Classroom Observation: Dr. Mary Beth Allen
Observer: Dr. Rhonda Sutton
Course: REED 523:
Analysis of Instructional Techniques in Reading
Date: September 25, 2012

Class Procedure:

This class was about Beginning Reading Instruction. The previous class focused on the early literacy topics of concepts of print, high frequency words, and phonemic awareness. This class extended the discussion on early literacy and focused on phonics, context clues, structural analysis, and fluency.

This was an online class and the students had a PowerPoint presentation given to them ahead of time to view. The PowerPoint included information about each of the topics, as well as links to additional information. Dr. Allen also recorded her comments about each of the topics and that was embedded into the presentation. The students had responded to a prompt on the Discussion Board of D2L, where they had shared their insight related to the value and role of phonics in the early literacy classroom.

During class time, Dr. Allen shared additional information using the Wimba Eboard. She used information from the PowerPoint and provided additional information—theory and practical classroom applications—related to the topics of phonics, context clues, structural analysis, and fluency. She used discussion questions for the students to share their insights, connections, questions, and comments.

Dr. Allen ended the class with an online poll question – What is the most important thing for early literacy teachers to know or be able to do? All students responded and Dr. Allen shared the results. She then asked them what they saw were the common patterns and the students shared their insights- “teach phonics and phonemic awareness as part of a balanced literacy program, make learning fun, focus on making connections, fluency is more than how fast a student can read.” The poll results demonstrated what the students had gleaned from the class and what they thought was most important.

Evaluation:

Dr. Allen carefully shaped the class session to support the topic of Beginning Reading Instruction, which students had been discussing over time as a basis for understanding early literacy. Her use of podcast to share information about the
topics prior to class allowed for rich class discussion. During class, Dr. Allen provided additional information that scaffolded the students’ connection of new learning with previous knowledge. Dr. Allen’s intentional use of technology modeled effective integration of PowerPoint and online polling.

The class atmosphere was welcoming and inclusive. Students were encouraged to actively participate as leaders and peers. Dr. Allen used non-threatening questions and comments to clarify throughout the discussions. Dr. Allen’s expertise is evident in her ability to use a wide variety of sources and materials to enrich and enhance online instruction and student learning. Her expectation for graduate students includes their active involvement as class leaders as well as students and their need to bring their knowledge about their school environment into the college classroom as they examine theory and practice.

By the signature below, Dr. Allen acknowledges receipt of this letter and agreement with its contents.

Mary Beth Allen, Ed. D.
Professor of Reading

Respectfully Submitted,

Rhonda M. Sutton, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor of Reading