

Eight-Year Program Review IBHE Report Summary: see attached Resources page

PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT SUMMARY

1. **Reporting Institution:** Eastern Illinois University
2. **Program Reviewed:**
13.1401 Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in English as a Second Language Instruction
3. **Date**
08 February 2024
4. **Contact Person**
Dr. Christy Hooser, Associate Dean, College of Education
- 4.1. **Telephone**
(217) 581-5315
- 4.2. **E-mail**
cmhooser@eiu.edu
5. **OVERVIEW**

Department Mission: The Department of Teaching, Learning, & Foundations is committed to fostering the development of professional educators within diverse settings while building upon the natural leadership abilities of our students. We strive to model innovative techniques and reflective practices to provide our students with unique opportunities to translate theory and research into effective and practical instructional applications. Through modeling, mentoring and providing services, we support and pursue local and global partnerships and participate in collaborative scholarly endeavors.

Context of Offerings: Several ESL programs exist in various forms throughout Illinois. University of Illinois Springfield and Urbana-Champaign, like Eastern Illinois University, offer graduate certificates in ESL. Others offer different degree pathways, such as Illinois State University that offers an undergraduate minor in bilingual education, and Southern Illinois University-Carbondale that offers a Masters of Science in Education in ESL. EIU's program represents an attractive option for students given its low cost and the frequency of course offerings that allow students to start in any semester. The ESL Certificate program includes 18-credit hours of online preparation in Linguistics, Theory, Assessment, Methods, and Cross-Cultural Perspectives. The online delivery provides a cost-effective means for students from across the State to train in ESL.

6. MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Currency: As research in ESL advances, EIU's faculty expertise is being leveraged to teach current best practices to Certificate students. Eight years is a relatively short span of time for dramatic shifts in evidentiary best practices, so the program has had little need to make major changes.

Student Demand and Societal Needs: Data from 2020 and the National Center for Education Statistics report that 12% of K-12 students in Illinois identify as ESL students meaning that just over one in nine students in an Illinois classroom requires ESL services. In U.S. Census-designated rural districts (coded with locale codes 41, 42, or 43), 1.7% of *rural students* require ESL services in 2021-22 academic year, representing 2,688 students (Ed Data Express). While comparatively smaller than the overall figure, it speaks to Illinois' challenge in delivering ESL services to a widely dispersed population. EIU's ESL program is a vital part of ensuring that our rural area can provide ESL student support services where they are needed. Nationally, ESL (also "English Language Learners" (ELL) and "Multi-language Learners" (ML) populations are growing, signifying an increasing demand for teachers trained in ESL.

EIU offers a graduate certificate program that aligns with state requirements for ESL endorsement. Capturing the true impact of the ESL program is difficult in that graduate students may not add the endorsement to their PEL within their ELIS account. However, even if the endorsement is not

formally added to their PEL, as part of the certificate program and area of emphasis within the MSED Curriculum and Instruction program, they have met the state's expectations for ESL requirements. As such, not all students elect to apply for the EIU Certificate—Since 2016, 19 students have opted to apply for the certificate. We know anecdotally that more students have not opted for the certificate but have either used the course preparation in their classrooms or have gone on to seek the formal ESL licensure. Moreover, students in our masters programs also take ESL courses so capturing the total number of students who are taking only the ESL certificate courses is challenging.

Nevertheless, the program is in the process of designing a better mechanism for student tracking during and after the suite of ESL certificate courses is complete. In particular, the Associate Dean of the College is working with the Graduate Chair and Graduate Advisor of the program on this. Moreover, recruitment efforts for other graduate programs have included recruitment for the ESL degree, creating an awareness that may lead to partnerships between EIU and school districts/ROEs in the future. Awareness is growing in any case.

Institutional Context: The establishment of the ESL Certificate and the courses that support it have served as the basis recently for the creation of a TESOL certificate program housed in the English Department (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) but with overlapping coursework with the ESL Certificate. Standing up the TESOL certificate would have been far more difficult without the groundwork laid by the ESL Certificate and the College of Education's investment in faculty with ESL and TESOL expertise.

Comments from the College Dean:

Given the increasing diversity of the K-12 student population, it is important that candidates have the opportunity to be responsive to the linguistic needs of learners. The ESL Certificate program is online, cost effective and provides a pathway for practicing teachers to expand their skills.

VPAA Decision:

- Program in good standing
- Program flagged for priority review
- Program enrollment suspended

VPAA Explanation:

13.1401 Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in English as a Second Language Instruction

The summary above notes the challenges of closely tracking the disparate paths of students who pursue the post-baccalaureate certificate in ESL instruction. The report clearly outlines the demand for ESL teacher training and shows that it is only increasing. The program is poised to respond to this growing demand through its deliberate recruitment into and strategic planning of interrelated graduate programs and educational partnership development.



Resources for Completing the Eight-Year IBHE Program Review Report

Section 5. Overview

This section will focus the review for your reader.

In no more than half a page, please explain your program's mission and its relationship to Eastern's mission (and, if applicable, to the mission of graduate education). Identify similar programs in the state; distinguish your program from them. You also should identify your program's student learning objectives and career/further education objectives, and summarize significant changes, achievements (by faculty and students and the program itself), and plans for the future.

Section 6. Major Findings and Recommendations

These are the standard IBHE questions:

a. Description and assessment of any major changes in the program:

- (1) changes in the overall discipline or field**
- (2) student demand**
- (3) societal needs**
- (4) institutional context for offering the degree**
- (5) other elements appropriate to the discipline in question**

What, if any, internal or external events have affected your program since the last review? Have enrollments, degree production, costs, student satisfaction, job placement, etc. changed significantly? Has the discipline's governing body approved a new name for the programs it represents; updated/revised curricular requirements; identified new markets; developed new emphases? Have nationwide demographic changes or social policies affected enrollments or requirements for good or for ill?

In addition to the items included in the "Accountability" section of the VPAA website (see the left-hand navigation box at <http://castle.eiu.edu/~acaffair/>), the resources listed below may help you to respond to item 6.a:

1. The IBHE Data Bank <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/Data%20Bank/default.htm> includes the *Data Book*, which provides statewide discipline-based data on enrollments, degree production, and costs; as well as a variety of other data on statewide enrollments, degree production, credit hour production, and costs.
2. The Institutional Research web page available at <https://www.eiu.edu/ir/> houses EIU's Data Books and the IBHE Alumni survey results, as well as a great deal of information about EIU students (ACT scores, degrees awarded, retention rates, etc.)
3. Occupational projections are available from many professional journals and organizations, as well as:

- a. the Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://stats.bls.gov/>
 - b. ISBE’s Educator Supply and Demand Report
http://www.isbe.state.il.us/research/htmls/supply_and_demand.htm
 - c. the Illinois Workforce Information Center
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Workforce_Information_Center.aspx
4. Staff members in the Office of Institutional Research also are available to aid you in assembling and analyzing administrative data.

b. Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement

While 6.b also asks you to discuss other significant findings, it is basically the assessment section of the program review. As such, the responses here are crucial to your review’s success. Departments that cannot demonstrate that their assessment programs meet the established guidelines will be expected to revise those programs within six months of the final review deadline. The IBHE’s **assessment guidelines are appended to this document.**

Since your overview already identifies your student learning objectives, focus here on the assessment program and its results. What measures are you using to assess learning? How well are students achieving the objectives identified for them? What are their specific strengths and weaknesses? What changes have you made and will you be making as a result of assessment? Emphasize direct assessment, but mention the indirect measures you are using as well. Support your generalizations with specific data/evidence. And be sure to include feedback from key stakeholders—students, alums, employers, peer reviewers, etc.—since the IBHE requires it.

c. Description of actions taken since the last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular

d. Description of actions to be taken as a result of this review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular

6.c and 6.d are straightforward. However, by this point, you already may have mentioned the most significant actions your department has taken/is planning to take. Do not repeat yourself. Merely refer the reader to a previous section or sections.

Section 7. Outcome

After consultation with the College Dean, the Provost’s Office will indicate whether the program will be deemed “in good standing” or “flagged for priority review.” The latter category is used to identify programs experiencing serious concerns—significantly low enrollments, high costs, negative accreditation findings, below-average pass rates on statewide exams, below-average employment placement rates, a continuing lack of satisfaction among students or employers, etc. Departments will be asked to examine and address the identified concern(s) and report the results in an interim review, due in 1-3 years. Typically, however, the IBHE program review results in a positive decision, and the next review is due in eight years.