

MA IN ENGLISH WITH TESL OPTION

Guidelines for MA in English with TESL Option

The English Department at Oklahoma State University offers a comprehensive program leading to an MA in English with an option in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). The TESL program is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to teach English to non-native speakers in a variety of situations, e.g., teaching English as a foreign language in an overseas school, college, or university; teaching English as a second language to international students studying in intensive English programs in the U.S.; or teaching English to bilingual/bicultural students in American public school systems and adult education programs. The TESL curriculum is designed to provide professional training in theoretical and applied linguistics, methods of teaching English as a second language, materials development, and second language testing. Students also participate in a supervised internship program in ESL. The elective courses are interdisciplinary in nature and are chosen by students and their advisory committees in accordance with particular interests and needs. The MA in English with an option in TESL consists of 30 credit hours (thesis option) or 34 credit hours (non-thesis option). In addition to these hours, students must fulfill the language requirement and pass the MA Qualifying Examination in TESL. A description of the degree requirements and regulations appears on the following pages.

Forms to File in 308 Morrill for the MA in English with TESL Option:

- ❖ Departmental Advisory Committee Form: by the end of the first year of graduate study
- ❖ Plan of Study: by the end of the second semester of full-time enrollment excluding summer sessions (filed online at the Graduate College website <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy>)
- ❖ Notice of Intent to take Qualifying Exams: by the end of the second week of classes in the semester in which exams will be taken
- ❖ Thesis Prospectus (when applicable): no later than the beginning of the first semester of thesis hours
- ❖ Notice of Intent to defend a Thesis (when applicable): by the end of the first two weeks of the semester in which the defense will take place
- ❖ Results of Final Defense Form (when applicable): immediately following defense

Summary Checklist

By the end of the second full semester of enrollment, you should have:

- ❖ chosen an advisor in your major area of study
- ❖ chosen your advisory committee
- ❖ met with your committee and discussed your plan of study
- ❖ filed your plan of study (<http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy>)

Before taking the MA Qualifying Examination, you must have:

- ❖ fulfilled the language requirement
- ❖ maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above on all graduate course work
- ❖ filed an approved plan of study
- ❖ submitted a Notice of Intent to Take Qualifying Examination form to the English Graduate Office by the end of the second week of classes (<http://english.okstate.edu/graduate-program/graduate-forms>)

Before you are eligible to graduate, you must have:

- ❖ filed a Graduation Clearance form (and a revised plan of study, if applicable)
- ❖ filed a Diploma Application (if your graduation is delayed you must fill out a Diploma Extension Application on the Registrar's website <http://registrar.okstate.edu/Forms>)

If you write a thesis, you must also have:

- ❖ submitted the defense copy (Final Draft) of your thesis by the Graduate College deadline
- ❖ passed your oral defense (Final Examination) and turned in the signed Results of Final Defense form to the English Graduate Office
- ❖ submitted the final copy of the thesis/dissertation in accordance with the format guidelines at <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis>

Application and Admission

Admission to the MA program in English with an option in TESL requires a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Other qualifications and application materials appear below. Applicants should be mindful that meeting the minimum standards for admission does not guarantee admission.

All applications are submitted electronically through the Graduate College. All required materials are to be uploaded electronically with the application at: <https://app.it.okstate.edu/gradcollege/>

Admission Qualifications and Application Materials

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| ❖ GPA | Applicants must have maintained an overall undergraduate grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale |
| ❖ Language | Applicants must have six credit hours of course work in a language other than English with grades of "B" or better. Applicants who do not meet this requirement must complete two semesters of language work, receiving grades of "B" or better prior to taking the qualifying exams. Non-native speakers of English are exempt from this requirement but may be required to take an advanced-level ESL course, depending on the results of the University's Test of English Language Proficiency (TELP) for international students. |
| ❖ Recommendations | Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation. |
| ❖ Statement of Purpose | Applicants must submit a written statement of approximately 250 words that identifies a proposed area of study, reasons for undertaking graduate study in this area, relevant work experience, and future career plans. |
| ❖ Writing Sample | Applicants must submit a writing sample: a 7- to 15-page paper written in an upper-level course in English or a related area of study. |

GRE scores are not required, but students who have taken the test are encouraged to submit their scores as part of their application.

English Language Proficiency (non- native speakers):

Applicants who are not native speakers of English must submit current scores from one of the following:

- ❖ TOEFL iBT - minimum score of 100
- ❖ TOEFL (paper-based) minimum score of 600
- ❖ IELTS - minimum score 7.0

Please see the English Department website for current score requirements.

Students are admitted to the MA program with TESL Option. If a student wishes to move from one MA degree program into another MA degree program (such as the MA with TESL Option to the general MA), the student must submit an application to and receive approval for that change from the Admissions Committee. The application must include a new statement of purpose and a new writing sample, which will be considered along with the rest of the student's graduate file. Since this application will be an internal English Department matter, students will not pay an application fee. If the Admissions Committee does not grant the request, the student will have the option of continuing in the area of specialization into which he or she was admitted.

Teacher Certification Disclaimer

The MA in English with an option in TESL does not carry with it certification for public school employment. Students wishing such certification must meet special state and university requirements.

Graduate College Rules and Regulations

There are many rules and regulations affecting graduate enrollment, tenure, examinations, theses, and dissertations that are made by the Graduate Faculty of Oklahoma State University rather than the English Department. Among the rules students should familiarize themselves with are those governing academic dishonesty or misconduct, especially those dealing with plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to become informed about all English Department, Graduate College, and University regulations.

The Oklahoma State University Catalog should be read closely by all those who are considering, or participating in, graduate studies in English at Oklahoma State University. Copies are available online at <http://www.okstate.edu/registrar>

Advisor and Advisory Committee

All graduate students select an individual advisor and an advisory committee to guide them in completing their degrees.

Advisor: Students are encouraged to choose an advisor by the end of their first semester of course work, but if this is not possible, students should select an advisor by the end of their first year of graduate study. The advisor may be any member of the English Department graduate faculty who specializes in TESL.

Advisory Committee : The advisory committee will normally consist of the student's major advisor as committee chair and at least two additional members of the English graduate faculty.

Changes: To change an advisor or advisory committee, a student must complete a Committee Change Request form, to be signed by all committee members and the Graduate Director and submitted to the Graduate College.

Plan of Study

A plan of study is a listing of course work the student intends to take for completion of the degree and an estimated time schedule. The student must develop the plan with his/her advisor and advisory committee. The Graduate College requires MA students to file an original plan of study with the Graduate College before the end of the second semester of graduate study. A hold is automatically placed on the registration of any student attempting to enroll beyond the second semester who does not have a plan of study approved by the Graduate College.

Students may download a plan of study form and instructions at the Graduate College website: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy>. The student should consult with his/her advisor to complete a draft version of the form. The finalized plan must be submitted online.

Planning Meeting: Prior to completing the end of the second semester of full-time enrollment (excluding summer sessions), students must schedule a meeting with their advisory committee. During that meeting, the student and advisory committee will discuss the student's preparation, professional goals, and plans for graduate study. The student and committee should agree upon

- ❖ A plan of study
- ❖ Fulfillment of the language requirement
- ❖ Tentative plans for the MA Qualifying Examination
- ❖ Tentative plans for the thesis or creative component

Creative Component: The course used as a creative component must be designated with an asterisk on the plan of study.

Submitting the Plan of Study: The student will finalize the version of the plan and submit it online and then the Committee members and the Graduate Director will sign the form electronically.

Changes: Changes to the plan of study can be made with the approval of the advisory committee. A revised plan should be submitted to the Graduate College at the beginning of the intended semester of graduation.

Ten-Year Rule: A final plan of study may not include any course more than ten years old at the time of actual graduation.

Checklist for Submitting a Plan of Study

- ❖ Minimum of 30 hours for thesis option, or 34 hours for non-thesis option, beyond baccalaureate degree
- ❖ Minimum of 16 hours in English
- ❖ At least 21 hours of course work at the 5000 or 6000 level at OSU
- ❖ All courses, including 4000-level, must be taken for graduate credit
- ❖ No more than 9 hours of course work taken as special student or transferred from another institution
- ❖ No course work may be used to complete requirements for another degree
- ❖ The plan of study must be signed by the advisor, committee members, and the Graduate Director

Course Requirements

The MA in English with an option in TESL offers two course requirement plans: thesis and non-thesis. The following requirements govern these options.

Thesis Plan: Students take 30 semester hours, including six credit hours of thesis.

Non-thesis Plan: Students take 34 semester hours, including a one-credit hour Independent Study course. They write a creative component, an article-length paper or research project, as part of this course.

Required Courses: Regardless of whether they opt for the thesis or non-thesis approach, TESL students are expected to complete 18 semester hours of required course work and to fulfill total hour requirements from among the elective courses available. The proposed program of work is planned in consultation with the student's advisory committee.

Required Courses (18 hours)

TESL Core Courses

- ❖ ENGL 5243 Teaching English as a Second Language
- ❖ ENGL 5313 Internship in TESL
- ❖ ENGL 5333 Seminar in TESL: Second Language Testing

Linguistics Core Courses

- ❖ ENGL 5123 Approaches to Language Acquisition
- ❖ ENGL 5130 Studies in English Grammar
- ❖ ENGL 5143 Descriptive Linguistics

Creative Component and/or Thesis

- ❖ ENGL 5210 Directed Study (one credit hour)
- ❖ ENGL 5000 Thesis (six credit hours)

Sample Electives

15 credits with creative component or 6 credits with thesis

Languages and Linguistics

- ❖ ENGL 4003 History of the English Language
- ❖ ENGL 4093 Language in America
- ❖ ENGL 5133 Phonetics and Phonology
- ❖ ENGL 5140 Seminar in Linguistics (various topics)
- ❖ ENGL 5153 Syntax
- ❖ ENGL 5173 Sociolinguistics
- ❖ ENGL 6410 Topics in Linguistics (various topics)
- ❖ PSYC 6393 Psychology of Language

Teaching Methodology

- ❖ ENGL 5013 Introduction to Graduate Studies (TESL)
- ❖ ENGL 5120 Studies in TESL (various topics)
- ❖ ENGL 5213 Content/Methods for Teaching Composition
- ❖ ENGL 5223 Teaching Technical and Business Writing
- ❖ ENGL 6420 Topics in Second Language Acquisition (various topics)
- ❖ EDTC 5103 Advanced Computing Applications in Education
- ❖ EDLE 5313 Characteristics of Adult Learners
- ❖ CIED 5143 Language Arts in the Curriculum

Cultural Studies

- ❖ ANTH 5243 Globalization and Culture
- ❖ PSYC 6393 Psychology of Language
- ❖ SOC 5273 Qualitative Research Methods
- ❖ ENGL xxxx Any literature course approved for graduate credit (only one course allowed)

Courses other than those listed may be taken as electives if approved by the advisory committee.

Methods Course for Teaching Assistants: Teaching assistants must take an appropriate pedagogy course or courses in their first semester of teaching at Oklahoma State University. These hours may be counted as part of the total hours of course work.

Required Hours at 5000/6000 Level: All MA students must complete at least 21 hours of course work at the 5000/6000 level; this 21 hours of course work may include six hours of credit for work on the thesis.

ENGL 5990: ENGL 5990: Special Problems limits enrollment (with permission from the Graduate Director) to students who elect the creative component rather than the thesis. The use of ENGL 5990 is restricted to students who have completed course work and need to enroll in one or two hours in order to fulfill enrollment requirements.

4000-Level Courses: Only those 4000-level courses marked by an asterisk in the University Catalog are available for graduate credit. All graduate course work should include a research paper or other appropriate project. In the instance of a 4000-level course that may not require such a paper or project, the student should, with the consent of the instructor involved, arrange for such a paper or project to supplement the assigned work. The English Department strongly suggests that all graduate courses be at the 5000/6000 level.

Transfer Hours: Students may transfer up to nine graduate hours from another university granting a master's degree in English. A student's advisory committee shall determine the number of hours of transfer credit to be awarded. If a student uses the hours for a degree at the previous institution, the hours are not applicable to the MA degree at OSU.

Independent Study: Independent Study courses may be occasionally arranged with an instructor when no regular graduate course on the desired topic is available during the student's expected tenure. Each of the two course numbers (ENGL 5210 and 6210) may be used for up to six credit hours per semester, and no more than nine hours total per course number. All students requesting an Independent Study course must hold a meeting with their advisory committee and receive approval by the Departmental members of the committee. Special forms must be used by those who wish to enroll in such courses.

Available on the forms page of the English Graduate website at: <http://english.okstate.edu/graduate-program/graduate-forms>, this form should be submitted no later than the end of the first week of graduate enrollment prior to the semester in which the Independent Study course is taken. A student who has completed the 17th graduate credit hour in a degree program but who does not have an approved plan of study on file in the Graduate College may not arrange an Independent Study course.

The Graduate Studies Committee will evaluate applications for Independent Study in accordance with the following criteria and procedure:

1. Has the student's advisory committee approved the course?
2. Has the student taken regularly offered courses related to the subject?
3. Is the Independent Study unlikely to have a negative impact on enrollment in concurrent or immediately subsequent course offerings?
4. Does the Independent Study fill a gap in the student's curriculum? Or is the specific course content unlikely to be offered during the student's expected tenure?
5. Are the text materials clearly listed?
6. Is the work appropriate for the number of credit hours requested?
7. Is the list of assignments and percentages awarded to each clearly explained?
8. Is the schedule of conferences sufficiently specific?

If all eight questions may be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will email a notice of acceptance to the proposed instructor, who will then inform the student.

If one or more questions cannot be answered affirmatively, the Graduate Director will contact the proposed instructor in an effort to clarify and/or resolve the problem(s). If no resolution can be reached, the Graduate Director will inform the proposed instructor of the denial and the reason(s) for the denial by email. The proposed instructor will then inform the student.

End-of-Semester Evaluations: All graduate students will be evaluated in writing at the end of each semester by the professors with whom they have taken courses. These evaluations are kept on file in the English Graduate Office and are available for students to read.

Grade of "Incomplete": The following regulations apply to students who receive what at OSU is termed the "composite incomplete" grade ("IB," "IC," "ID," or "IF") for any of their course work within the English Department:

- ❖ Students must complete course work within one calendar year, after which time the preliminary grade (expressed by the second letter of the composite) becomes permanent in accordance with University policy. Individual faculty members, however, may establish a shorter time limit for completing course work. Faculty will identify time limits in the "remarks" dropdown of the electronic grade sheet.
- ❖ Teaching assistants or associates having more than three incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for reappointment.
- ❖ Teaching assistants or associates having any incomplete grades on their records will not be recommended for summer employment.

Students should familiarize themselves with Section 6.2 of the University Academic Regulations found in the *University Catalog* for a full explanation of University policy governing incomplete grades.

Language Requirement

TESL students must complete six credit hours of course work in a language other than English with grades of "B" or better. Students who have not met this requirement at the time of admission must complete two semesters of language course work, receiving grades of "B" or better prior to taking the MA Qualifying Examination. Non-native speakers of English are exempt from this requirement but may be required to take an advanced-level ESL course, depending on the results of the University's Test of English Language Proficiency (TELP) for international students.

MA Qualifying Examination in TESL

MA students in TESL take one five-hour qualifying examination that is administered on a single day. It is given each September and February on the fifth Saturday of the semester. Students must submit a signed Notice of Intent to take the examination by the end of the second week of classes and must take the exams on the Stillwater campus. No exams are offered during the summer.

Prerequisites: In order to take the MA Qualifying Examination, students must:

- ❖ have fulfilled the language requirement.
- ❖ have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work taken beyond the baccalaureate degree. Grades received for courses used to satisfy the language requirement are not included in computing the minimum grade point average. All courses carrying graduate credit, including transfer hours on the approved plan of study, will be calculated in this grade point average.
- ❖ have an approved plan of study on file with the Graduate College.
- ❖ submit an "Intent to Take Qualifying Examination" form to the English Graduate Office by the end of the second week of classes.

Exam Areas: The MA Qualifying Examination in TESL contains two questions in each of the following five areas.

- ❖ Second Language Acquisition
- ❖ Pedagogy
- ❖ Applied Linguistics
- ❖ Grammar
- ❖ ESL Testing

Students must respond to one question in each of the five areas.

Reading lists covering the five areas are available online at <http://english.okstate.edu/programs/graduate-program/ma-exams-and-reading-lists>

Evaluation: Each question will be evaluated by three readers from the specific subject area covered by that section of the exam. Student anonymity will be maintained. If a student answers two questions in a single area, the readers in that area will evaluate each question separately. All readers evaluate exam questions individually before meeting as a committee to discuss student performances and provide a rating of "Pass with Distinction," "Pass," "Pass/Terminal MA," or "Fail" for each question. To be eligible for the MA in English with an option in TESL, students must pass all five areas.

Notification of Results: The Graduate Director will email notification of exam results to students and their advisors no later than two weeks after they were taken.

Retakes: *Students may take the exams only twice.* Students who fail one or more questions will retake only the areas that they failed.

Appeals: Normally, a second failure on any TESL Qualifying Exam will result in termination of the student's work toward the degree. However, when course work has been of exceptionally high quality, a student may, after a second failure, petition the Graduate Studies Committee for permission to take the exam a third and final time. In order to petition, the student must have a grade point average of 3.50 or higher in graduate courses taken at OSU. In addition, the student's petition must be supported by favorable end-of-semester evaluations from at least three professors.

Thesis (optional)

Should the student choose to write a thesis, the thesis is expected to be a substantial research project on a topic related to teaching English as a second language, bilingual education, second language acquisition, second language testing, or applied linguistics; it may be based on experimental research, may deal with a theoretical problem, or may have a pedagogical thrust. The thesis director should be a member of the TESL graduate faculty of the English Department.

Thesis Committee: Unless a student requests a change, the advisory committee serves as the thesis committee. If it is necessary to change the committee, a new committee form must be completed and submitted to the English Graduate Office and the Graduate College.

Prospectus: MA candidates writing a thesis should submit a prospectus (approximately 1000 words) no later than the first semester they are enrolled in thesis hours. The prospectus must be approved by the candidate's committee. Committee members must be notified in writing if an approved prospectus differs significantly from the submitted thesis (if, for example, the topic of the thesis changes, the authors or texts to be treated are altered, or the number or character of the chapters changes). Students must provide a copy of the approved prospectus to the Graduate Director.

Reading Procedure: At the time that the prospectus is approved, the candidate and the committee members should agree upon the reading procedure for the individual chapters. Matters to be discussed in reaching this agreement might include which chapters each member of the committee needs to see as they are completed by the candidate; whether individual committee members wish to see the chapters serially or all at once; and how much time committee members will need to finish reading a chapter or the entire thesis. ***Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading fewer than two weeks before the defense.***

Deadlines: Students submitting theses must adhere to deadlines established by the Graduate College and by the English Department.

Style: The student must write the thesis according to the guidelines in the current Graduate College Style Manual. See <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/tdg>. In addition, students should follow the guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

Defense Copy (Final Draft): The defense copy of the thesis that is defended should contain all of the chapters in a completed form and full documentation.

Final Copy: If as a result of the defense, revisions to the thesis are required, committee members will not sign the thesis until they are satisfied with the revisions.

Thesis Defense (optional)

For those students writing theses, the thesis defense will consist of a public, oral examination by the thesis committee. It will be no fewer than 45 minutes, but it may also be longer. The thesis defense occurs after the student has submitted a complete draft of the thesis to all committee members.

Intent to Defend Form: Candidates will file a nonbinding Intent to Defend form with the Graduate Director within the first two weeks of the semester in which they expect to defend the thesis. Each member of the committee will sign this form before it is filed with the Graduate Director. If a student does not defend in the semester when the Intent to Defend form is filed, he or she should resubmit the form when he or she is prepared to defend.

Scheduling of Oral Defense: *Under no circumstances should a completed thesis be submitted to any committee member for reading fewer than two weeks before the defense.* The English Graduate Office must be notified no less than two weeks before the oral defense of the day, time, and location of the defense, and the title of the thesis. The English Graduate Office must be informed of any changes in the scheduled defense date, time, and location. No thesis defense will be held after the beginning of the summer session.

Student Tenure

Students must complete all requirements within seven years from their first enrollment in courses for the MA program.

Length of Financial Support for Teaching Assistants

A teaching assistant who has not been placed on strict academic probation and who is making satisfactory progress toward the degree is eligible for financial support for a maximum of three years. A student who obtains an MA in English at OSU and then enters the PhD program is eligible for an additional five years of support.

If exceptional circumstances warrant, a student in the final year of financial support may petition the Head of the English Department for an additional year's support. Such exceptional cases will be judged on an individual basis and in light of Departmental policies and staffing needs.

Ineligibility for the MA Degree

The Graduate Director may upon proper cause declare that a student is ineligible for a degree from the English Department at Oklahoma State University. Upon determining that such cause exists, the Graduate Director will immediately notify the student's advisor, who will discuss the matter with the student and respond to the Graduate Director within fifteen working days. Should the Graduate Director still believe that proper cause exists, he or she will write a letter to the student indicating the reasons for the decision. The student may then appeal to the Graduate Studies Committee within ten working days for a hearing.

The Graduate Studies Committee will review the appeal and report its findings to the Graduate Director, who will notify the student. The student may then appeal that decision to the full Graduate Faculty of the English Department. The decision of that group shall end Departmental appeals.

Appeals and Petitions

All appeals involving grades or charges of academic dishonesty or misconduct must be directed to the OSU Academic Appeals Board. Contact the Provost's office (101 Whitehurst) for information and forms.

Petitions involving teaching assistantships must be directed to the Department Head.

All other petitions or appeals must be directed in writing to the Graduate Director, who will then forward the petition to the appropriate body, usually the Graduate Studies Committee (for special requests as described within the English Graduate Guidelines) or the English Graduate Faculty (for exceptions to English Department policy). The Graduate Director will notify students by mail of the decision reached by the Graduate Studies Committee or the Graduate Faculty, with a copy to the student's advisor. For exceptions to university policy, the Graduate Director will forward the petition to the Graduate Council.