

Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) (050) – Graduate Certificate

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies

College: Arts & Sciences

Prepared by: Jim Mischler, Program Coordinator Date: May 31, 2022

Approved by: Dr. Francene Lemoine, Dean Date: 10 June 2022

Northwestern State Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

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 unequalled 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: As scholars, students, and teachers, we strive to be engaged, compassionate, curious learners and to engender the same passion in every student we teach. The critical study of texts, languages, and textual production is vital for our development as critical thinkers, effective communicators, and thoughtful community members. As a department, we offer these interdisciplinary experiences in diverse but complementary areas of study.

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 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

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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 English language proficiency. 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 to achieve learning goals. These workers teach students from a variety of cultural backgrounds and, therefore, they must be sensitive to cultural differences.

Current Program:

Required courses	Course Name	Credit Hour
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

Approved Elective courses

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
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:

The assessor(s) will electronically collect from instructors one written assignment/project from each student enrolled in *selected* courses in the TESOL program. *

1. The assessor(s) will assess the student writing using the assessment rubric (see Appendix).

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2. The assessor(s) will analyze the data from the rubric to determine whether or not students have met the target outcome.
3. Based on the results of the assessment, changes in curricula and teaching practices 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.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

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.

SLO 1. Understanding of Theory. Students 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: 90% of the students will achieve a score of 3 (competency) or higher on the assessment rubric. NOTE: See the Appendix for the complete results on all four Measures.

Course Map: Tied to the course syllabus objectives

ENG 5240: Principles of Second Language Learning, Instruction & Methodology

ENG 6640: Syntactic theories & Applications

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 90% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. Target met.

Analysis.

1. In AC 2020-2021, the target was that 90% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 1.1.
2. In 2020-2021, 11 of 11 assignments (100%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 10% and exceeding the 2019-2020 result by 8%.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, in 2021-2022, the Target was not raised to 95% because the small number of students in the program makes that

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goal exceedingly difficult to achieve. For example, if there are 11 total students assessed in 2021-2022—the same number as 2020-2021— all of them (100%) would have to achieve at least a score of 3 to meet the new Target. For this reason, the current Measure 1.1 has reached its practical limit as an assessment tool.

4. For AC 2021-2022, Measure 1.1 was revised to focus on *synthesizing* key theoretical concepts; that is, measuring the student's ability to explain the relationship between two or more concepts or ideas. With the new Measure, the Target was reset to 70%.
5. NOTE: The 2021-2022 changes to the definition of Measure 1.1 and the Target (discussed in #3, above) were both abandoned in fall 2021 because an acceptable method for measuring "synthesis of key theoretical concepts" was not found. In addition, resetting the target to 70% would render spurious (or even moot) any comparisons between AC 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. For these reasons, the AC 2020-2021 Measure 1.1 definition and the 90% Target were reinstated for 2021-2022.

Decision.

1. In AC 2021-2022, the target was that 90% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 1.1 (NOTE: This is the 2020-2021 Measure 1.1, reinstated due to the problems with measuring "synthesis"; see #5 in the Analysis section, above, for details).
2. In AC 2021-2022, 10 of 10 assignments (100%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 10% and equaling the 2020-2021 result. In the fall 2021 class, all six students scored 4 or higher (out of 5 possible) on Measure 1.1. In the spring 2022 class, three of four students scored 4 or higher; the fourth student achieved a score of 3. The reason for the lower average (compared to 2020-2021) is that there was one less student who completed the TESOL courses in 2021-2022; the difference in the average score is due to the lower number of students in the current year, not lower scores on the assessment.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the following changes will be implemented in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement forward. First, a method for effectively measuring "synthesis of key theoretical concepts" will be identified and implemented for the 2022-2023 assessment data. Second, more detailed instruction will be developed for the final class project to support students in their efforts to identify and explain key concepts; as discussed above, one student scored 3 ("Competent") on Measure 1.1, which may have been a result of a misunderstanding of the requirements for the final project. Specifically, the wording of the instructions for the project assignment may have caused the student to misunderstand what was required. Third, starting in fall 2022, students will be required to submit a first draft of the final project paper (previously, this was optional). The faculty member will then meet with each student to discuss the draft and revisions needed for the final draft. This method will help resolve any misunderstandings concerning the requirements for the final project and serve as an opportunity for the faculty member to provide individualized feedback and support for each student in their efforts to understand how to synthesize key theoretical concepts in their classwork, including the final project assignment.

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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 90% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. Target met.

Analysis.

1. In AC 2020-2021, the target was that 90% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 1.2.
2. In 2020-2021, 11 of 11 students (100%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 10% and equaling the 2019-2020 result.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, for AC 2021-2022, Measure 1.2 was revised to focus on *research trends in the student's chosen Final Project topic* rather than general trends in the TESOL field. With the new Measure, the Target was reset to 70%.
4. NOTE: The 2021-2022 change to the Target (discussed in #3, above) was abandoned in Fall 2021 because measuring "research trends in the student's Final Project topic" does not require such a drastic change to the target, which, as noted in #5 of the Analysis section for Measure 1.1, would also render moot any comparisons between AC 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. For these reasons, the AC 2020-2021 Target of 90% was reinstated for 2021-2022, but the change in the AC 2021-2022 Measure 1.2 definition was retained.

Decision.

1. In AC 2021-2022, the target was that 90% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 1.1 (NOTE: This is the 2020-2021 target, reinstated due to the problems with comparing AC 2020-2021 and 2021-2022; Analysis section, #5, for details).
2. In AC 2021-2022, 10 of 10 assignments (100%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 10% and equaling the 2020-2021 result. In the fall 2021 class, all six students scored 4 or higher (out of 5 possible) on Measure 1.2. In the spring 2022 class, three of four students scored 4 or higher; the fourth student achieved a score of 3.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the following changes will be implemented in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement forward. First, more detailed instruction will be developed for the final class project to support students in their efforts to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends; as discussed above, one student scored 3 ("Competent") on Measure 1.2, which may have been a result of a misunderstanding of the requirements for the final project. Specifically, the wording of the instructions for the project assignment may have caused the student to misunderstand the requirements for the assignment. Second, starting in Fall 2022, students will be required to submit a first draft of the final project paper (previously, this was optional). The faculty member will then meet with each student to discuss the draft and revisions needed for the final draft. This method will help resolve any

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misunderstandings concerning the requirements for the final project and serve as an opportunity for the faculty member to provide individualized feedback and support for each student in their efforts to fully demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends in the final project assignment.

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: 85% of the students will achieve a score of 3 (competency) or higher on the assessment rubric.

Course Map: Tied to the course syllabus objectives

ENG 5240: Principles of Second Language Learning, Instruction, and Methodology

ENG 6640: Syntactic Theories and Applications

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 85% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. Target met.

Analysis.

1. In AC 2020-2021, the target was that 80% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 2.1.
2. In 2020-2021, 9 of 11 students (82%) scored 3 or higher, 10% lower than 2019-2020. Two of the student papers either did not provide a real-world solution or discussed it too briefly to constitute an effective response. The average score was 3.6, 10% lower than 2019-2020.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, for AC 2021-2022, Measure 2.1 was revised to focus on *a practical application in the student's chosen Final Project topic* rather than general trends in the TESOL field. With the new Measure, the Target was reset to 70%.
4. NOTE: The 2021-2022 change discussed in #3 (above) to the Target was abandoned in fall 2021 because measuring "a practical application in the student's chosen Final Project topic" does not require such a drastic change to the target, which, as noted in #5 of the Analysis section for Measure 1.1, would also render moot any comparisons between AC 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. For these reasons, a new Target of 85% was instituted for 2021-2022 (an increase from 80% in 2020-2021), but the change in the AC 2021-2022 Measure 2.1 definition was retained.

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Decision

1. In AC 2021-2022, the target was that 85% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 2.1 (NOTE: This is an increase from the AC 2020-2021 target but different from the original 2021-2022 target of 70%; see the Analysis section, #5, for details).
2. In AC 2021-2022, 9 of 10 assignments (90%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 5% and exceeding the 2020-2021 result by 8%. In the fall 2021 class, all six students scored 3 or higher (out of 5 possible) on Measure 1.2. In the spring 2022 class, three of four students scored 4 or higher; the fourth student achieved a score of 2.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the following change will be implemented in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement forward. First, more detailed instruction will be developed for the final class project to support students in their efforts to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends. Second, unlike the analyses of Measure 1.1 and 1.2, it is unlikely that the score of 2 (“Weak to Competent” for one student was the result of misunderstanding the instructions for the final project assignment. This student began to struggle after Mid-terms with the more advanced assignments that required in-depth analysis of the class readings in order to complete required writing assignments, including the final project. The lack of in-depth analysis also affected the student’s ability to devise a relevant real-world solution on the chosen topic. To address this issue, the change to be implemented in AC 2022-2023 is the second one discussed for Measure 1.2 (see Decision section, #3): Starting in Fall 2022, students will be required to submit a first draft of the final project paper (previously, this was optional). The faculty member will then meet with each student to discuss the draft and revisions needed for the final draft. This method will help resolve any misunderstandings concerning the requirements for the final project and serve as an opportunity for the faculty member to provide individualized feedback and support for each student in their efforts to apply theories and research trends and in turn devise real-world solutions in the final project assignment.

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 85% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. Target met.

Analysis.

1. In AC 2020-2021, the target was that 80% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 1.2.
2. In AC 2020-2021, 10 of 11 assignments (90.9%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 7% and also 6% higher than 2019-2020.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, in 2021-2022, for AC 2021-2022, Measure 2.1 was revised to focus on *a practical application in the student’s chosen Final Project topic* rather than general trends in the TESOL field. With the new Measure, the Target will be reset to 70%.

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4. NOTE: The 2021-2022 change discussed in #3 and #4 (above) to the Target was abandoned in Fall 2021 because measuring “a practical application in the student’s chosen Final Project topic” does not require such a drastic change to the target, which, as noted in #5 of the Analysis section for Measure 1.1, would also render moot any comparisons between AC 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. For these reasons, a new Target of 90% was instituted for 2021-2022 (an increase from 80% in 2020-2021), but the change in the AC 2021-2022 Measure 2.1 definition was retained.

Decision.

1. In AC 2021-2022, the target was that 85% of the students would achieve a score of 3 or higher on Measure 2.1 (NOTE: This is an increase from the AC 2020-2021 target but different from the original 2021-2022 target of 70%; see the Analysis section, #5, for details).
2. In AC 2021-2022, 9 of 10 assignments (90%) scored 3 or higher, exceeding the Target by 5% and slightly below the 2020-2021 result (90.9%). In the fall 2021 class, all six students scored 3 or higher (out of 5 possible) on Measure 1.2. In the spring 2022 class, three of four students scored 4 or higher; the fourth student achieved a score of 2.
3. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the following change will be implemented in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement forward. First, more detailed instruction will be developed for the final class project to support students in their efforts to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends. However, unlike the analyses of Measure 1.1 and 1.2, it is unlikely that the score of 2 (“Weak to Competent” for one student was the result of misunderstanding the instructions for the final project assignment. This student struggled, especially after Mid-terms, with the more advanced assignments that required correct use of standard page formatting and research citation style to complete required writing assignments, including the final project. To address this issue, the second change to be implemented in AC 2022-2023 is the same one discussed for Measures 1.1, 1.2, and 2.1 (see the Decision sections, #3): Starting in fall 2022, students will be required to submit a first draft of the final project paper (previously, this was optional). The faculty member will then meet with each student to discuss the draft and revisions needed for the final draft. This method will help resolve any misunderstandings concerning the requirements for the final project and serve as an opportunity for the faculty member to provide individualized feedback and support for each student in their efforts to understand and employ standard page formatting and research citation style correctly.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2021-2022. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results.

1. The Targets set for AC 2021-2022 were appropriate. All four targets (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, and 2.2) were met or exceeded; in comparison, in AC 2020-2021, three of the four targets achieved that result.
2. Specifically, the students demonstrated in the ENGL 5240 and 6640 courses

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superior knowledge of TESOL and linguistic theory, superior knowledge of current research trends, and higher competency in devising real-world solutions and graduate-level research and writing practices. These results show a trend toward overall improvement in the 2021-2022 assessment cycle, compared to 2020-2021 and 2019-2020.

3. In AC 2021-2022, Measures 1.1 and 1.2 achieved the best performance of the four measures. The Target scores were 100%, the same as AC 2020-2021.
4. By comparison, Measures 2.1 and 2.2 had lower scores but 2.1 exceeded the AC 2021-2022 target as well as the AC 2020-2021 result. Measure 2.2 also exceeded the target and was less than 1% below the 2020-2021 result. Again, these results show a trend toward overall improvement for the 2021-2022 assessment cycle when compared to both 2020-2021 and 2019-2020.
5. The lowest score on any Measure was 2, by one student in both 2.1 and 2.2. This is an improvement over AC 2020-2021, when one student scored 1 in 2.1.
6. The changes made for 2022-2023 are expected to improve the results of the annual assessment even further, especially for Measures 2.1 and 2.2, which have scored lower than 1.1 and 1.2 each of the past four years (though they are improving with each assessment cycle).

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

- Revise the curriculum in ENGL 5240 and 6640 to provide additional content, practice, and support for skills related to the four Measures.
- Revise the instructions for the final project assignment in both courses to provide further clarity on the requirements related to the four Measures.
- Develop specific materials for practicing standard page formatting and citation style in the TESOL field, beyond those provided in the department research methods course.

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Appendix

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Program Assessment Tally Sheet

Assessor: J. Mischler

Semester/Year: 2021-2022

Paper Number: All (N = 10)

SLOs & Measures:		<u>Evaluation</u> 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	<i>Can identify and explain key theoretical concepts and ideas.</i>			1	3	6
1.2	<i>Can demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current research trends.</i>			1	2	7
2.	Development of Applications					
2.1	<i>Can apply theories and research trends appropriately to devise real-world solutions.</i>		1	1	4	4
2.2	<i>Can demonstrate effective practices in graduate-level research and writing.</i>		1	1	5	3