

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

1. CRITICAL THINKING IN THE EFL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE) CURRICULUM (offered by University of Oregon, Linguistics/American English Institute)

The goal of this course is to deepen participants' understanding of the theory and applied use of Critical Thinking (CT) principles and practices in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom by engaging in the following activities: 1) Reading and discussing professional information and articles to develop an understanding of CT theory and practice and its relationship to current topics in language pedagogy, 2) Identifying, evaluating, and applying materials and techniques to enhance CT practices in the classroom, 3) Interacting with colleagues regionally and internationally who share an interest in stimulating CT in their EFL classes, 4) Creating teaching plans that demonstrate understanding of course topics, and 5) Adapting and enhancing existing materials and techniques so they are more appropriate and effective CT tools in each participant's specific teaching setting.

2. TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS (TEYL) (offered by University of Maryland, Baltimore County, English Language Center)

This course is designed to introduce participants to the theory and practice of teaching young learners in the EFL classroom. The course will investigate approaches for teaching language within a meaningful context as well as the different techniques for making language input more comprehensible and encouraging student participation. Participants will look at the major principles that govern language teaching based on all of the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, we will study both traditional and modern instructional strategies and techniques for teaching EFL and look specifically at the application to young learners. Through academic reading and writing assignments, individual learner-centered activities, virtual collaborations with a mentor, and online discussions, participants in this course will explore various aspects for teaching EFL to young learners.

3. BUILDING TEACHING SKILLS THROUGH THE INTERACTIVE WEB (offered by University of Oregon, Linguistics/American English Institute)

This course is designed to deepen participants' understanding of the theory and applied use of CALL (computer assisted language learning) principles in the EFL classroom. This course strives to (1) model innovative online teaching practices, (2) improve understanding of and actively engage in the analysis and systematic adoption of innovative materials and tools for ELT (English Language Teaching), (3) offer opportunities for EFL educators to observe and analyze real-world application of such new materials and practices, (4) provide educators with support and problem-solving mechanisms as they implement new materials and practices in their teaching, and (5) act as a train-the-trainer model so that participants can move forward with concrete dissemination plans.

4. ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) BEST PRACTICES (offered by University of Oregon, Linguistics/American English Institute)

The goal of this course is to develop participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward designing, implementing, and evaluating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses based on best practices in the field. Because the foundation of this course is in best practices, new and experienced ESP practitioners are welcome from all areas of English for Specific Purposes. For example, participants may choose to focus on courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which address the needs of learners preparing to study in a specific academic discipline at a university, e.g., business, medicine, or law. Or, they may be working with learners who need Vocational English for Specific Purposes (VESP) to study at a vocational or technical secondary school. Other teachers/trainers at private language schools or in university ESP departments may be designing courses in English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) for individuals already in the workplace who need English as a tool for their job. The course will address the need for training in ESP to promote education and economic development at the local and national levels.

5. ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT (offered by University of Maryland, Baltimore County, English Language Center)

This course is designed to introduce participants to the theory and practice of foreign language assessment and testing. Participants will explore the differences between assessment and testing, and how they can be used to make effective decisions to support teaching and learning. Participants will also learn important concepts to consider when developing assessments and tests, such as validity, reliability, and practicality, as well as different kinds of assessments and tests (formative, summative, diagnostic, proficiency, achievement, product-oriented, process-oriented, alternative assessments). In order to develop capabilities in assessing EFL learners' performance in all four skill areas and content areas, participants will learn to write test specifications, develop items, analyze and edit items, and put together a final assessment instrument that is reliable, valid and useful. Finally, participants will gain experience developing rubrics to assist with grading and scoring and make the assessment process transparent to all stakeholders. Reading materials, presentations, and online resources will provide the foundation for interactive discussions on practical applications of all issues discussed throughout the course. The assignments will help participants expand their repertoire of EFL assessment strategies and will prepare them to share their findings and conclusions with the local community.

6. METHODS COURSE I: SURVEY OF BEST PRACTICES IN TESOL (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages) (offered by University of Maryland, Baltimore County, English Language Center)

This course is designed to provide participants with current methodologies associated with teaching English language learners (ELLs) of different ages in various learning contexts. Participants will read, write, discuss, and research a wide variety of strategies and techniques for TESOL. While exploring best practices for teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including grammar and vocabulary, participants learn how to create an effective and communicative language classroom for ELLs. In addition, participants will examine what best practices mean in the context of teaching English in the 21st century, where English is an international language and the use of English incorporates modern technologies. Through individual learner-centered activities and small group collaboration, participants in this course will put theory to practice using an experiential approach.

7. METHODS COURSE II: DEVELOPING EFL LITERACY THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING (offered by University of Maryland, Baltimore County, English Language Center)

Participants in this course will learn about both the theoretical and practical aspects of project-based learning (PBL) through a review of current articles and videos on this topic along with participation in class projects and discussions. Topics covered in the readings include theoretical foundations of PBL, learning objectives and course design, alternative assessment, motivation, collaborative and cooperative learning, learner autonomy and learning styles. Video segments include insights on the planning and implementation of PBL in language learning classes, teacher interviews, student testimonials, PBL in action in a classroom setting, and models of assessment for PBL. Participants will have many opportunities for focused and contrastive analysis of classroom practices in the videos, with ongoing guidance in developing appropriate application of observed techniques in their local English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching environments. Video footage will be available through the YouTube-UO web site: <http://www.youtube.com/uoregon>.

Participants will be required to complete individual and group projects in order to experience PBL from a student perspective and to gain insights and understanding of the benefits and potential challenges of PBL from an instructional standpoint.