

**TESOL Programs Handbook
West Chester University of Pennsylvania**

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[Mission]

The mission of TESOL programs at West Chester University is to educate and prepare candidates so that they...

- a) are knowledgeable in the factors and issues which inform second language education;
- b) are highly capable instructors of English as a Second Language for a variety of learners in a variety of contexts, especially public schools PK-12; and
- c) have the skills necessary to function as effective language and literacy educators and community leaders among diverse populations both within the U.S. and abroad.

[Program Descriptions]

The Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MA TESOL) is an interdisciplinary graduate program administered by the department of Languages and Cultures (L&C). The MA is primarily designed for those preparing to teach English to learners whose first/home language is not English, and for pre-certified teachers who wish to develop their field-related expertise in the area of second language teaching, curriculum design, assessment, language program development, and educational leadership and advocacy.

The Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL Certificate) provides an introduction into teaching English to speakers of other languages. The Certificate is primarily designed to qualify pre-certified teachers to teach ESL in Pennsylvania public schools, in cases where a primary teaching certification is already in place at the time of application to the program and is approved by Pennsylvania Department of Education. The course sequence may also be geared to prepare graduates for EFL or ESL teaching outside of PK-12 public school contexts in the U.S. and abroad.

The Certificate in TESL applicants planning to teach ESL in PA public schools (that is, applying for PDE ESL Program Specialist (PDEEPS) Certificate) should have previously student taught and earned formal (stand-alone) certification from the PDE in another area before entering this program. Applicants to PDEEPS are required to first earn Instructional I certification in an alternate subject area (e.g., K-12 Spanish or French, Secondary English, Social Studies) recognized by the PDE in order to apply for the necessary qualification for teaching ESL in the public schools in Pennsylvania.

[Course Requirements]

The faculty of the Department of Languages & Cultures at West Chester University collaborate to ensure that MA TESOL and TESL Certificate (ESL Program Specialist Certificate, PDEEPS) candidates meet the PDE guidelines, as well as the requirements set forth by the [Professional Education Unit at WCU](#) and [TESOL International's standards and best practices](#).

The Certificate in TESL/ESL Program Specialist (PDEEPS) Certificate (for teaching ESL in PA public schools):

TESL certificate candidates are required to take 18 credit hours of graduate-level coursework to develop their knowledge bases in the areas of second language (L2) teaching, assessment, ESL curriculum development, ESL-specific literacy, and the structure of English. The program includes 60 hours of supervised field experiences, in which candidates are observed, mentored, and critiqued by university faculty as they teach on-site and interact in area ESL classrooms.

There are six (6) courses in the TESL Certificate program:

- LIN 501 (Introduction to Linguistics)
- LAN 504 (Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language)
- LAN 584 (Teaching Reading and Writing to ESL Students)
- LAN 569 (Teaching English Language Learners PK-12)
- LAN 575 (Structure of Modern English)
- LAN 576 (Curriculum and Materials for TESOL)

The TESL Certificate is currently offered entirely online.

MA in TESOL

MA TESOL candidates take 24 core credits with 6 hours of elective credits, under advisement, which enables them to develop a field-related specialization aligned with their professional goals (e.g., adult ESL, EFL, subsequent doctoral work, advocacy, etc.). MA candidates may earn the TESL Certificate en route to their degree. To enroll in the Cert program, admitted MA students need to add the Cert program via RamPortal (see [Update Your Program of Study document](#)) and, if planning to teach in PA public schools, also complete an **"Approved Program of Study" (APS) form**. This form is currently available from the programs director and will soon be fillable online via OnBase.

MA TESOL candidates also submit a culminating assessment portfolio and sit for a required 3-hour comprehensive examination upon completion of the required coursework. Details about the portfolio and comprehensive examination are made available to MA TESOL candidates one semester before the graduating semester.

Generally, all students must complete all eight required courses. In certain circumstances, an applicant with a strong background in linguistics may waive LIN 501 (Introduction to Linguistics) and replace it with an additional elective (if so approved by the program director). All MA TESOL students must complete 30 credits to obtain their degree. This is a university-wide requirement. The required classes are as follows:

- LAN 501 (Introduction to Linguistics)
- LAN 583 (Second Language Acquisition)
- LAN 504 (Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language)
- LAN 575 (Structure of Modern English)
- LAN 584 (Teaching Reading and Writing to ESL Students)
- LAN 578 (Teaching Listening/Speaking to ESL/Second Language Learners)
- LAN 576 (Curriculum and Materials for TESOL)
- LAN 587 (ESL Practicum)

The MA TESOL is currently offered entirely online.

[Admissions]

In addition to meeting the general requirements for admission to a graduate program at West Chester, applicants must document background in the following areas:

1. Applicants must have a baccalaureate degree from a college or university accredited in the United States or its equivalent from a school in another country. A minimum 2.80/4.0 undergraduate GPA is required.
2. Proficiency in English. Applicants whose native language is not English must submit an official report from one of the following organizations:
 - TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) - applicants must score a minimum of 92 for the internet-based exam (237 for the computer-based exam, 580 for the paper-based exam); or
 - IELTS (International English Language Testing Service) - applicants must receive an overall IELTS score at band 6.5 or above, and minimum scores of 6.5 for speaking, listening, reading and writing are preferred.
 - In addition, for students in the ESL Program Specialist Certificate Program (PDEEPS), applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English via the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) test called the "English Language Oral Proficiency Interview" (OPI). Information about the ACTFL test, including test dates and locations in international countries, can be obtained here.
 - This English language requirement can be waived at the discretion of the program director if the applicant has obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher in an English-speaking country.

3. GRE scores **are not required** for application or admission to TESOL Programs at WCU.
4. For TESL CERT only: Previously obtained Pennsylvania Instructional I or II Certificate (if planning to teach ESL in PA public schools).

[TESOL Program Outcomes and PDE Standards]

TESOL Program outcomes are based on Standards developed by the PA Department of Education (PDE) and include the following knowledge bases and skills:

I. Language

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Recognize language as an integrative system made up of component parts (phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics) and apply this knowledge to identify aspects of English that are difficult for ELLs.
- B. Support ELLs in communicating effectively for social and academic purposes by enhancing oral/aural skills, i.e., recognizing and using syntactic structures, the English sound system, and other communication skills.
- C. Support ELLs in understanding and using appropriate register variation and language use within different contexts and for different audiences, including formal, informal, social, and academic.
- D. Develop a variety of instructional techniques to assist ELLs in developing and using vocabulary (idioms, cognates, and collocations) and L2 literacy appropriately in written and spoken language, including contextualized practice with focused feedback.
- E. Apply knowledge of the principles of first and second language acquisition, and of the differences between first and second language acquisition, to the design of instruction for ELLs.
- F. Apply strategies that recognize the role of students' L1s as a resource for language and literacy development and for communicating with invested participants (students, families, volunteer support, and bilingual aides).
- G.

II. Culture

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the processes of negotiating one's cultural identity.
- B. Differentiate among the varied processes of cultural transitions, including acculturation, assimilation, biculturation and resistance.
- C. Identify negative effects of prejudice, stereotyping and ethnocentrism on language learners' successful learning in schools and promote pro-social classroom learning environment.
- D. Recognize cultural bias in curriculum and materials and use a range of resources to deliver instruction.
- E. Demonstrate effective intercultural communication skills to appreciate diverse cultures.
- F. Develop effective techniques for communication between home and school by recognizing and supporting the preferred mode of communication of the parent/guardian (written, oral, L1, L2, etc.) and utilizing interpretation and translation resources appropriately.
- G. Demonstrate understanding of the interdependence of language and culture to facilitate students' transition between the home culture/language and U.S. school culture/language.
- H. Integrate diverse ways of learning and multiple cultural perspectives, including building on ELLs' strengths, into the planning/adapting of curriculum and instructional methods.
- I.

III. Observing, Planning, Implementing, and Managing Instruction

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Design standards-aligned instruction in English utilizing the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, the English Language Proficiency Standards, and Can-Do descriptors in relation to the continuum of proficiency levels.

- B. Plan effective lessons in all domains (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening) using a variety of materials, texts, activities, strategies and assessments appropriately based on consideration of learners' differing English language proficiency, L1 literacy and prior knowledge, age and developmental stages, grade levels, learning styles and socio-cultural needs.
- C. Plan ESL instruction and assessment specific to the reading and writing needs of students with limited formal schooling (LFS) or interrupted formal education (SIFE).
- D. Recognize, plan and implement key elements of ESL lesson design, which include:
 - 1. Content and language objectives;
 - 2. Scaffolding, supports;
 - 3. Activating and building on prior knowledge;
 - 4. Formative and authentic assessments; and
 - 5. Academic and social interaction at the English Language Proficiency Level of the student, specifically in the domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- E. Differentiate instruction based on formative assessment of student progress, reteaching as necessary for students who need additional time and alternative approaches to meet learning outcomes.
- F. Develop and implement communicative activities in K-12 classrooms that promote authentic interactions for social and academic purposes and that integrate all language skills, i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- G. Plan and provide evidence-based reading and writing instruction that includes various cueing systems (i.e. graphic, syntactic, and semantic cues) appropriate for ELLs.
- H. Select, analyze and adapt a variety of authentic sources and tools to enhance oracy and literacy development for ELLs, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Various popular texts, including fiction, non-fiction, comic-book style, etc.;
 - 2. Visual and/or original source materials;
 - 3. L1 materials;
 - 4. Music;
 - 5. Media and multi-media, including technological resources and electronic communication.
- I. Explain and model explicit comprehension and learning strategies that assist students with learning tasks in all subject areas.
- J. Collaborate with and provide guidance to content teachers of ELLs related to using English language proficiency standards (ELPS), appropriate supports, and adaptations which provide students access to content instruction, tasks and assessments at their English language proficiency level.
- K.

IV. Assessment

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to:

- A. Use multiple and appropriate formative and summative assessment measures for a variety of purposes, including classroom and student self-assessment and technology-based assessment (e.g., audio, video, computer) at various grade levels.
- B. Apply appropriate testing practices for English language learners including:
 - 1. Determination of the validity and reliability of tests to make assessment related decisions for ELLs;
 - 2. Knowledge and application of alternate and multiple assessment measures to ascertain what ELLs know and can do;
 - 3. Appropriate interpretation and use of data to support ELLs;
 - 4. Assessment of ELLs' test-taking challenges and creation of strategies and scaffolding techniques to address these challenges.
- C. Recognize, apply and share state-allowed testing accommodations for ELLs at varying proficiency levels.
- D. Identify and use multiple assessment resources and measures (including research, native language evaluation, Pennsylvania English Language Proficiency Standards, PA Academic Achievement Standards, and WIDA ACCESS for ELLs performance rubrics, among others) to make informed

decisions concerning an ELL's progression through a language instruction program (identification, placement, progress, achievement, exit, and monitoring) observing all applicable national and state requirements.

E. Implement a variety of assessment tools as part of classroom instruction (observation checklists, reading logs, video spreadsheet software, self- and peer-assessment, among others), planning for classroom practice of each technique, to record progress towards ELLs' English language proficiency and academic achievement.

F. Inform parents/families, using their preferred mode(s) of communication, of federal and state-mandated testing, and the implications of such testing, for ELLs in a language instructional program.

G. Identify accountability measures and assessment targets in order to analyze real-time ELL data in order to make programmatic and instructional adjustments.

H. As part of an instructional planning team, analyze data from various ELL groups (disaggregated, where appropriate, by language proficiency level, grade level, instructional site, etc.) to evaluate the effectiveness of an ESL program or language teaching methodology.

I. Identify and use a variety of resources and research, including native-language assessment and accommodated assessments, to inform decisions about language differences, giftedness, learning disabilities, or other qualities of ELLs which would entitle them to participation in school programs.

J. Understand and share multiple measures of assessment data, collected over time, to document ELL growth and progress before considering a referral to a special education or other remedial program.

K. Evaluate and share data, including strengths and weaknesses of each model, with parents/family and other members of a team making informed decisions on referral of an ELL for special education or gifted services.

V. Professionalism

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to:

A. Use research in the field of ESL to articulate a personal educational philosophy for instructing ELLs.

B. Conduct focused action research in the classroom following applicable procedures for protection of human research participants.

C. Create a personal professional development plan based on interests and reflection, taking advantage of opportunities to support those goals in professional associations and other academic organizations.

D. Collaborate with general and specialist school staff (e.g., multidisciplinary faculty teams) for the purpose of establishing instructional programs appropriate for ELLs at a variety of English proficiency levels.

E. Recognize the need to advocate for ELLs and their families including full access to school resources; inform colleagues in instructional teams.

F. Develop classroom activities that could involve families and provide ELLs and their families with information, support, and assistance (e.g., advocate for the students and their families, help families participate in their school/community through the use of bilingual paraprofessionals or interpreters, or engage with community members and policymakers with respect to issues affecting ELLs).

G. Model the use of culturally and linguistically responsive techniques and dispositions, so as to support the learning of other school professionals working with ELLs.

[Diverse Field Experiences]

Field experiences are an important component of both MA TESOL and TESL Cert (ESL Program Specialist) Programs. Fieldwork is a formal requirement of LAN569 (methods), LAN 504 (techniques), LAN 576 (curriculum and materials) and LAN 587 (practicum). In each of these courses, candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are assessed through fieldwork. Field placements vary according to current (and future)

teaching positions of candidates. For candidates who do not seek to be ESL-certified on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there is great flexibility with regards to the field placement.

Typical PK-12 ESL sites in Pennsylvania include rural, suburban, and urban districts stretching from Oxford Area School District in southern Chester County to Norristown, and the School District of Philadelphia to the east. Governmental (e.g., Delaware Valley Literacy Council), non-profit/volunteer (e.g., Comunidad Hispana), university (e.g., Drexel), and community college ESL programs in the region may also be used for students whose career goals do not involve PK-12 instruction. Candidates are required to implement educational principles and theories into practice during fieldwork. Upon completing on-site assignments, candidates are subsequently required to engage in reflection via discussions, presentations, and written assignments.

[Clearances]

Clearances are not needed if you are completing your field hours in adult education. For field experiences in Pk-12 contexts, students must obtain current clearances before the start of semester. Students should note that this is a lengthy process (e.g., it can take up to two weeks to obtain the Child Abuse clearance) and plan in advance. Students without clearances will first receive e-mail correspondence from the Student Services office (see sample e-mail in Appendix) and at the start of the semester will be dropped from field courses. Instructions for obtaining clearances can be accessed at <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/clinical-experiences-candidate-services/educator-clearances.aspx>

As soon as students obtain their clearances, they should upload them through a secure link within RamPortal. (See link above.) **Please do not email or fax clearances.** At that time, students will be able to contact school districts and request field experience in classrooms with English Learners.

If students are current practicing teachers and plan on completing fieldwork in the same school district, they may be able to use the clearances on file with their employment. Employed school professionals can be approved for one (1) semester by completing the Verification of Employment form with the candidate's Human Resources Department. The clearances and TB test on file with the school or school district of employment must be submitted along with the completed form.

Specific questions regarding clearances can be directed to **The Office of Clinical Experience & Candidate Services at 610-436-3090.**

[Graduation]

Candidates must notify the program director regarding their completion plan no later than the beginning of the final semester.

Both MA and TESL Certificate candidates apply for graduation (MA degree and TESL Certification, respectively) in RamPortal. Simply log on to your RamPortal account and click the link "Apply for Graduation."

TESOL MA completers participate in the commencement ceremony, but Certification completers do not. Candidates pursuing Program Specialist Certificate (PDEESL) (that is, TESL Certificate in order to teach in PA public schools) will need to apply for Certificate in PDE TIMS (select "Program Specialist" option). Please find information regarding certification here: <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/certificationInfo.aspx>

[Advising]

Students are advised through consultation with the program director and faculty advisors via several advisement tools (e.g., Advising sheets (see pages 8 and 9), Program Fact Sheet, WCU Graduate Catalog). Candidates should meet with a faculty advisor in order to select courses for the following term and to ensure that professional goals are aligned with course choices and field experiences. Program advising sheets and additional information are attached below for student and faculty reference.

Students are supported by the program director and faculty advisors throughout their studies. Faculty advisors, in collaboration with other TESOL faculty members, monitor candidates' progress (academic performance, student conduct, professional dispositions) at four different times in the program: upon application, end of the first and third semesters, and upon application for graduation. The program director and/or advisors meet with the candidate to make action plans to address concerns, need be.

For further information, please contact: Dr. Dominik Wolff, Languages and Cultures, 307 Mitchell Hall, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383 USA, 610-436-1071, dwolff@wcupa.edu

[Act 48]

K-12 educators can request Act 48 credits/hours for a TESOL credit-bearing course taken at West Chester University. For information on the process, please visit <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/act48.aspx>

[Faculty] in alphabetical order

Mahmoud Amer, Professor

Dept. of Languages and Cultures
Mitchell Hall 307
610-436-5077

Jelena Colovic-Markovic, Professor

Dept. of Languages and Cultures
Mitchell Hall 233
610-436-3371

Innhwa Park, Professor

Dept. of Languages and Cultures Mitchell Hall
232
610-436-2640

Esther (Chui Kian) Smidt, Professor

Dept. of Languages and Cultures
Mitchell Hall 230
610-738-0410

Dominik Wolff, Associate Professor

Dept. of Languages and Cultures
Mitchell Hall 307
610-436-1071

Name: _____

Date: _____

Required Courses (24 credits):

- _____ LIN 501 (fall) Introduction to Linguistics*
- _____ LAN 583 (spring) Second Language Acquisition
- _____ LAN 504 (spring) Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language (field)*
- _____ LAN 575 (fall) Structure of Modern English*
- _____ LAN 584 (spring) Teaching Reading/Writing to ESL/Second Language Students*
- _____ LAN 578 (fall) Teaching Listening/Speaking to ESL/Second Language Learners
- _____ LAN 576 (fall) Curriculum and Materials for TESL (field) (**advanced)*
- _____ LAN 587 (spring) ESL Practicum (field) (**advanced)

*[*For students with active Level I or II certification in Pennsylvania, these five courses, which also count toward the ESL Certificate requirement, plus LAN 569, equal the 18 credits required for the WCU PDE ESL Program Specialist Certificate, enabling people to teach ESL in Pennsylvania public schools.]*

*[**Denotes advanced course, usually to be taken during the final two semesters of enrollment]*

Electives (6 credits) may be drawn from the following courses:

- _____ LAN 569 Teaching English Language Learners PK-12*
- _____ LIN 540 Sociolinguistics
- _____ LAN 550 Classroom Discourse
- _____ LAN 555 Computer Applications for Language Learning
- _____ LAN 557 Online Language Teacher Education
- _____ LAN 579 Teaching Pronunciation to English Language Learners
- _____ LAN 588 Second Language (L2) Vocabulary Learning and Teaching
- _____ LAN 612 Assessment of ESL/Second Language Students

Other courses are subject to advisor approval.

MA TESOL candidates also submit a culminating assessment portfolio and take a required comprehensive examination upon completion of the required coursework. Candidates must inform the Program Director of the completion plan to schedule the examination at their earliest convenience (no later than the beginning of the final semester).

ESL Program Specialist Certificate Advising Sheet (18 credit hours)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Pre-certification Area: _____

Admission into the WCU ESL Program Specialist Certificate requires prior and valid Pennsylvania Instructional I or II Certification in a different academic area. Completion of the program thus allows instructors to add teaching ESL in Pennsylvania public schools to their teaching load.

Required Courses

- _____ LIN 501 (fall) Introduction to Linguistics
- _____ *LAN 504 (spring) Techniques of Teaching English as a Second Language (field)
- _____ LAN 575 (fall) Structure of Modern English
- _____ *LAN 569 (fall, spring) Teaching English Language Learners PK-12 (field)
- _____ LAN 584 (spring) Teaching Reading and Writing to ESL Students
- _____ *LAN 576 (fall) Curriculum and Materials for TESL (field) (**advanced)

[* Denotes certificate courses which require clearances for field]

*****Candidates must inform the Program Director upon completion of the required coursework for graduation clearance.*****

Course Scheduling [general information]

- It is strongly advised to register for courses as soon as the scheduling opens (i.e., October/November for spring courses; February/March for fall courses).
- It is advised (although not required) to take the Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 course in order.
- It is advised (although not required) to spread out your field courses throughout different semesters for manageable workload per semester.
- You must inform the program director of your completion plan at your earliest convenience (no later than the beginning of your final semester)
- For questions, please contact your adviser or the TESOL Programs Director.

TESOL Core Courses

Tier 1: Foundation courses LAN 501 (F) LAN 575 (F) LAN 583 (S) LAN 504 (S) LAN 569 (F/S/Summer II) [(with field) if pursuing ESL Specialist Certificate en route to MA, that is, planning to teach ESL in PA public schools]
Tier 2: Mid-level courses LAN 578 (F) LAN 584 (S)
Tier 3: Advanced courses LAN 576 (F) LAN 587 (S)

Approved TESOL MA Electives

LAN 505 Introduction to Bilingual/Bicultural Education
LAN 550 Classroom Discourse
LAN 555 Computer Applications for Language Learning
LAN 557 Online Language Teacher Education
LAN 569 Teaching English Language Learners Pk-12
LAN 579 Teaching Pronunciation to English Language Learners
LAN 580 Seminar in Second Language Education
LAN 581 Implicit/Explicit Instruction and Corrective Feedback
LAN 588 Second Language (L2) Vocabulary Learning and Teaching
LAN 611 Content-Based ESL/Second Language Instruction
LAN 612 Assessment of ESL/Second Language Students

Other courses are subject to advisor approval including the following:

ENG 600 Tutoring Composition (an elective option for students seeking to work as tutors in the writing center)

[Example] MA TESOL Recommended Course Sequence

The course sequence below is NOT required but is provided as a reference for full-time students

--

LIN 501* (F)

LAN 575* (F)

—

LAN 583 (S)

LAN 584* (S)

LAN 504* (S) (Field)

—

LAN 578 (F)

LAN 576* (F) (Field)

Elective 1 (option: LAN569*)

—

LAN 587 (S) (Field)

Elective 2

(*Certificate in TESL (ESL Program Specialist Certificate) Courses)

[Example] Certificate in TESL (ESL Program Specialist Certificate) Recommended Course Sequence

The course sequence suggested here is NOT required but is provided as a reference for part-time students

LIN 501 (F)

LAN 575 (F)

LAN 569 (F/S/Summer II) (Field)

LAN 504 (S) (Field)

LAN 584 (S)

LAN 576 (F) (Field)

[Sample E-mail related to missing Clearances]

[Student Name],

You recently enrolled in [Name of Course with Field Component], field course that requires background clearances to be in a field placement with children. The dates of issue for the background clearances must be on or after [date].

- **Clearances are not needed if you are working with adult education.**
- ***If you are an Employed School Professional and completing your field work at your school or school district of employment, you may be able to use your clearances on file with your employment with [proof of employment](#).***

All others (not with Adult Education and not an Employed School Professional)

Background clearances include:

- the PA State Criminal Record Check (online application).
- PA Child Abuse Clearance (online application that can take **up to 2 weeks** to return the clearance).
- FBI IdentoGO fingerprinting that requires fingerprinting in the State of PA (please only submit your IdentoGO receipt or email from IdentoGO).

Also required:

- a Tuberculosis (TB) test under one year old is required IF not already submitted.

It is important that you schedule your IdentoGo appointment for fingerprinting now. Directions are found at the [link](#), 1st bullet.

Please review the step-by-step instructions for applying for clearances and directions for uploading clearances in MyWCU at this LINK, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd bullets. MAC Users do not use Safari, choose Firefox instead, clear your browser's history, and restart your computer before

<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/clearances.aspx>

[Please do not email or FAX clearances.](#)