



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Council on Postsecondary Education
OFFICE OF THE POSTSECONDARY COMMISSIONER
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Enclosure 5b2.
February 24, 2016

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TO: Members of the Council on Postsecondary Education

FROM: Jim Purcell, Ed.D, Commissioner for Postsecondary Education

DATE: February 15, 2016

RE: Rhode Island College Proposal for a Certificate of Graduate Study
in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)

Background

Rhode Island College is proposing to offer a 21-credit Certificate of Graduate Studies in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

Rationale

The Certificate in Graduate Studies in TESL provides students with an alternative pathway to TESL certification. Currently, students would need to complete a M.Ed. in TESL or take the TESL courses required for certification and request a credential review. Currently, many students choose the coursework and credential review, and therefore, they do not receive any credential from Rhode Island College. However, students completing a certificate in graduate studies in TESL will have the certificate noted on their transcripts. By offering these courses as a certificate, the college would be able to apply for eligibility for financial aid to support students in this program.

Teachers with TESL certification are in great demand as the number of English Language Learners increases in Rhode Island. Central Falls has established the goal of 100% of teachers with TESL certification; currently, the school district reports 50% TESL certification. The Rhode Island Foundation has established a fund to underwrite the cost of ESL certification for all teachers in the Providence, Central Falls and Pawtucket school districts.

Institutional Role

This certificate program fits within the mission of RIC to serve the needs of state residents in baccalaureate and graduate programs including the field of education.

The courses in the certificate are a subset of the courses in the M.Ed. in TESL. Students who complete the certificate in good standing, would be able to apply the courses toward requirements in the M.Ed.

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Interinstitutional Considerations

RIC reports that there are no other graduate certificates in TESL offered in Rhode Island.

Program

The program content is guided by RIDE certification standards. The courses are delivered as face-to-face courses.

	<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Credits</u>
TESL539	Language Acquisition and Learning	3
TESL 549	Sociocultural Foundations of Language Minority Education	3
TESL 541	Applied Linguistics in ESL	3
TESL 507	Teaching Reading & writing in ESL	3
TESL 551	Assessment in ESL	3
TESL 546	Teaching ESL: Required for Early Childhood Education and elementary teachers	3
TESL 548	Content ESL: Required for middle grades and secondary education teachers	3
Total 21 credits		

Faculty and Staff

The courses already exist and are taught as part of the M.Ed. in Teaching English as a Second Language. No additional faculty or staff are required.

Students

The college expects that the certificate will be most attractive to teachers in K-12 who are interested or required to have TESL certification. According to information provided by RIC, teachers who complete this certificate may be eligible for a salary increase based on the total number of credits earned above the bachelor's degree. Eligibility for and the amount of a salary increase are dependent on the school district.

Evaluation

The Department of Elementary Education and the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development will evaluate the success of this CGS through monitoring enrollment, completion rates, student GPAs, and student satisfaction surveys.

Financial Viability

All of the courses in the certificate are currently offered in the M.Ed. in Teaching English as a Second Language. Therefore, the students in the CGS program will add to the enrollment in these courses. There are no additional costs.

RIOPC Review

RIOPC staff reviewed the information on the proposed certificate of Graduate Study in Teaching English as a Second Language which was supplied by the Rhode Island College. The academic changes presented are within the mission, role and scope of Rhode Island College and do not require Council approval.