

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), M.S.

The 2024-2025 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) concluded with a culmination meeting on March 4, 2026.

The following people attended the meeting: Amir Dabirian (Provost), Jessica Stern (Dean), Gabriela Nunez (Associate Dean), Nathan Carr (Chair), Daniel Rueckert (Program Coordinator), Sean Walker (Deputy Provost), Aimee Nelson (Executive Director for Graduate Studies, EDGS), and Su Swarat (Senior AVP for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, SAVPIEP).

The Provost congratulated the program for completing the PPR process and commended the program for its contribution to not only the university but also the broader region. The following specific accomplishments were highlighted during the PPR process:

- Students expressed high satisfaction with the program's full-time and part-time faculty, mentoring and support provided from admission through graduation, and the positive sense of community it provides.
- Students and alumni expressed feeling well prepared to work in TESOL-related careers as a result of the program.
- The program is the only TESOL program in Orange County and the only Subject Matter Preparation Program for English Language Development in California, meeting the needs of the community.
- The program's curriculum provides students with the foundation and skills needed to teach English to adults, including opportunities for service learning and an undergraduate certificate program.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

1. Curriculum improvement:

- The external reviewers recommended the program to continue to ensure the curriculum and course offerings reflect the current faculty's expertise and the evolving field needs (e.g., reworking TESL 595 as an ESP and Materials Development course).
- The Program Coordinator stated that the program is incorporating more AI in lesson design and adding ESP across the curriculum (not just one course). The faculty are currently working to establish common standards across the courses to ensure quality throughout the curriculum.

2. Student outreach and recruitment:

- The need to grow enrollment is highlighted through the PPR process. The Chair acknowledged the need and stated that the program ideally would like to have 20 new students each semester. It has been challenging given the international student decline.
 - The Provost recommended the program to explore auto-admit options of our graduating seniors in applicable majors, and to consider the possibility of collaborating with majors such as International Business or education credential programs on joint certificate programs.
 - The Dean suggested the possibility of developing a 4+1 program with Linguistics.

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- The EDGS suggested the program to work with the advising team and develop a one-page flyer that helps students understand the TESOL program.
- The external reviewers recommended the program to review and remove any prerequisites that may be a barrier for applicants.
 - The Chair stated that a plan is in place to remove some prerequisites (e.g. upper-division literature and culture requirement) but not all (e.g. English grammar requirement, 2-year foreign language requirement). With this plan, the Chair and the Coordinator are optimistic it will reduce barriers for applicants.
- The external reviewers also recommended the program to enhance its website to ensure the application process is clear and easy to understand and to highlight the program's key features (e.g., service-learning video).
 - The Chair and the Program Coordinator concurred. The Program Coordinator reported challenges associated with the service-learning video production.
 - The Provost recommended the program to work with Titan Communications to update the video.
 - The Provost suggested the program to feature job placement of alumni on the website as a tool for recruitment.
- The Chair stated that late applicants to the program often have high yield rate.
 - The EDGS agreed to support the program if there are applications submitted past the deadline.
- The Program Coordinator voiced the need for support and resources for recruitment.

3. Degree maps:

- The external reviewers recommended the program to develop sample degree maps for fall and spring entry to ensure sufficient enrollments and provide students with the needed courses for timely graduation, including offering courses in different modalities.
- The Chair concurred and reported that "typical" degree maps will be generated and provided to the students.
- The EDGS emphasized that these degree maps would also help students understand the timeline to graduation and thus reduce time to degree.

4. Faculty hiring needs:

- The external reviewers recommended the program to work with the Dean's office to increase program faculty to provide more support for the program and to diversify the program's faculty portfolio, including hiring a temporary part-time faculty member to support service work for the program.
- The Program Coordinator reported that a part-time faculty was hired to support service work and non-administrative duties, but this role cannot help with administrative responsibilities.
- The Program Coordinator stated that faculty needs are impacting methodology and some core courses as they are taught by different faculty and instructors, causing less consistency.
- The Dean expressed concern on whether the program enrollment can sustain new faculty hires, and the Program Coordinator agreed that the program is focused on growth to enable more hires.

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5. Space needs:

- The external reviewers recommended the program to identify alternative spaces to host courses and support student needs.
- The Program Coordinator reported that the current room available to the students (HSS 325) needs to be cleaned and renovated, with the immediate need of a new clock.
- The Provost agreed to purchase and install the clock.

The Provost concluded the meeting by thanking the department and program leadership and the faculty for their hard work.