

PROPOSAL

FOR A

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

IN

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (TESL)

Department of Linguistics
Oakland University

October 12, 2001
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ABSTRACT

The Department of Linguistics would like to institute a 20 credit graduate certificate program to meet the needs of large numbers of teachers and other interested persons in the area who want to teach English to Speakers of other Languages (ESL). It is similar in basic design to the Graduate Certificate Program in Statistical Methods in the Department of Mathematics which is described on page 69-70 in the 2001-2003 Oakland University graduate catalog. The department already administers an undergraduate ESL certificate program consisting of 12 credits (three 4 credit courses) which is extremely popular, and a 12 credit graduate TESL Certificate, described on page 60 of the 2001-2003 Oakland University graduate catalog. The proposed 20 credit graduate certificate program is designed to offer greater depth in ESL preparation to post-baccalaureate students than is afforded by either the undergraduate or graduate 12 credit programs, but which would not require as much time or money to complete as the full 36 credit MA degree in Linguistics. In addition, such a program would be of interest to post-baccalaureate students needing credit for continuing certification or teaching ESL in the community college system. We feel that this intermediate credit program would greatly increase the flexibility of the department to meet the varying needs of students in the surrounding area, and offer these students a fuller range of options for pursuing ESL-related education which can be tailored to fit their individual needs.

Our experience has shown that there is a huge potential market for this kind of program. The Department of Linguistics receives numerous requests throughout the year from potential students who need some kind of post baccalaureate credentials in ESL to show to either current or prospective employers. Some of these individuals are now teachers in the area public schools who suddenly find themselves in classroom situations where they have to teach large numbers of children whose native language is not English. Because of the dramatic increase in the number of foreign-born children in Oakland County, school systems such as those in Troy and Farmington Hills record more than sixty different native languages spoken by children in the K-12 grades. Others are individuals who are interested in pursuing teaching opportunities in the area public schools and community colleges involving ESL, but who are presently not interested in or financially prepared to start work on an actual MA degree in Linguistics, which requires a total of 36 semester credits, including a research project or master's thesis.

Based on interest shown in numerous phone calls to the departmental advisors and inquiries made to departmental faculty, we anticipate that this program will significantly increase the number of post-baccalaureate students attending Oakland University, and that some of them will decide to stay on and complete the credits for an MA degree in Linguistics (note that all of the course work for the graduate certificate is applicable for the MA in Linguistics).

Rationale

The local and regional need for instituting this program was described in the abstract on the preceding page. We take it for granted that the addition of this program will enhance the university's mission in maximizing instructional opportunities for students whose needs have not previously been met. We also believe that the program will help promote the graduate role and mission of the university in the area of public and community service by providing services for students who wish to augment their professional preparation in the area of teaching English to speakers of other languages (TES(O)L).

As mentioned in the abstract, the main goal of the certificate program is to provide students who might otherwise not enroll at Oakland University the opportunity to pursue post graduate education in the area of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages which does not lead to the MA degree, but which does offer professional training and preparation for teachers and other interested professionals who need to have background in teaching English to non-native speakers.

We expect this program to appeal to several groups of prospective students:

(1) Given the large number of LEP (Limited English Proficient) students in Oakland County, K-12 teachers are faced with the challenge of working with LEP students even though they have no training. Specialized ESL programs in the public schools are designed for NES (Non-English Speaking) children or only provide instruction for a limited number of hours per week. This leaves the classroom teacher with the primary responsibility of improving the language proficiency of these students. Since certified teachers are required to take university courses in order to keep their certificates current, this program would be an ideal course of study for continuing certification.

(2) Most area community colleges require ESL teachers to have a minimum of 18 graduate credits in Applied Linguistics or ESL training. The 12-credit certificates currently in place are insufficient to meet this requirement. The proposed graduate certificate program allows students to participate in a cohesive course of study in ESL teaching and meet the community college requirement.

(3) As previously mentioned, there are many people with baccalaureate degrees in related fields such as foreign languages who are interested in teaching ESL but do not want to pursue a full MA degree. The proposed 20 credit certificate program provides the theoretical and applied training required for such teaching.

We are not aware of any other certificate programs in TESL in the state of Michigan which are exactly like ours. There are several other institutions in the state which offer Masters degrees in either TESL or Linguistics (or both), such as Eastern Michigan University (EMU), and Michigan State University, both of which offer MA degrees in TESOL. But, like Oakland University's current MA in Linguistics, these programs require a full course of study toward a terminal MA degree, which many busy professionals have neither the time nor the interest to complete. Our suggested certificate program would provide an intermediate-level program of 20 credits which would likely appeal to a broad range of potential students in the surrounding area in Oakland County.

Crucially, no other institution in Oakland County offers anything like our proposed program.

EMU does offer a graduate certificate in TESOL, but its program is different in significant ways from the one we propose (see attached print-out from EMU's website in the appendix). EMU's program requires 6 specific courses, and thus does not offer the choice and flexibility that ours does. Also, EMU's program does not require any course work in theoretical linguistics, which we think is important in informing students about how human languages actually work. Furthermore, EMU's program only consists of 15 credits (as opposed to our proposed 20 credit program), most of which are focused on practical teaching methodology. It should also be noted that EMU is too far away from Oakland County to be easily accessible to students in our area who want to pursue advanced course work in applied linguistics. We are confident that the creation of a graduate certificate program here at Oakland would be much more convenient.

Source of students. As mentioned in the abstract, the linguistics department faculty has already received numerous inquiries about post-graduate professional study in TESL which we believe would be met by a program of this sort. Since no other graduate institution in Oakland County has a similar program, the expected source of students would be individuals from the surrounding areas in Oakland County, though we would not be surprised if students from farther away would be interested.

Self-Study of the Academic Unit

The Department of Linguistics prepared a self-study document at the end of the 1999-2000 academic year which details most of the information requested in this section. We will supply some additional information here which is not found in the self-study document. As has already been implied, the goals of the Department are enhanced by this new program in that it will bring additional students interested in TESL to Oakland University who will populate our graduate-level courses. These students will also likely contribute in a number of ways to the Center for American English (CAE), most apparently in the required Practicum (practice teaching) that all certificate students will take.

Currently, the Department of Linguistics has 5 full time permanent faculty, with a search for a new tenure-track specialist in second language acquisition just approved to take place during the 2001-2002 academic year. Once the new hire is in place, the department will have 6 full-time members. The present full-time faculty are:

Peter Binkert, Professor and Chair
 Madelyn Kissock, Assistant Professor
 Kathy Malin, Special Instructor
 Sam Rosenthal, Assistant Professor
 Michael B. Smith, Associate Professor

In addition, there are two other faculty with one third appointments in Linguistics who also contribute to the department's programs:

Alice Horning, Professor of Rhetoric and Linguistics

Carlo Coppola, Professor of Modern Languages and Linguistics

Presently, during the 2001-2002 academic year, we have two visiting faculty who are teaching lower-division classes: James Kirchner and Jonathan Evans. Since the required and suggested courses for the 20 credit certificate are already offered regularly by the Department, we feel that we are presently capable of launching the certificate program without additional staffing. Of course, if in the future the enrollments in the program grows, there may be a need later to hire additional full or part time faculty. Note that the visiting faculty are not needed to offer the courses in this program.

Currently, Special Instructor Kathy Malin handles the main teaching duties in the Department's ESL courses, though Professors Madelyn Kissock and Alice Horning have taught some of these courses in the past and might be expected to do so in the future. We anticipate that the new hire in second language acquisition will also handle some of the teaching and advising load associated with the certificate program. Otherwise, the courses in the program are regular graduate courses in theoretical and applied linguistics which are already offered by regular full-time faculty on a regular basis for our already existing MA program.

Library holdings are adequate for all of our linguistics programs. We are not aware of any serious deficits in the library holdings in the TESL area which are not already being handled in the administration of our current programs. The department has decided to forgo requesting library finds for this program. See the correspondence from Mildred Merz about library holdings and Peter Binkert's statement about not applying for library funds in the appendix.

Classroom space is not expected to be affected, since the courses in the program are already regularly offered. Equipment needs are not expected to increase at the present time.

We do not expect any adverse affect on our current programs as a result of instituting the graduate certificate program in TESL. The main effect will be to increase enrollments in courses which in many cases are already under-enrolled. We therefore anticipate that the net effect of this new program would be a positive one in solidifying enrollments in pre-existing courses.

Program Plan

We propose that the catalog copy describing the program read as follows:

The program consists of 20 credits in Applied Language Studies (ALS) and Linguistics (LIN) as set forth below. It is designed for completion in one or two years by individuals who are already teaching and seeking further professional development or by those seeking additional preparation in order to enter the field of English as a Second Language (ESL). Students who complete the program will have a thorough grounding in approaches to the study of human language and the principles of language learning and teaching.

Admission. All applicants with baccalaureate degrees from an accredited institution will be considered. Ordinarily, a minimum undergraduate grade point average

LIN 504:	4 credits
ALS 518:	4 credits
ALS 519:	4 credits
ALS 575:	4 credits

20 credits

No new courses are needed or proposed at this time, though any new courses developed for the MA in Linguistics would also likely apply to this program.

We do not anticipate the need for the support of any other unit on campus to run this program. We have included a letter of support from Mary Otto, Dean of the School of Education and Human Services, which can be found in the appendix. We also do not anticipate the need for recruiting efforts for the reasons already mentioned earlier in this proposal: our experience has already indicated a definite need for a program of this type. We do not at present see the need for instituting enrollment caps in the program, and we do not see any problems in enrollments exceeding our present resources.

Needs and Costs of the Program

As already mentioned, we do not at present see any need to increase resources to run this program. It will be implemented within the Department's current infrastructure. We therefore see no need for new faculty or staffing at the present time. Library holdings are adequate. Graduate assistants are not necessary. Current space and equipment holdings are judged to be adequate at the present time.

Since the certificate program is intended to be incorporated within the Department's present course offerings, we do not anticipate additional costs. For this reason, we have not included a detailed budget. Indeed, the increased enrollments we expect will likely bring enhanced revenue to the University.

At the present time, we do not anticipate the graduate certificate program in TESL providing increased support to the university in the way of new grants. But we do anticipate an increase in tuition revenues from the increased enrollments in our current graduate courses.

Implementation

Since, as already mentioned, we do not anticipate this program requiring any additional faculty or other resources (beyond the already-approved new hire in second language acquisition), but rather envision it fitting into our present course offerings, the implementation of the program should be quite simple. We simply envision the

enrollments in the relevant graduate courses increasing somewhat as the students begin to enroll in the program.

Assessment

There is no mention of assessment in the Guidelines and Procedures for Instituting a New Degree Program. However, an assessment plan can be added if needed. Currently, the department assesses the graduate program on the basis of students' papers for LIN 680 and an exit interview. For the Certificate Program we would substitute a paper from one of the required courses above, probably ALS 518, in place of LIN 680.

Appendices

- A. Print-out from EMU's website describing its Graduate Certificate in TESOL
- B. Letter of support from Mary Otto, Dean of the School of Education and Human Services
- C. Letter from Mildred Merz concerning library holdings in applied linguistics and ESL.

Program Description

K-12 Graduate Certificate / Endorsement Program

at Eastern Michigan University

[Program Description](#)

[Course Descriptions](#)

[Advising](#)

[Admissions / Deadlines](#)

[Tuition and Fees](#)

[Helpful Links](#)

[Meeting TESOL
Standards for K-12
Teacher Ed. Programs](#)

[Need for ESL
Endorsement](#)

[TESOL Programs Home](#)

[ESL / TESOL Home](#)

Admission Requirements

Applicants must first be admitted to the Graduate School. Upon acceptance in the Graduate School, the applicant must meet the following admission requirements:

- At least one year's college study of a foreign language, or the equivalent as determined by the Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies department.
- Submit at least two letters of recommendation that give evidence of the applicant's promise of success in working with speakers of other languages and working in multicultural settings.
- Submit a brief statement of the applicant's reasons for pursuing this certificate.
- Submit a Michigan (or other state) teaching certificate.
Submit proof of classroom teaching experience.

There is no opportunity for conditional admission to this program for nonnative speakers of English.

Required Courses

The following required courses are listed in the order in which they will be taken.

- TSLN 525 Second Language Acquisition for Classroom Teachers (3)
- TSLN 501 Theoretical Foundations of Second-Language Pedagogy (3)
- TSLN 540 Cultural Issues in Language Teaching (2)
- TSLN 410 TESOL Methods (3)
- TSLN 521 Content-based Materials and Testing in the ESL Classroom (2)
- TSLN 503 Observation and Analysis of Multicultural Classrooms (2)

Before enrolling in approved 400-level courses for graduate credit, students must obtain (a) recommendation of their adviser; and (b) written permission from the Graduate School, Starkweather Hall. Not more than 9 hours of approved 400-level courses can be used on a graduate program.



Office of the Dean

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Rochester, Michigan 48309-4494
(248) 370-3050 Fax (248) 370-4202

April 25, 2002

Professor Peter Binkert
Department of Linguistics
330 O'Dowd Hall
Oakland University
Rochester, MI 48309-4401

Dear Dr. Binkert:

Oakland University's School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) will work collaboratively with the Department of Linguistics to assure a high quality ESL program. The School of Education will provide consultation on course curricula and make available full time faculty to support the instruction in the program. SEHS personnel will work with Linguistics to develop methods and a system to evaluate student learning and quality of instruction.

The office of Professional Development and Education Outreach, a department within the School of Education dedicated to special projects, will also provide support to the program. Professional Development personnel will provide special services to participants in the program by assisting them with the application process and course registration. They will also serve as a one point of contact for the students, facilitating communication with various OU departments.

Professional Development will market the program and consult with the Michigan Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation and Certification and with the university Records Department to initiate a process whereby students who have satisfactorily completed ESL course work can be recommended for ESL endorsement.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Otto
Mary L. Otto
Dean

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Thu, 25 Apr 2002 20:21:02 -500
From: Mildred H. Merz <merz@oakland.edu>
To: Peter J. Binkert <binkert@oakland.edu>
Subject: Re: TESL Proposal (fwd)

Peter--Sorry to take so long to get back to you. I think I didn't answer immediately because I didn't have a definitive answer. Will the program need to go to Graduate Council? I would think that if it does, then it could possibly qualify for new program money. Of course, this all involves whether it will have a formal budget with a line for library support. We can give it a try. I would have to write a collection evaluation with an estimate of what I would suggest would be needed--and how much that would cost over a five year period. To write the report I would need the proposal--one in draft form would do. I could see if I could get the report done this summer.
Millie

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 7 May 2002 12:48:54 -0400 (EDT)
From: Peter J. Binkert <binkert@Oakland.edu>
To: elvekrog <elvekrog@saturn4.acs.oakland.edu>
Cc: Michael Smith <smith@saturn4.acs.oakland.edu>,
Peter J. Binkert <binkert@saturn4.acs.oakland.edu>,
Mildred H. Merz <merz@saturn4.acs.oakland.edu>
Subject: Grad TESL Program

Jan -

After communicating your concerns about a possible library budget to Mille Merz and receiving Millie's reply which I forwarded to you previously, we have decided to forgo requesting library funds for the Graduate TESL Program. Please forward this decision to the COI and the Graduate Council.

Thank you for you assistance in this.

Peter

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