

# Online Courses for ESL and ENL Endorsements

For more than forty years, the TESL program in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) has been helping on-campus teachers-in-training meet the ESL Endorsement requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The same State-approved courses offered on campus are also offered online to in-service teachers; they are taught by the same internationally recognized TESL specialists who teach them on campus.

Minimal ISBE requirements for those who wish to teach ESL in public school programs consist of (a) coursework in designated content areas and (b) clinical experience in a public school ESL or bilingual education program. Those who wish to earn an advanced credential, the ENL Endorsement (for secondary certificates only), must satisfy the two requirements above, (c) take two additional TESL or bilingual education courses, and (d) complete a State-administered TESL proficiency test. For more information about these two endorsements, refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below.

If you have questions that are not answered by the following information, please contact Dr. Wayne Dickerson, Program Director, Online Courses in Linguistics, at [ESLendorsement@illinois.edu](mailto:ESLendorsement@illinois.edu). The following Frequently Asked Questions document may answer many of your questions.

## [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

### Meeting Content-Area Requirements

The State requires that an ESL Endorsement candidate complete coursework in five content areas. In our program, that amounts to five courses (each either 3 hours of undergraduate credit or four hours of graduate credit). For the ENL Endorsement, two additional TESL courses are also required.

Most online course are eight weeks long and are offered during the Summer 2 session (early June through early August). A few online courses are offered during the Fall and Spring semesters. For information about when each course is offered, see [this listing](#) (<http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/onlinecourses/>). The full set of online courses for the ESL Endorsement can be completed in one academic year.

State of Illinois Required Content Areas	Online UIUC Courses Meeting Requirements
A. Linguistics	A. EIL 486 Linguistics for Language Teachers
B. Theoretical foundations of teaching ESL	B. EIL 489 Theoretical Foundations of SLA (Second Language Acquisition)
C. Assessment of the bilingual student	C. EIL 460 Principles of Language Testing
D. Methods and materials for teaching ESL	D. EIL 411 Introduction to TESL Methodology
E. Cross-cultural studies for teaching limited-English-proficiency students	E. CI 446 Culture in the Classroom*
F. Two TESL Electives (for the ENL Endorsement)	F. Recommended (for the ENL Endorsement): EIL 422 English Grammar for TESL Teachers EIL 488 Engl Phonology & Morphology for TESL

If you want to earn a Bilingual Endorsement (or a Bilingual Endorsement **and** an ESL Endorsement using the same courses), the College of Education offers a suite of online courses for this purpose. For information see <http://education.illinois.edu/online/besl/index.html>.<sup>1</sup>

\*This Curriculum and Instruction course has been offered online in the past from mid-July to mid-September. Contact the C&I department for more details: [connect@education.illinois.edu](mailto:connect@education.illinois.edu).

**Special Instructions for EIL 460:** Students taking EIL 460 must inform the instructor that she/he is taking the course to satisfy Illinois State Board of Education requirements for an ESL or ENL Endorsement. The instructor will adapt the curriculum for public school work. When the course is complete, the student must ask the instructor to write the Council on Teacher Education, stating that the course satisfies the public school assessment component.

A schedule of courses, tuition and registration information, as well as descriptions of online EIL courses can be found at <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/onlinecourses/index.html>.

## Meeting Clinical Experience Requirements

In-service teachers who teach at least three months in a public school ESL or bilingual education program can meet the practical on-site teaching requirement with a letter from their school principal, attesting to their months of clinical experience.

## Frequently Asked Questions

A great deal of helpful information can be found in the following FAQs to guide you in understanding your options and in making good decisions.

**Q:** Is an ESL Endorsement the same as an ENL (English as a New Language) Endorsement?

**A:** No. An ENL Endorsement is available only at the secondary level (Type 09 certificate). It requires the same minimum of 18 hours of coursework covering the five content areas and the same practical experience as the ESL Endorsement, but the teacher must also earn either (a) 6 additional hours of TESL or bilingual coursework (= minimum of 24 hours total) and pass a State-administered proficiency examination over TESL, or (b) take 14 additional hours of TESL or bilingual coursework (= minimum of 32 hours total). See

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<sup>1</sup>The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has approved a number of UIUC courses to meet its content-area requirements (left column in the table above). For a full listing of State-approved UIUC courses for ESL endorsements at different grade levels, please see <http://www.cote.illinois.edu/certification/Requirements/PrimaryGradeEndorsements.html#ESL>, <http://www.cote.illinois.edu/certification/middlegradeendorsements.html#ESL>, and <http://www.cote.illinois.edu/certification/secondaryendorsements.html#ESL>. Students may mix courses from different universities or different departments within a university in order to fulfill content-area requirements. However, those students who wish to teach in bilingual education programs and need a heavy concentration on bilingual education should take CI courses. For those students who wish to teach ESL in public school programs, we recommend that they take the EIL and LIING courses above because the professional preparation in these courses is exclusively for ESL teaching. (See the first four questions in [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.)

[http://www.isbe.state.il.us/certification/pdf/ESL\\_matrix.pdf](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/certification/pdf/ESL_matrix.pdf).

By passing the TESL proficiency test or by earning a total of 32 credit hours in TESL and/or bilingual education coursework, a middle and secondary grades teacher is considered Highly Qualified in this core area. Highly Qualified is a federal designation associated with the No Child Left Behind legislation. Since the principal teacher of an ESL class must be Highly Qualified, Federal law requires that parents be notified when their child is being taught this core area by a teacher who is not Highly Qualified. An ESL Endorsement alone does not satisfy the federal requirement to be Highly Qualified. Both endorsements are logged electronically in the [Educator's Certification System](#).

**Q:** What are the State of Illinois requirements for an ESL Endorsement?

**A:** The Illinois State Board of Education prescribes a minimum of 18 hours of content-area coursework in five specific content areas and 100 clock-hours or three months of practical teaching experience in a public school ESL or bilingual education program.

**Q:** What are the State of Illinois requirements for an ENL Endorsement?

**A:** The Illinois State Board of Education requires a minimum of 24 credit hours of coursework for the ENL Endorsement, covering the five content areas of the ESL Endorsement and two TESL or bilingual education electives, 100 clock-hours or three months of practical teaching experience in a public school ESL or bilingual education program, and successful completion of a State-administered TESL proficiency test. Instead of taking the TESL Proficiency Test, a candidate may elect to earn a minimum of 14 hours of credit in the areas of TESL or bilingual education beyond the 18 credit hours required for the ESL Endorsement (for a total of 32 credit hours).

**Q:** Is an ESL or ENL Endorsement enough to allow me to teach ESL in public schools?

**A:** No. An ESL or ENL Endorsement, by itself, does not entitle a teacher to teach ESL. In Illinois, the ESL Endorsement must be attached to a valid regular public school teaching certificate of Types 03, 04, 09, 10 ([http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/ESL\\_certification\\_chart.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/pdfs/ESL_certification_chart.pdf)). The ENL Endorsement must be attached to a secondary school teaching certificate (Type 09).

In addition, in order to teach ESL in grades 5-8, a teacher must hold a Middle Grades Endorsement. Information about earning the Middle Grades Endorsement online can be found at <http://education.illinois.edu/online/middlegrades/index.html>.

Furthermore, according to federal NCLB legislation, an ESL teacher who carries full responsibility for an ESL class must have earned the status of Highly Qualified. The ESL Endorsement alone does not satisfy this criterion; the ENL Endorsement qualifies a teacher for the status of Highly Qualified.

**Q:** Is an ESL or ENL Endorsement the same as a Certificate in TESL?

**A:** No. The ESL and ENL Endorsements are State-approved credentials for teaching ESL in a public school. A Certificate in TESL is an institution-awarded credential for teaching ESL in other contexts. In non-public school settings, a Certificate in TESL is understood by employers whereas an ESL or ENL Endorsement is not.

Upon completing the ENL Endorsement, a candidate may apply for the Certificate in TESL and is encouraged to do so. For details, see <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/certificate/documents/OnlineCertificateinTESL.html>.

By taking two EIL courses beyond those required for an ESL Endorsement, a teacher can earn a Certificate in TESL and is encouraged to apply for it. For details see the link above.

**Q:** What's the difference between an ESL Endorsement and a Bilingual Endorsement?

**A:** A Bilingual Endorsement allows a teacher to teach all school subjects except ESL in a classroom where students' native language is not English. An ESL Endorsement allows a teacher to teach only English as a second language.

The requirements for the two endorsements are similar but not the same.

**Content area requirements:** Coursework must cover five content areas in both. Three of these content areas are the same for both endorsements: (a) *Methods and materials for teaching ESL*, (b) *Assessment of the bilingual student*, and (c) *Cross-cultural studies for teaching limited-English-proficient students*. The other two content areas in each endorsement are different. For the ESL Endorsement, teachers must take courses in *Linguistics* and in *Foundations of teaching ESL*. For the Bilingual Endorsement, teachers must take courses in the *Foundations of bilingual education* and *Methods and materials for teaching in a bilingual program*.

**Practical experience:** Both endorsements require teachers to have 100 clock hours or 3 months of public school classroom experience. For the ESL Endorsement, the time may be spent either in an ESL program or in a bilingual education program. For the Bilingual Endorsement, the time must be spent in a bilingual education program.

**Language proficiency:** A teacher whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English before receiving an ESL Endorsement. A teacher whose native language is not that of students in a bilingual education program must demonstrate proficiency in that language (through a State-administered language proficiency test) before qualifying for a Bilingual Endorsement.

**Q:** Some programs offer an ESL Endorsement only, while others offer a Bilingual Endorsement and an ESL Endorsement. Is there a difference in the ESL Endorsements offered by these two types of programs?

**A:** There might be.

**The ideal.** For high-quality professional preparation, all ESL Endorsement courses should be taught by TESL specialists who are experienced in preparing teachers for public schools so that each course has an ESL emphasis and offers students a depth of understanding that will serve them well for their career.

**Consider the faculty.** Specialists in TESL often offer better professional development in teaching ESL than non-specialists. Therefore, it is less desirable to have specialists in theoretical linguistics, or bilingual education, or other subjects teaching TESL courses. While a specialist in a non-TESL area can certainly teach TESL subject matter, the greatest benefit to students usually comes from having TESL specialists teach their own specialty.

**Consider the shared content areas.** As noted in answer to the previous question, three content areas are the same in the Illinois ESL and Bilingual Endorsement requirements. Does it make any difference whether you meet the requirement in an ESL program or in a bilingual education program? Yes, it does! If you are working toward an ESL Endorsement, a TESL emphasis throughout the course is more desirable than a bilingual-education emphasis.

Furthermore, each content area has more than sufficient substance for a course of its own. By

combining content areas into a single course, coverage of each area is significantly diminished, even if coverage of the two areas is balanced in time. For example, if the content of *Methods and materials for teaching ESL* is combined with the content of *Methods and materials for teaching in a bilingual program*, both areas will be shortchanged, one more than the other, depending on the strength of the instructor.

**Consider the unique content areas.** Beyond the common content areas, each endorsement has two unique content areas. If each unique content area is covered in its own course, ESL Endorsement preparation will be stronger than if the unique area is merged with another content area in a single course. For example, if a program combines the *Foundations of bilingual education* with *Theoretical foundations of teaching ESL* into a single course, an endorsement candidate's preparation is compromised because both areas will suffer, one more likely than the other, depending on the specialty of the instructor.

**ESL Endorsement preparation at UIUC.** The TESL program in the Department of Linguistics has been in the business of preparing public-school ESL teachers for more than 40 years. Its faculty are TESL specialists who give each ESL Endorsement course—on campus and online—a TESL emphasis and a depth of coverage from a TESL perspective that results in appropriate professional preparation for a public school ESL teacher. For this reason, we recommend the suite of ESL Endorsement courses offered by the Department of Linguistics for teachers who wish to teach ESL in public school programs.

**Q:** Can I combine courses from different universities and from different departments within one university to fulfill ISBE requirements?

**A:** Yes. For many Illinois institutions, ISBE has approved specific courses that meet its content area requirements. You can mix these courses to satisfy ISBE requirements. You are not obliged to stay with a single program in order to complete content area requirements. For UIUC, the EIL, LING, and CI courses that the State has approved to meet primary and secondary ESL Endorsement requirements are at <http://www.cote.illinois.edu/certification/Endorsements.html>.

**Q:** Can I take some ESL Endorsement courses online and some on campus?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** I'm puzzled: Some programs require more courses, covering more areas, than ISBE lists as required for an ESL Endorsement.

**A:** Yes, it is confusing. In cases where institutions seem to require more coursework than ISBE requires for an ESL Endorsement, you need to keep in mind that ISBE alone sets the requirements for an ESL Endorsement. No program or institution can unilaterally modify ISBE requirements by adding to them or subtracting from them. You need not go beyond ISBE requirements to be entitled to an ESL Endorsement.

**Q:** I live outside of Illinois. Can I take your online endorsement courses for an endorsement in my state?

**A:** It depends on the requirements of your state. Many states have endorsement requirements that are the same as, or very similar to, those in Illinois. In such cases, teachers are often able to use Illinois endorsement courses to fulfill requirements in their own state. You should check with your State Office of Education first before enrolling in an out-of-state course. The following resource will help you locate the Office of Education in your state and its endorsement requirements: [http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org\\_list.cfm?category\\_cd=SEA](http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_cd=SEA).

**Q:** What is special about the TESL program in the Department of Linguistics at UIUC?

- A:**
- This department is the oldest continuing MATESL program in the United States, beginning in 1966. Almost from the beginning (in the early 1970s), our program began preparing public school teachers to teach ESL.
  - We helped develop the first bilingual/bicultural program for a public school, in which all children, regardless of their mother tongue, engage in learning another language and culture. The program became a model for other schools in the nation.
  - Many of our faculty members have taught in public schools. Some have helped to develop ESL assessments for the public schools in a consortium of states.
  - One of our faculty, who teaches three of the online ESL Endorsement courses, has recently been the Director of Foreign Language Teacher Education at the University of Illinois, preparing foreign language teachers for public schools across Illinois.
  - In the United States and Canada there are approximately 250 MATESL programs. An independent panel of evaluators, half of whom were from the international TESOL organization, had this to say about our MATESL program after a week-long on-site visit: 'The MATESL program is highly regarded nationally, and produces graduates who seem to be well satisfied with their education experiences and are able to find employment easily in the field for which they have been trained... In recent survey work as well as the way it is generally perceived by others, it is judged to be one of the top 4 to 5 programs in the United States and one of the top 6 to 8 in the world.'

**Q:** What qualifications do the online ESL Endorsement instructors in the Department of Linguistics at UIUC have?

**A:** All of our online instructors hold a Ph.D. degree, are specialists in TESL, and have had years of experience teaching ESL and preparing ESL teachers. In addition they have all had professional preparation as online instructors. All are either certified Master Online Teachers or are working toward this credential.

**Q:** Can an ESL Endorsement lead to a Certificate in TESL or to a MATESL degree?

**A:** Yes, to both questions.

A Certificate in TESL is a credential for teaching ESL in contexts other than U.S. public schools. Beyond the five courses required for the ESL Endorsement, a teacher who takes two more EIL courses can earn a Certificate in TESL which will entitle that teacher to the status of being Highly Qualified, according to the No Child Left Behind legislation. For Certificate details, see <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/certificate/documents/OnlineCertificateinTESL.html>.

A teacher who earns an ENL Endorsement has actually satisfied all requirements for a Certificate in TESL and is welcome to apply for the certificate using the guidelines found in the link above.

A Certificate in TESL from the University of Illinois can also be a stepping stone to a MATESL degree, the gold standard in the TESL profession. For details about applying course credits earned for the Certificate in TESL to fulfill requirements for the MATESL degree at UIUC, consult with the Program Director, Online Courses in Linguistics. For information about the MATESL degree at UIUC, see <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/grad/matesl/>.

**Q:** What is an online Department of Linguistics ESL or ENL Endorsement course like?

- A:**
- An eight-week course compresses a semester of work into half the time. So you should allot adequate time—usually about 4 hours a day—to keep up with assignments.
  - To help you feel comfortable from the start, each course provides an orientation to the online environment (called Moodle) where most of the instruction and activities take place.
  - Your work will be largely ‘asynchronous’, meaning that you do not have to be online at the same time as your instructor or peers. Instead, you will be able to complete assignments and activities when it’s convenient for you. Even so, you will be expected to meet deadlines in order to move through the course with your peers and finish on time. It is not a self-paced course.
  - Your peers will be like you, either pre-service or in-service ESL teachers.
  - You will receive instructor feedback on assignments and have on-going opportunities to raise questions if you feel you don’t understand something.
  - You will need a high-speed internet connection. While you will not need to buy any new software programs, you will likely need to download and install free software for some classes.
  - A few days before your online class begins, you may be asked to look at the course site, go through an orientation, get familiar moving around in the site, download and install software, read an introduction to the course to understand policies and expectations, etc. This helps everyone get off to a good start when the class actually begins.
  - Taking an ESL Endorsement course will be a highly engaging experience. You will likely find that you are much more involved in class activities and with your instructor and peers than in face-to-face classes.

**Q:** How can I tell if I am a good candidate for online learning?

**A:** Research has shown that successful online learners share certain characteristics. The following self-administered questionnaires focus on these characteristics and are useful to help you assess your readiness for online learning.

1. The SORT assessment (Student Online Readiness Tool) from the University System of Georgia, <http://www.occc.edu/OnlineResources/sort/index.html>
2. The University of Oklahoma Online Course Readiness Assessment: <http://cas-online.ou.edu/how-do-i-get-started>

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