

AC 2019-2020 Assessment

Graduate Certificate: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), 2019-20

College: Arts & Sciences

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Approved by: Dr. Greg Handel

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Northwestern State Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, Student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its Students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

College of Arts and Sciences Mission: The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies Mission: The Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies has an active, diverse, and vital academic program, offering the Bachelor of Arts in English, the Minor in English, the Minor in Spanish, the Master of Arts in English, and two Graduate Certificates: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT). The Department teaches the required English core courses for undergraduates as well as large number of courses required for students in various majors. The Department serves over 6,000 NSU students per academic year, and this total does not include our English dual-enrollment program. Graduates are prepared to work in a wide variety of industries, in jobs that require skills in communication, data analysis, and creative, innovative thinking.

Graduate English Major Mission: The Graduate Program of the Department of English, Foreign Languages and Cultural Studies is a dynamic, student-oriented program focused on rigorously preparing students to achieve in diverse fields. The graduate program

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focuses on developing, providing, and supporting innovative, responsive, and accessible graduate education of the highest level. The program encourages a mastery of disciplinary literature, thoughtful research, professional development, and cross-curricular innovation as members of an engaged scholarly community. Through encompassing a diverse suite of related fields of study, the Graduate Program offers its students access to creative, critical, and compositional skills, providing them invaluable versatility in a rapidly changing market.

Purpose of the Graduate Certificate in TESOL: The purpose of the Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is to equip students with the knowledge and abilities necessary to work in professional careers as *Adult Literacy Teachers*. This type of teacher helps students to speak, listen, read, and write in English, often in the context of everyday living, including work situations. Students learn writing and conversational skills or may focus on learning more academic or job-related communication skills depending on their skill level. Adult literacy teachers work with students from a wide range of backgrounds. Because the teacher and students often do not share a common native language, intercultural sensitivity and creativity are important skills to foster communication in the classroom and achieving learning goals. These workers teach students from a variety of cultural backgrounds and, therefore, they must be sensitive to cultural differences.

Current Program:

1. Required courses

Course Level/Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
ENGL 5240	Principles of Second Language Learning, Instruction and Methodology	3.0
ENGL 6610	Fundamentals of Linguistics	3.0
ENGL 6640	Syntactic Theories and Applications	3.0

2. Approved Elective courses*

Course Level/Number	Course Name	Credit Hours
ENGL 5000	Introduction to College-level Teaching	3.0
ENGL 5040	Introduction to Phonology	3.0
ENGL 5060	Intercultural Communication	3.0
ENGL 5280	General Composition Theory	3.0
ENGL 5540	Second Language Testing and Assessment	3.0
ENGL 5920	English Internship	3.0

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ENGL 6540	Computers and Composition	3.0
ENGL 6620	History and Development of the English Language	3.0
ENGL 6650	Advanced Studies in Language and Gender	3.0
ENGL 6980	Grant Writing	3.0

*Two
courses are

selected from the Approved Electives list to complete requirements for the 15-hour Certificate program.

Methodology:

1. The assessor(s) will electronically collect from instructors one written assignment/project from each student enrolled in *selected* courses in the TESOL program.*
2. The assessor(s) will assess the student writing using the assessment rubric (see Appendix).
3. The assessor(s) will analyze the data from the rubric to determine whether or not students have met the target outcome.
4. Based on the results of the assessment, changes in curricula and/or the assessment itself are discussed in the Plan of Action Moving Forward section of this Report.

* **NOTE:** The courses selected for the TESOL assessment are ENGL 5240 (offered every fall) and ENGL 6640 (offered every spring). These courses were chosen because they are required for the Certificate and also contain the content that best exemplifies the primary content areas and goals of the TESOL program.

2019-20 Graduate Certificate in TESOL Assessment. Number assessed: 13.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO): The following SLOs apply to the Graduate Certificate in TESOL.

Student Learning Outcome 1. Understanding of Theory (see SLO 1 below for definition)

Student Learning Outcome 2. Development of Applications (see SLO 2 below for definition)

Measures. Combines the assessment of a Methodology and a Target. There are four Measures, (two for each SLO), and each is assessed for each course and student: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2. The

Results:

SLO 1. Understanding of Theory. in the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program will, within the required courses and at the end of the program, demonstrate a knowledge of current theory and be able to identify and explain key concepts in the field. This knowledge serves as the foundations for all of the roles and activities that TESOL educators perform in their work. Target: 85% of the students will achieve a score of 3

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(competency) or higher on the assessment rubric. *NOTE: See the Appendix for the complete results on all four Measures.*

Measure 1.1 (Direct Evidence): Can identify and explain key theoretical concepts and ideas.

The Measure will determine how well students demonstrate competency to identify and explain key theoretical concepts and ideas. At least 85% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, seven of the eight students (88%) achieved at least a 3 (Competency) on Measure 1.1 (NOTE: The target was 80%). The average score was 4.25 out of a possible 5.0. Based on the analysis those results, for AC 2019-2020 the target was raised to 85%. In AC 2019-2020, 12 of 13 assignments (92%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the new target by 7%. The average score was 4.07, which is 9.6% lower than the AC 2018-2019 average. The decrease in the average score is due to the score of 3 achieved by one of the students in fall 2019; the four spring 2020 students all scored 4 or better.

Decision: In AC 2019-20, the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program exceeded the target for Measure 1.1 in SLO 1, but the average score was slightly lower than AC 2018-2019. Based on the analysis of the results, in AC 2020-2021 the Target will be raised to 90% and instruction and practice in TESOL theory will be revised to assist students who struggle with related course content.

Measure 1.2 (Direct Evidence): Can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends.

The Measure will determine how well students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends. At least 85% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, eight of the eight students (100%) achieved at least a 3 (Competency) on Measure 1.2. The average score was 4.5. Based on the analysis those results, for AC 2019-2020 the target was raised to 85%. In AC 2019-2020, 13 of 13 students (100%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the new target by 15%. However, the average score was 4.2, 6.7% lower than the AC 2018-2019 average. As with Measure 1.1, the decrease in the average was due to the score of 3 achieved by three students in fall 2019; all four spring 2020 students achieved a score of 5.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program exceeded the target for Measure 1.2 in SLO 1, but the average score was lower than AC 2018-2019. Based on the analysis of the results, in AC 2020-2021 the Target will be raised to 90%

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and instruction and practice in instruction in TESOL research trends will be revised to assist students who struggle with related course content.

SLO 2. Development of Applications. Students in the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program will, within the required courses and at the end of the program, be able to find useful ways to apply theory and research results to resolve current issues and problems in the field. Devising realistic, workable solutions and sharing the results for the benefit of the profession and society are vital to the advancement of the field and meeting the needs of the people served. Target: 80% of the students will achieve a score of 3 (competency) or higher on the assessment rubric.

Measure 2.1 (Direct Evidence): Can apply theories and research trends appropriately to devise real-world solutions.

The Measure will determine how well students demonstrate the ability to apply theory and research trends appropriately to devise real-world solutions. At least 80% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-19, four of the eight students achieved at least a 3 (Competency) on Measure 2.1 (50%); the Target of 80% was not met. Four of five students in the spring 2019 ENGL 6640 class did not include a real-world solution in the final paper, due to the specific wording of the assignment instructions. For the four students who did include a real-world solution, the average score was 4.5; the average score for all AC 2018-2019 students was 2.25 (due to the papers that did not include a real-world solution). Based on the analysis those results, for AC 2019-2020 the target was maintained at 80% and instructions for the final paper were revised to make clear the requirement to include a real-world solution. In AC 2019-2020, all the student papers in both semesters included a real-world solution that could be evaluated for the application of TESOL theories and research trends. 12 of 13 assignments (92%) scored 3 or higher on Measure 2.1, exceeding the target by 12%, and the average score was 4.0, an increase of 9% compared to AC 2018-2019. Overall, in AC 2019-2020 student performance on Measure 2.1 showed the largest improvement of the four measurement criteria.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program exceeded the target for Measure 2.1 in SLO 2, and the average score was significantly higher than AC 2018-2019. Based on the analysis of the results, in AC 2020-21 the Target will be raised to 90%, due to the high performance achieved in AC 2019-2020. However, additional instruction and practice in applying TESOL theory and research trends to real-world solutions will also be provided to assist students who struggle with related course content.

Measure 2.2 (Direct Evidence): Can demonstrate effective practices in graduate-level research and writing.

The Measure will determine how well students demonstrate effective practices in graduate-level research and writing. At least 80% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

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Finding: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, seven of the eight students (87.5%) achieved at least a 3 (competency) on Measure 2.2. The average score was 3.5, the lowest average for any of the four Measures assessed, indicating that students struggled with graduate-level research and writing more than any other area of the assessment. Based on those results, for AC 2019-2020 the target was maintained at 80% and instruction was strengthened to assist students to increase their knowledge and skills in graduate-level research and writing. In AC 2019-2020, 11 of 13 assignments (84.6%) scored 3 or higher, higher than the Target but 9.6% lower than 2018-19. The Target score was lower due to the Weak to Competent score achieved by two students in fall 2019. Conversely, the average score was 3.8, 8.6% higher than 2018-19, which is largely due to the higher average score achieved by the spring 2020 students.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the Graduate Certificate in TESOL program met the target for Measure 2.2 in SLO 2. Based on the analysis of the results, the Target will be raised to 85% for AC 2020-2021, since the average score for the past two assessment cycles is 86%. However, additional course instruction, practice, and feedback will be provided to students who struggle with related course content. Of the four measures assessed, Measure 2.2 continues to score the lowest on both the Target score and the average score; for these reasons, more curricular revisions and classroom practice are needed to support student learning.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results

1. The Targets set for 2019-20 were appropriate; all four Targets were met and exceeded.
2. Students were highly successful in demonstrating their knowledge and skill in the course content that was assessed, indicating that the curriculum meets the academic needs of the students.
3. Specifically, the students demonstrated in the ENGL 5240 and 6640 courses high knowledge of TESOL and linguistic theory, superior knowledge of current research trends, high ability to propose appropriate solutions to real-world problems, and competency in graduate-level research and writing practices. These results show significant improvements in all four Measures, especially 2.1, compared to 2018-19.
4. Measure 2.1 achieved the best performance of the four Measures. The Target score was 100%, and the average score improved from 2.25 in 2018-19 to 4.0 in 2019-20.
5. Measure 2.2 was the only one that was not met in 2018-19, and it also had the lowest average score of the four Measures during that assessment cycle. That

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trend of lower scores continued in 2019-20, but the Target was met and exceeded for the first time.

6. Even with these results, some students continue to struggle with course content related to each of the four Measures. Understanding this, we must prepare assessments to understand those educational needs and provide additional instruction, practice, and feedback to support student learning.

Plan of Action Moving Forward for Spring 2020

- Raise the Target to 90% for Measures 1.1, 1.2, and 2.1; raise it to 85% for Measure 2.2.
- Devise methods to identify early in each semester the course content that may need additional instruction, practice, and support. An exercise or assessment can be used to determine current knowledge of content for all four Measures; for example, an assessment can be given in the first week of class to determine the students' current knowledge of academic citation styles (Measure 2.2.).
- Use the information gained from the early-term assessments to revise the semester's curriculum to meet the identified educational needs and to aid and support throughout the semester via additional instruction, practice, and feedback.
- Provide more specific and targeted feedback on all writing assignments in ENGL 5240 and ENGL 6640 (including the online Forum assignments), to help students to refine their knowledge and skills in academic writing, including citation style.

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Appendix
 Graduate Certificate in TESOL
 2019-20 Assessment Cycle

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
 Assessment Rubric

Assessor: J. Mischler

Semester/Year: 2019-20

Paper Number: All (N = 13)

SLOs & Measures:		Evaluation				
		Check the applicable box to indicate the level of achievement for each Measure.				
		Weak (1)	Weak to Competent (2)	Competent (3)	Competent to Strong (4)	Strong (5)
1.	Understanding of Theory					
1.1	Can identify and explain key theoretical concepts and ideas.	0	1	2	5	5
1.2	Can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends.	0	0	3	4	6
2.	Development of Applications					
2.1	Can apply theories and research trends appropriately to devise real-world solutions.	0	1	3	4	5
2.2	Can demonstrate effective practices in graduate-level research and writing.	0	2	3	4	4