



Center for Professional Education
TESOL Certificate Program Handbook
2024-2025

Policies and Procedures for individuals
enrolled in the TESOL Certificate
Program

Applying to the Program:

CPE Application: The application is online and is separate from the general university application; CPE certificate candidates do not need to complete any other applications to SPU. No candidate can be admitted without a bachelor's degree. The application fee is \$50.00 and cannot be waived. The application is short and focused on collecting necessary data for program accreditation.

Apply Before Taking Classes: Candidates are subject to the TESOL Certificate requirements in place at the time of program application and admission; therefore, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply prior to taking courses. If admitted *after* completing coursework, only courses that meet the current TESOL Certificate plan of study will be transferred.

Timeline Once Admitted: Students are provided 5 years from acceptance date to complete coursework. Most programs can be completed in 1 or 1.5 years for students working steadily through the courses.

Non-Matriculated Status & Financial Aid:

- Participants in the TESOL Certificate program are considered non-matriculated students. The program will lead to a TESOL certificate but not a degree. Therefore, they are not eligible for financial aid.

Academic Expectations and Full Course Completion:

- **Expected Workload:** Self-paced courses are equal to 30 work hours per credit-so students should plan on devoting approximately 90 study hours to a 3-credit course.
- **B or Higher Grades Required:** Because students are working toward a continuing education certificate in a new subject area, a score of a solid B or higher is necessary in each course. Courses may not be taken for a Pass/Fail score-a letter grade is needed.
- **Assignment Completion Policy:** No student should opt to not complete assignments within a course once the B percentage has been reached-we require completion of ALL course assignments in order for the course to be applied toward the certificate completion.

Disability Services: CPE students may access services through SPU's Disability Office. If you believe you would benefit from accommodations, please email dss@spu.edu to begin the process. Since CPE students work in self-paced, self-programs, it is important for you to self-initiate any necessary accommodations as soon as you are aware of the need for accommodations.

SPU Library Services: CPE students have access to most Ames Library services, and can utilize the collections and databases available through <https://spu.edu/library>.

Transcript Reviews & Alternative Coursework: Due to the nature of the certificate program, transfer courses are not accepted at this time. Alternative coursework options are not available at this time.

Independent Plan of Study and Candidate Responsibility: This is a self-motivated program open only to individuals holding bachelors degrees, meaning students complete courses at their own pace within the 5-year period of enrollment. It is a student's responsibility to keep up with course offerings and program requirements. Students should regularly check the program website and create their own reminders for course registrations and should not plan to wait for emailed reminders. No refunds or special accommodations will be made for students who missed necessary courses-students must take ownership of their plan of study.

Program Timeline:

1. Apply for the program. (Request application link from tesol@spu.edu)
2. Complete all required courses as outlined in the plan of study.
3. Complete ELT 5555 TESOL practicum experience. (practicum experience is open to individuals who have completed all coursework required for the TESOL Certificate)
4. Receive TESOL Certificate.

Admitted Candidate Retention and Appeals

TESOL Certificate Timeframe and Retention: The average certificate candidate will typically complete all TESOL Certificate requirements within 2 calendar years.

1. If a candidate does not complete the certificate requirements in 5 years, the candidate will need to re-apply and submit to an evaluation of courses based on current certificate program requirements. Additional courses may be required.
2. If two calendar years lapse without any progress or communication from the candidate toward program completion, and the candidate is nonresponsive to outreach, the candidate's file will be closed and archived, and the candidate will be considered withdrawn. The candidate will need to re-apply if still interested in the TESOL Certificate.
3. If a candidate withdraws from the program but later requests re-admittance, they will need to pay to reapply and may also face additional program requirements as they will be re-admitted under the new coursework program.

Academic Appeals: The University provides a process whereby a student may appeal an academic decision, including, but not limited to, grades on course activities, evaluations, course grades, decisions on program admissions, and decisions on fulfillment of program and graduation requirements.

Academic appeals can be made only on grounds of unfair treatment against the stated standards, not against the professional judgment of the faculty member(s). The intent is always to resolve the appeal at the most immediate level. Only if a resolution cannot be obtained at the first level, is the process moved upward.

In each case, the student shall bring the appeal in writing to the person or committee who made the original decision, cc'ing tesol@spu.edu. If a resolution is not obtained at that level the student may appeal to the next level in the school or University administrative structure.

Appeal Guidelines: Appeals on final grades must be submitted within one quarter of the grade being awarded. For appeals on academic decisions such as grades on course activities, evaluations, course grades, and decisions on program admissions, the levels to be followed, in order, are as follows: Faculty member at the course level, Graduate program director, Dean, Vice president for academic affairs, President

1. An appeal must be made in writing within **five calendar days** of receiving the decision from the faculty member or committee.
2. Every attempt shall be made at each level to resolve the issue according to ethical practices, accreditation standards and University policy.
3. The person making the appeal should provide the necessary supportive information to substantiate the appeal.
4. If, for any reason, a case is appealed beyond the faculty member or faculty committee, an appeal file shall be created. This file will contain written documentation related to the case including, but not limited to, the student's written appeal and the faculty response. The appeal file shall be open to all principals in the case, including the student appellant.

Practicum Experience Withdrawal or No Credit

Practicum Experience Withdrawal: In some circumstances, it is necessary for a candidate to withdraw from the practicum experience. Each situation involving withdrawal is unique and considered on a case-by-case basis. Some procedures related to withdrawal from practicum include the following:

1. Voluntary withdrawal is precipitated by the candidate who will communicate intent and rationale to the practicum site and program chair. Common reasons for voluntary withdrawal include illness, family emergencies, or a change in professional goals.
2. Candidates who withdraw from Practicum Experience without the recommendation of the site supervisor or program administrators must petition for reapplication.
3. A NC grade in Practicum Experience is preceded by one or more of the following:
 - Failure to complete required coursework for the practicum experience
 - Failure to select and confirm a practicum site
 - Referral by the building administrator or mentor teacher for unsatisfactory performance or violation of professional conduct
 - Referral by program administrators or instructors for unsatisfactory academic performance or violation of professional conduct
 - After a candidate receives a NC in the practicum experience course, the candidate *may* be given one additional chance to enroll in the course, depending on the situation and submission of appropriate recommendation from both supporting administrator and mentor teachers must be submitted. Additionally, a re-admittance interview may be scheduled for candidates hoping to re-enter the program after withdrawal.

SPU's TESOL Practicum Experience Pedagogy Assessment Overview

What is ELT 5555 Practicum Experience?

- o ELT 555 Practicum Experience is a 10 week, 1-credit 5000-level course in which TESOL candidates demonstrate full proficiency in their new subject area. A 1-credit graduate-level course requires 20 hours of observation time at the practicum site. Candidates will demonstrate completion of practicum hours through check ins on the course canvas site. A final culminating assignment will complete the practicum course.

Practicum Experience prerequisites:

- o Complete the required coursework.
- o **Register for ELT 5555 TESOL Practicum course.**
- o **SELF-PLACEMENT: Locate an appropriate site for the practicum placement** (or verify your own classroom is appropriate, if applicable). This site should be teaching English to speakers of other languages in some capacity, at least two hours per week.
- o **SUGGESTED PLACEMENT: The TESOL Certificate is partnering with World Vision for practicum placement.** Please work with the course instructor for how to connect with World Vision for practicum placement.

Course overview:

- o **Written Requirements.** Details on written requirements are available in the courses canvas site, which you will be placed in upon enrollment in the practicum course.
- o **Practicum Site Requirements:** This course is designed to work with a site that is actively teaching English to speakers of other languages. The candidate will be observing the site, noting ways that learned materials is playing out in a real-life setting. Towards the end of your time, you may be asked to help with leading instruction time and working with participants.