

**The College of New Jersey
School of Education
Department of Special Education, Language, and Literacy**

ESLM 700: Comprehensive Exam

Course Credit: 0

Time and Place: TBA

Description:

The comprehensive exam is an addition to the NJ ESL certification requirements and one of the requirements for M.Ed. in TESL program to assess candidates' overall competence in content knowledge and implementation of TESOL P-12 standards and NJ state standards.

The topic areas of this exam were adapted from ETS ESOL Praxis II Exam in alignment with the TESOL standards and include the following five areas:

- 1) Analysis of Student Language Production
- 2) Linguistic Theories
- 3) Teaching Methods and Techniques
- 4) Assessment Techniques and Cultural Issues
- 5) Professional Issues

The candidates are assessed on their content knowledge through the courses in linguistics theories, methodologies and assessment. The exam provides a summative feedback on the knowledge and skills the candidates have acquired through the program to be an exemplary TESL professional. The exam is completed at the end of the program to measure candidates' abilities to apply theories to everyday classroom settings. It is a Pass/Fail exam.

Exam Instruction:

Candidates are required to write five short essays based on the given questions in five areas.

- Duration of the exam is four hours.
- Discuss and answer all the questions in all five areas.
- The answers should be type-written (double-spaced, 12 pt. font).
- No answer to one area should exceed two pages.
- Give resources or references whenever possible.
- Make sure that you answer all parts of every question.
- Use APA style.

Sample comprehensive questions

1) Analysis of Student Language Production

Discuss approaches and methods appropriate for analyzing students' oral and written assignments. How do you discover and identify learners' error patterns and provide appropriate feedback on those errors.

Using some examples to describe the major differences or problems between English and a home language of your ESL students in terms of phonology and grammar. What strategies or approaches will you use to overcome students' major difficulties?

2) Linguistic Theories

Discuss the concepts of grammatical competence, communicative competence, and socio-linguistic competence in relation to Jim Cummins' model of BICS and CALP (1981). What do the concepts and Cummins' model mean for curriculum, methods, and assessment in the ESL classroom?

Discuss Krashen's Monitor Model and its five interrelated hypotheses. What does this model mean for curriculum, methods, and assessment in the ESL classroom? Finally, what relevant factors are not addressed by Krashen?

Discuss the process of first and second language acquisition. What are the similarities and differences? Evaluate the relating factors that directly impact successful language development for both L1 and L2 learners. Discuss what you can do to facilitate the acquisition process in your ESL classroom.

3) Teaching Methods and Techniques

Consider the Natural Approach, Whole Language, Total Physical Response or three other methods. How can they be used most appropriately to teach various aspects of language? Discuss the possible implications of an integrated approach in your school setting.

What are the positive and negative aspects of using Whole Language or Phonics based curriculum in an ESL classroom? What special problems does this approach pose for ESL students?

What are the impacts of new technology such as The Internet, email, and multimedia on ESL instruction? How can you use new technology in your class instruction?

4) Assessment Techniques and Cultural Issues

Discuss the impact of some factors such as learners' cultural and socioeconomic background, learning environment, and first language, in the process of first and second language acquisition. Discuss what you can do to facilitate the acquisition process in your ESL classroom.

Why must students' cultural backgrounds be taken into consideration when shaping the educational system? Discuss the impact this consideration should have on curriculum, school

environment, and teaching style for an ESL program in a public school or an international school setting.

Discuss the strength and weakness of traditional, port-folio, authentic, or holistic assessment. What procedures, and instruments should be used to assess ESL students in your school setting? Discuss what types of assessment are appropriate to evaluate students' learning?

5) Professional Issues

Discuss issues related to language policy towards minority students in terms of language programs, curriculum and instructional approaches. What is the impact of Lau vs Nichols on the language policy towards linguistic minorities in the US?

Discuss the importance of partnership of ESL teachers with mainstream teachers or with parents of your ESL students. What projects or strategies do you think are good to promote partnership or parenting?

Comprehensive Exam

(Partially adopted from the College of Notre Dame)

Criterion	Unacceptable (1)	Acceptable (2)	Competent (3)	Exemplary (4)	Question/ Score
Content Knowledge	The candidate fails to answer most of the questions correctly, demonstrating little or no understanding or relevant theories and issues.	The candidate answers some of the questions correctly, demonstrating a basic understanding or relevant theories and issues.	The candidate answers most of the questions correctly, and thoroughly, demonstrating a strong understanding or relevant theories and issues.	The candidate answers all of the questions correctly, and thoroughly, demonstrating an in-depth understanding or relevant theories and issues.	1 2 3 4 5
Supporting Details	The candidate offers no supporting details from the courses and readings.	The candidate offers sufficient supporting details from the courses and readings.	The candidate offers good supporting details from the courses and readings or from personal observations and /or experience.	The candidate offers clear and relevant supporting details from the courses and readings and from personal observations and /or experience.	1 2 3 4 5
Organization	The candidate answers most of the questions in an illogical and disorganized manner	The candidate answers most of the questions coherently but does not present clear transitions from one idea to the other.	The candidate presents logical and well-organized answers to most of the questions.	The candidate presents logical and compelling answers to all questions.	1 2 3 4 5
Application	The candidate shows no implementation of the knowledge of theories and issues in ESL classroom instruction.	The candidate shows some implementation of the knowledge of theories and issues in ESL classroom instruction.	The candidate demonstrates good and practical use of the knowledge of theories and issues in ESL classroom instruction.	The candidate demonstrates well-developed ideas and methods to use the knowledge of theories and issues in ESL classroom instruction.	1 2 3 4 5