Study: ELA | \* POD (Blair Kerby, Leslie Carpenter)  \*D/T leaders (Sarah Cook-Tara Johnson)  \* Resource (Kristina Passi-Alexandra Davis)  \*\* **reflective letter 4** |
| 10/10 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/12 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/15 (M) | Lesson Plan Workshop | Alabma Course of Study: ELA | \*POD (Bart Hartsoe) |
| 10/17 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/19 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/22 (M) | Sustaining Yourself | Burke, Ch. 22, p. 440-449  Ch. 24, 460-474  \*\*Optional:  Mary Rose O’Reilly “Softening our Relationship to Time” (12 pgs) | \*POD (Cody Brakeman, Katie Copper)  \*\* **reflective letter 5** |
| 10/24 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/26 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 10/29 (M) | Finding a Job | Burke, Ch. 22, p. 450-459  \*\* cover letter and CV workshop | \*POD (Caitlin Howell) |
| 10/31 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/2 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/5 (M) | TBD (student interest) |  | \*\* **reflective letter 6** |
| 11/7 (W) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/9 (F) | Field Work | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/12 (M) | TBD (student interest) |  |  |
| 11/14 (W) | (Potential Make Up Fieldwork Day) | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/16 (F) | (Potential Make Up Fieldwork Day) | Prepare for Placement |  |
| 11/26 (M) | Portfolio Development | TBA | TBA |
| 11/28 (W) | Portfolio Presentations |  |  |
| 11/30 (F) | Portfolio Presentations |  |  |

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**The College of Education’s Statement on Professionalism**

As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

* Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices.
* Contribute to collaborative learning communities.
* Demonstrate a commitment to diversity.
* Model and nurture intellectual vitality.

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**Fieldwork**

By rules of the Alabama State Code for Teacher Education, all methods classes such as CTSE 4150 and 4160 must have a required laboratory component, meaning that students in methods classes are required to spend time in the field, observing and working with teachers and students.

My requests for your fieldwork at Opelika Middle and Opelika High have been approved. Presently, I am trying to recruit more teachers to host students. Many of the teachers who have hosted in the past are planning during our 8-10am class time.

As indicated on the schedule, we will meet for about a month in Haley, three days per week. In mid-September, you will begin your observations in your fieldwork school. For two of the three class meetings each week, you’ll be at the school (W and F), roughly during the time our class meets; for the third class (M), back in Haley with me. This pattern of observation and participation with teachers will continue into early November.

My intent is to pair or group you for fieldwork. **Ideally**, you will initially observe a few of our participating teachers (at both schools, if possible) and then settle in with your “home” teacher for more observing and then participating as a teacher (in small ways and big ways, as possible). This plan may change depending on logistics and what the teachers prefer. When you are teaching, I plan to observe (and provide feedback), making the rounds between schools and among teachers, as I can.

To meet the hours required by the State Board, you may have to do additional fieldwork outside our class meeting hours. More on this later, as I work out details with principals and teachers.

**Recommendation**

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) publishes research and information that can help you with just about anything in your professional life: teaching memoir or poetry; using controversial literature in your classroom; rethinking assessment – you name it. The NCTE journals that will be helpful to you include *English Journal*, *Voices from the Middle*, and *English Education*. The student rate for a year membership is very reasonable. Details are at the NCTE web site <www.ncte.org>.