

**Rationale for new graduate courses in literacy:**

**ENG 7<sup>50</sup>~~7~~ Introduction to Graduate Study of Literacy**  
**ENG 8<sup>54</sup>~~8~~ History of Literacy/Literacy Past and Present**

Contemporary and historical studies of literacy are a major area of interdisciplinary interest across a number of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences today. These courses reflect that interest as well as the maturing of literacy studies and the development of a substantial and significant body of knowledge. In many critical areas, that knowledge has revised our understanding of the acquisition, practice, and significance of reading and writing across genres, media, and modes of communication (with respect, for example, on one hand, to the historical course of the development, spread, and contributions of literacy (and literacies), and, on the other hand, to literacy's cultural, social, and political economic relationships and associations.

Within the general field of literacy studies, historical research has not only challenged received wisdom but has led to a fundamental revision of how many scholars think about literacy and its importance. In this connection, the history of literacy now finds a place in many inquiries across the world and across the domains of social, cultural, intellectual, political, and economic studies. These courses probe these and other connections.

More generally, adding these courses to the curriculum reflects new and developing interests in literacy studies in the College of Humanities, the federated arts and science colleges, and across Ohio State University. At the same time, it reflects the President's and Provost's stated interests in and promotion of interdisciplinary teaching and research at both undergraduate and graduate levels across the campus. Literacy studies are among the foundations for interdisciplinary work across the human sciences.

In addition, these courses reflect the expanding number of faculty with teaching and research expertise/interests in literacy, and the increasing student interest in literacy studies. Within the Department of English, Rhetoric and Composition has renamed itself Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy. The same developments are related in the new cross-campus literacy initiative "Literacy Studies @ OSU" and the Literacy Studies Working Group. There is also serious discussion in several colleges and disciplines about proposing an undergraduate minor in Literacy Studies with one of its possible bases in English. More immediately, there is great interest in the possibilities of cross listing literacy courses in English with History, Comparative Studies, Education, and perhaps some of the social sciences.

Importance of advanced training in literacy will also benefit OSU's important outreach activities.

These new courses could be taught by a number of faculty (including Brueggemann, Fredal, Graff, Johnson, Moss, Royster, Simpkins, Ulman, and others)