BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER

Curriculum Philosophy
Mission Statement

The English Language Center is committed to quality teaching and learning of English as a second language and dedicated service. We work together to accomplish this by:

- Educating students using the best methods and technology available
- Inspiring a gospel centered lifestyle
- Promoting cutting edge research
- Sharing our expertise and resources with the church and community
- Training faculty in teaching, administration, and curriculum development

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During its first 25 years, the English Language Center (ELC) saw thousands of students develop language skills and cultural understanding and hundreds of teachers and budding administrators gain invaluable professional insights and experience. While past accomplishments are significant, the future possibilities of the ELC are even more promising. However, for the ELC to achieve its potential, language instruction must be positioned on a principled curriculum. Just as any well-prepared language teacher must be governed by a teaching philosophy—based on a sound understanding of the English language and how it is taught and learned—so too must a language program be grounded philosophically. To these ends, this curriculum philosophy has been drafted to serve as a guiding document for the ELC curriculum and related research.

This document is divided into three major sections: Curriculum Philosophy; Context and Definitions; and Facts, Assumptions, Action Steps, and Research Questions. The Curriculum Philosophy provides a definition of curriculum and presents the principles on which ELC curricular decisions are based. Context and Definitions provides a clear setting for important issues such as student needs, faculty experience, and budget and resource constraints that must be considered in curricular decisions. The Facts, Assumptions, Action Steps, and Research Questions section is the core of this document. It includes our commonly held beliefs about principles of language learning and teaching that inform curricular decisions as well as research questions aimed at refining our assumptions and action steps.

**ELC CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY**

The ELC curriculum philosophy is based on one definition and three principles. While curriculum has a variety of meanings, Rogers (1989, p. 26) offers a functional description. For ELC purposes:

**Curriculum is all those activities in which [students] engage under the auspices of the school. This includes not only what [students] learn, but how they learn it, how teachers help them learn, using what supporting materials, styles and methods of assessment, and in what kind of facilities.**

Along with this definition, three interrelated principles are applied to develop and maintain a curriculum that is stable, responsive, and cohesive (see Figure 1). While each of these principles is delineated in greater detail below, the following serves as a brief outline. Though all effective curricula must embrace some innovation, a stable curriculum implements change in a way that is orderly, systematic, and principled.

**For a curriculum to change in this manner and to remain viable, it must also be responsive to such factors as student needs, institutional and environmental changes, and current research. Without responsiveness, a stable curriculum soon stagnates. Finally, a sound curriculum is cohesive in that there is internal consistency and continuity between and across the various elements of the curriculum.**

**“This curriculum philosophy is designed to be used as a tool for all who have a stake in the ELC curriculum.”**

**In what ways do you think the current ELC curriculum is**
- Stable?
- Cohesive?
- Responsive?

**How could it be more**
- Stable?
- Cohesive?
- Responsive?

**Why do you need a personal teaching philosophy?**

**What aspects of the curriculum, as defined by Rodgers (1989), do you have direct influence over?**

**Classroom Management**

You have ten students in your class who are recent high school graduates, two are university graduates preparing to enter graduate school in a U.S. university, and one is a history teacher here on leave to improve his English language skills.

**What challenges might you face in maintaining a stable, responsive, and cohesive class?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Cohesive</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>
PURPOSES
This curriculum philosophy serves two primary purposes. First, it defines the principles that guide ELC curricular decisions. This is particularly important in a lab program (see Context and Definitions) such as that of the ELC, where frequent turnover of faculty and administrators is common. Similarly, since the ELC is exposed to the latest thinking and trends in language teaching, without guiding principles the curriculum could easily evolve into a collection of well-intentioned ideas. As Patricia A. Richard-Amato (2003, p. 195) has observed, “A hodgepodge of activities . . . does not a curriculum make.” Second, this document establishes the guidelines for curricular implementation and related research. In this regard it helps establish a much-needed institutional memory. Rather than just being moved by great ideas, the ELC curriculum is grounded on a common base.

USE
This curriculum philosophy is designed to be used as a tool by all who have a stake in the ELC curriculum. In particular, the Faculty Training and Curriculum Committee (FTC) and the Executive Council (EC) may use it as a guideline to analyze curriculum and research questions such as what aspects of the English language will be taught, why and how they will be taught, and when they will be taught. Each of these questions must be addressed clearly and consistently as curricular changes are considered for the ELC. This document also serves as a guide for teacher training, which is an essential aspect of a quality curriculum. Additionally, this document is central to the mission and purpose of the Testing, Research, and Evaluation Committee (TREC).

STABLE
A stable curriculum is built on proven principles of language teaching and learning that are garnered through years of research and experience. At the same time, a curriculum resistant to innovation will soon stagnate. While appropriate innovations are vital to keep the curriculum viable, current, and vibrant, a stable program will have a deliberate, principled, and systematic procedure for managing curricular change. Unwarranted changes made without constraint can be disruptive and counterproductive. Rather, curricular change must be planned, purposeful, and controlled. This is particularly true in a lab school such as the ELC, where there may be the tendency based on the latest teaching trends to change the curriculum frequently. Stability and change are complementary concepts in the ELC curriculum. A stable curriculum is dynamic and in tune with the institutional environment of teaching and learning.

Stability can be achieved in a number of dimensions—such as continuity of textbooks, materials, faculty, teaching techniques, and approaches to assessment. In order to maintain a stable curriculum in a climate of change, the ELC curriculum has oversight by and input from a number of key committees: Faculty Training and Curriculum (FTC), Executive Council (EC), the Coordinator’s Council (CC), and the Testing, Research, and Evaluation Committee (TREC). Principal oversight of the curriculum is the responsibility of the FTC committee, which reviews and recommends changes to the EC and CC for final approval. In addition, TREC discusses and recommends changes in assessment and research-related issues.

RESPONSIVE
Responsiveness in the curriculum is directly connected to stability. For a curriculum to remain viable and stable, it must be responsive to a variety of factors such as student needs and expectations, teacher ability, material resources, sponsoring institution, and assessment and research. While such responses can either

"Stability and change are complementary concepts. . ."

Stable, cohesive, and responsive are key principles of the ELC curriculum philosophy. How are these elements applicable to your personal philosophy?

Stable
Cohesive
Responsive

What are some possible factors that could bring instability to your classroom curriculum?

Since this is your first semester teaching, many students in the class do not trust your ability as a teacher; some students have expressed this verbally in front of other students. You in turn have developed a mistrust of the students.

What impact will this situation have on the three key principles of a sound curriculum?

Stable
Cohesive
Responsive

Classroom Management
be reactive or proactive, the ELC acts proactively in its response to factors that influence the curriculum. Such a posture can only be maintained by establishing a culture of awareness. This awareness comes through staying informed of student needs, interests, and attitudes; keeping involved in institutional matters; participating in high levels of professional activity; and maintaining an active and informed research agenda. Such research is driven by questions arising from ongoing program assessment and evaluation and in turn refines and informs practice.

**COHESIVE**

Cohesion within a curriculum implies that there is internal consistency and continuity between and within levels. This suggests that both students and teachers understand that what they are learning and teaching is related to other aspects of the program. For instance, what happens in level two is influenced by what is taught in levels one and three. Cohesion can also occur across classes within a particular level. For example, in a writing class, students may write about the same topic they are reading about in their reading class or use vocabulary in their grammar class that they learned in their listening/speaking class. Such an approach is likely to reinforce learning. Cohesion is also manifest in materials and activities that prepare advanced students to meet future needs such as professional or university-level English study. Thus these logical links can appear between levels and across classes, language skills, and learning resources. Such cohesion, however, requires careful planning and integration of the curriculum. Though favoring one of these principles to the exclusion of the others would be problematic, together these three principles bring a dynamic balance and prospective that protects and strengthens the curriculum.

**CURRICULUM OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The FTC committee, in conjunction with TREC, has primary responsibility for curriculum oversight and implementation at the ELC. Suggestions for curricular changes may be submitted by anyone (students, teachers, staff, etc.) associated with the ELC. However, in order to maintain a responsive, stable, and cohesive curriculum, all curriculum proposals should be submitted to the skill area coordinator with the most direct supervision over a proposed change. Skill area coordinators submit proposed changes to the FTC and TREC for review and recommendations. Proposed changes can either be approved for submission to the EC for review or sent back to the skill area coordinator for further revision. Once the FTC and TREC have approved proposed changes, those changes are then sent on to the EC for review. Following review by the EC, curricular changes are sent back to the FTC for revision or implementation.

As a general guideline, FTC and TREC will review proposals that have broad, consequential implications for the ELC curriculum. FTC and TREC do not typically review scheduling, logistical, and administrative changes (see Figure 2, page 8).

In what ways can the ELC curriculum be more cohesive within and between levels and skills?

How can you build cohesion within and between your classroom curriculum?

What must a teacher do to develop a culture of awareness in the classroom?

What impact will this situation have on the three key principles of a sound curriculum?
A philosophy void of context is little more than a collection of interesting ideas. The following contexts and definitions serve as the underpinnings for the curricular assumptions and action steps of the ELC.

**MISSION STATEMENT**
The mission statement document provides the bases for:
- Educating students using the best methods and technology available
- Sharing our expertise and resources with the Church and community
- Promoting cutting-edge research
- Inspiring a gospel-centered lifestyle
- Training faculty in teaching, administration, and curriculum development

**LAB SCHOOL**
The BYU English Language Center exists as a lab school with a dual educative purpose. First, the center exists as an essential component of the Department of Linguistics and English Language graduate TESOL programs. Graduate students in the certificate and master’s programs use the ELC as a laboratory for research, administration, and teaching. Second, in order to provide graduate students with authentic teaching experiences, the ELC also provides academic English language instruction for ESL learners.

**ADMINISTRATION**
The ELC is housed in the Linguistics and English Language Department of the College of Humanities and is overseen by the respective dean and department chair. In this regard the ELC helps fulfill the overall academic mission of both the college and the department by providing a fertile environment for preparing teachers, training administrators, and conducting research.

“A stable curriculum is built on proven principles of language teaching and learning that are garnered through years of research and experience. At the same time, a curriculum resistant to innovation will soon stagnate.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are the principles of a stable, cohesive and responsive curriculum incorporated into Figure 2?</td>
<td>How would you try to get a teaching technique that has been successful in your class implemented into the ELC curriculum?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| How are the principles of a stable, cohesive and responsive curriculum incorporated into the ELC Mission Statement? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s your first semester teaching at the ELC. Many of the students are near your age, and they seem not to respect you as a teacher. They manifest this disrespect in a variety of ways: feet on desks, talking to others while you are teaching, throwing things across the room, yawning out loud while you are speaking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| List some possible effects this situation will have on the curriculum of the class. |
| Stable | Cohesive | Responsive |

Figure 2. Curriculum Input and Implementation
The administration specific to the ELC consists of three levels (see Figure 3). The first administration level is the ELC coordinator, who oversees the entire institution, along with an administrative executive secretary and operations manager. The second level consists of a coordinator of technology and assessment, an associate coordinator for testing, an associate coordinator for curriculum, an associate coordinator for outreach, and a specialist in curriculum and test development. These first two levels make up the ELC Coordinator’s Council, which provides recommendations to the director, oversees particular ELC needs (e.g., curriculum, testing, evaluation, and student support), and serves to maintain an institutional memory. The third level consists of six full-time faculty members (seven on the diagram) who work at the ELC for three years. The full-time faculty members are assigned specific responsibilities, which may include skill area coordination (listening and speaking, reading, writing, and grammar), student life, the Student Access Study Center (SASC), labs, TOEFL preparation, religion classes, the ELC choir, etc. Responsibilities will be divided among the faculty as needed and may change and rotate. The three levels together make up the ELC Council, which oversees the specific needs of the ELC.

### Affiliations

While the ELC is a self-supporting English language program, it is tied directly to Brigham Young University through the College of Humanities and the Linguistics and English Language Department. It also works closely with the Division of Continuing Education, which provides a variety of additional support services (see Figure 4, page 12). Each of the affiliations depicted in figure 4 has an impact on how the ELC operates and may influence future directions the ELC takes.

Technology is a wonderful thing, but cell phones have become a problem in your ELC classes. Some students seem to spend as much time texting as they do participating in class. In addition, almost all cell phone conversations are in students’ native languages.

What impact does this situation have on your ability to maintain a stable, cohesive and responsive class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Cohesive</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

“For a curriculum to remain viable and stable, it must be responsive to a variety of factors such as student needs and expectations, the ability of the teachers, material resources, the sponsoring institution, assessment and research.”

The multiple organizations affiliated with the ELC have an impact on what happens at the ELC. In what ways must the ELC be responsive to these multiple organizations?

In what ways must you as a classroom teacher be responsive to the organizations with which the ELC is affiliated?
POLICIES

ELC policies and procedures include all written guidelines for governing aspects of administrative, instructional, or recreational activity at the ELC. The ELC recognizes the value of maintaining a uniform listing of policies and procedures designed to prevent problems and to standardize, simplify, and streamline day-to-day operations in one comprehensive document and seeks to make appropriate sections as accessible as possible to those who are expected to carry out the policies and procedures.

The ELC strives to accommodate the following groups:

1. Students—The ELC writes policy and procedure information for students in simple language and provides appropriate translations whenever possible.
2. Teachers—Due to high turnovers and hectic student schedules, the ELC makes policy and procedure information as accessible as possible to teachers through summaries, bulleted sections, etc.
3. University—Rather than operating as an independent, self-supported program, the ELC recognizes its role in fulfilling the purposes of its sponsoring department, college, and university. Therefore, the ELC seeks to implement all university, college, and departmental policies and procedures in an exemplary manner.

FACULTY

The English Language Center faculty is composed of full- and part-time staff (see table 1, page 14). Full-time faculty consists of recent BYU graduates with an MA in TESOL, linguistics, and language acquisition who are hired to nonrenewable three-year teaching/administrative positions. In addition, full-time administrators include the Coordinator’s Council, whose members serve for an unspecified number of years. Part-time faculty includes MA and TESOL graduate certificate students and community teachers. The majority of ELC teachers have high levels of TESOL training but limited classroom experience. The average teaching experience for a faculty member at the ELC is only two to three semesters.
Support staff is in place to provide assistance to teachers and students. The staff serves in the operations manager’s office, the SASC, the computer lab, and the front office at University Parkway Center (UPC), home of the ELC. The operations manager makes decisions related to student admission, student visas and I-20 verification, and payment of tuition. He or she also supervises the part-time student secretaries in the office, who answer the telephone, make copies for teachers, and answer questions for students and visitors about admission to the ELC.

The executive assistant manages the part-time student secretaries, SASC attendants, and paid and volunteer SASC tutors. SASC attendants check out materials to students and respond to questions. SASC tutors meet with students by appointment to provide assistance, input, and feedback on assignments; meet with small groups of students for speaking practice; and assist in managing the part-time student secretaries. Assistant Computer Support Representatives (CSRs) and lab attendants work in the computer lab. Assistant CSRs provide support with in-house computer- and technology-related questions. Lab attendants respond to student questions about computer assignments students have received in class.

This table displays information about the composition of the teachers at the ELC. Data are for the first two columns are percentages for each segment of the teacher population and data for the other columns are averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty composition</th>
<th>Classes per semester</th>
<th>Highest Level of Professional Training</th>
<th>Professional Teaching ESL at the ELC</th>
<th>Non-teaching ESL at other institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BYU Student—First Semester</td>
<td>10% 10%</td>
<td>TESOL Courses</td>
<td>1 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Student—2 or More Semesters</td>
<td>30% 14%</td>
<td>TESOL Certificate</td>
<td>5 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-student—First Semester</td>
<td>4% 4%</td>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-student—2 or More Semesters</td>
<td>35% 10%</td>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>11 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Council—Fulltime</td>
<td>14% 15%</td>
<td>MA plus coursework</td>
<td>8 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYU Linguistics &amp; English Language Faculty</td>
<td>4% 1%</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>11 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. ELC Faculty Composition

**SUPPORT STAFF**

"This curriculum philosophy is designed to be used as a tool for all who have a stake in the ELC curriculum."

In what ways are the principles of a stable, responsive and cohesive curriculum applicable to the ELC Support Staff?

**Institution**

Given the nature of the faculty at the ELC as described in Table 1 on page 14, how can a stable, responsive, cohesive curriculum be established?

**Classroom Management**

You spend a lot of time preparing your lesson plans and the activities. You follow the plans closely. You sense that some of the students already know what you are covering. This is sometimes manifest in open expressions of boredom, but you don’t want to rush through your plans. Otherwise you may run out of things to do.

What impact does this situation have on your ability to maintain a stable, cohesive and responsive class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Cohesive</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STUDENTS
Students come to the ELC to learn English for various reasons. A large majority study at the ELC to become proficient enough in English to attend an American university as graduate or undergraduate students. The others wish to learn English to pursue other professional endeavors. The students’ proficiencies vary greatly. Students’ proficiency levels range from novice-mid to advanced-low. There are five levels.

ELC students come from more than 45 nations. While the total number of countries is large, nearly three-quarters of the student body comes from six countries: Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, Japan, Peru, and Mongolia. Korea is the most represented country at the ELC, but Spanish is the most common native language among the students.

Students range in age from 17 to over 50 with more than half the student body falling between the ages of 17 and 25. Nearly 66 percent of these students are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Other religions represented at the ELC include Baptist, Methodism, Pentecostalism, Buddhism, and Catholicism.

While some students study at the ELC only one semester, a few have been known to stay up to two years. Less than 1.5 percent of the ELC student body actually begins at Level 1 and works their way through all five proficiency levels. The average duration of study at the ELC is 2.75 semesters, excluding semesters designated for vacations or medical leave, which, on average, includes approximately 10 percent of the student body at any given time. The average number of proficiency levels successfully completed during a student’s time at the ELC is 2.5. Though nearly 1.5 percent of the student body will skip a level at some time during their study at the ELC, these figures show that many students need to repeat their classes one or more times before progressing to the next proficiency level. Table 2 illustrates the average percentage of students at each proficiency level.

Table 2. Percentage of ELC Students at Each Proficiency Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESOURCES
The ELC has most of the University Parkway Center (UPC) devoted to its use. The ELC has access to the building Monday through Friday until 6pm. After 5pm, only the first floor is devoted to the ELC. After 6pm and on weekends, the building serves as a church building for campus wards. The facilities of the UPC include a computer lab, a self-access study center (SASC), a teacher resource library, part-time teacher offices, full-time teacher offices, a main office with 2 copy machines, a staff/storage room, 20 classrooms, 2 kitchens and a gymnasium. There are approximately 85 student-accessible computers and 30 computers for faculty and staff use.

Because the ELC is a self-supporting institution, its budget is directly related to student enrollment. And given the ELC’s affiliation with the Linguistics English Language Department and the College of Humanities, the ELC’s budget is also linked to these two university units. The budget is maintained and adjusted by the Coordinators’ Council and is managed by the Operations Manager.

On average, students study only 2.75 semesters at the ELC. How can the program maintain a stable, responsive, and cohesive curriculum?

How does the knowledge that students study at the ELC for an average of 2.75 semesters influence what you teach in the classroom?

Demands on your time have been particularly heavy this semester. There just isn’t enough time to fully prepare for your class at the ELC. You borrow lesson plans, and activities from other teachers to compensate for your lack of preparation. Group work is used quite extensively to fill gaps in class when you don’t have prepared, focused, meaningful activities.

What impact does this situation have on your ability to maintain a stable, cohesive and responsive class?
Given the ELC’s Curriculum Philosophy and the contexts and definitions outlined above, the following section of this document includes the facts, assumptions, and corresponding action steps that represent commonly-held beliefs and guiding principles that inform ELC curriculum development and decision-making. Essential facts, assumptions, action steps, and corresponding research questions are included for each of the following sections:

1. **Faculty**
2. **Students**
3. **Language Learning**
4. **Technology**
5. **Research**

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**Classroom Management**

You cannot recall a class session when a student or two does not get up in the middle of class and walk out. They usually stay out of the class for prolonged periods of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What impact does this situation have on your ability to maintain a stable, cohesive and responsive class?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As any good teacher knows, the methods of instruction and the range of material covered are matters of small importance as compared with the success in arousing the natural curiosity of the students and stimulating their interest in exploring on their own. (Chomsky, 1988, p. 135).

Facts and Assumptions
1. Experience and training will improve teachers’ skills.
2. The majority of ELC teachers need support due to their limited classroom experience.
3. Teachers, regardless of experience level, need institutional training to succeed at the ELC.
4. Teacher turnover at the ELC will be high and fairly constant.
5. Teachers’ goals, motivations and commitment levels vary.
6. Teachers need effective classroom management skills in order to facilitate teaching and learning.
7. Teaching and learning are facilitated when teachers understand course objectives.
8. Effective collaboration and communication improve the ELC.
9. Professional development activities benefit teachers and the ELC.
10. Effectively assessing student skills improves teaching and learning.
11. Observations are an effective form of professional development.
12. Professionalism benefits the ELC and teacher career development.
13. Transparent and equitable substitution policies will enhance teaching and learning and teacher morale.
14. Effective tutoring can enhance student learning.
15. Teachers affect students.

Complete the table below by indicating which principle(s) you think the 15 facts and assumptions about the ELC faculty correspond with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fact/Assumption</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Cohesive</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Experience and training will improve teachers’ skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The majority of ELC teachers need support due to their limited classroom experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Teachers, regardless of experience level, need institutional training to succeed at the ELC.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Teacher turnover at the ELC will be high and fairly constant.</td>
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<td>5. Teachers’ goals, motivations and commitment levels vary.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6. Teachers need effective classroom management skills in order to facilitate teaching and learning.</td>
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<td>7. Teaching and learning are facilitated when teachers understand course objectives.</td>
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<td>8. Effective collaboration and communication improve the ELC.</td>
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<td>9. Professional development activities benefit teachers and the ELC.</td>
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<td>10. Effectively assessing student skills improves teaching and learning.</td>
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<td>13. Transparent and equitable substitution policies will enhance teaching and learning and teacher morale.</td>
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<td>14. Effective tutoring can enhance student learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Teachers affect students.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Experience and training will improve teachers’ skills.

**ACTION STEPS**
1.1 We give teachers opportunities to tutor students and mentor teachers.
1.2 We give teachers opportunities to request to teach different skills and levels.
1.3 We give teachers opportunities to be observed and receive feedback on their teaching.
1.4 We give teachers opportunities to participate in committee work and develop materials.
1.5 We give teachers opportunities to participate in ongoing research projects.
1.6 We offer recent graduates the opportunity to apply for ELC positions.

**Research Questions**
- What impact do class observations have on teachers who are being observed?
- What observation methods are most effective for ELC teachers?
- What percentage of ELC teachers participate in committees and research projects, and how do they feel about those experiences?
- What impact does EC experience have on employability and career development?
- What parts of the ELC experience are most valuable to teachers in their future careers?

2. The majority of ELC teachers need support due to their limited classroom experience.

**ACTION STEPS**
2.1 We pair every new teacher with a skilled teacher who has recently taught that same course twice and is currently teaching that course.
2.2 We establish a regular line of communication between mentors, mentees, and skill area coordinators. We establish a system of accountability through this line of communication.
2.3 We pay mentors adequately.
2.4 We provide an online discussion board for each skill.
2.5 Teachers who teach the same students meet and coordinate efforts.
2.6 We provide through the ELC Web site a list of teachers who have taught each skill area and level.
2.7 We provide opportunities to observe, be observed, and receive feedback.
2.8 We provide inservice training.
2.9 We provide mentoring.
2.10 We encourage peer mentoring.

**Research Questions**
- How do teacher and student satisfaction compare between lab schools (i.e., the ELC) and non-lab schools?
- What percentage of ELC teachers participates in peer collaboration, and how do they feel about these experiences?

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“One telling measure of how differently teaching is regarded from traditional scholarship or research within the academy is what a difference it makes to have a ‘problem’ in one versus the other. In scholarship and research, having a ‘problem’ is at the heart of the investigative process; it is the compound of the generative questions around which all creative and productive activity revolves. But in one’s teaching, a ‘problem’ is something you don’t want to have, and if you have one, you probably want to fix it. Asking a colleague about a problem in his or her research is an invitation; asking about a problem in one’s teaching would probably seem like an accusation. Changing the status of the problem in teaching from terminal remediation to ongoing investigation is precisely what the movement for a scholarship of teaching is all about.” (Bass, 1999, ¶ 1)

Select one of the 15 Facts and Assumptions that seems particularly pertinent to you at this time in your career, and list three specific action steps you can take to improve your abilities as a language teacher.

1. 
2. 
3. 

Based on the quote by Randy Bass (above) identify a “problem” in your teaching that you could research.

**Classroom Management**

Students in the class always tend to sit next to friends and others who speak their native language. This results in a lot of non-English chatter in class.

| What impact does this situation have on your ability to maintain a stable, cohesive and responsive class? |
|---|---|---|
| Stable | Cohesive | Responsive |

22 23
3. Teachers, regardless of experience level, need institutional training to succeed at the ELC.

**ACTION STEPS**
3.1 We provide new teacher orientation and follow-up training.
3.2 We provide workshops.
3.3 We provide SASC and resource library training.
3.4 We provide mentoring.

**Research Questions**
- How do experienced and community teachers feel about ELC professional development?
- How do BYU’s TESOL graduate students perceive the usefulness of the training in courses when applied to teaching at the ELC?
- How do ELC training opportunities compare to other IEP professional development opportunities?
- What types of linguistics classes/training best prepare teachers for teaching in adult ESL programs?
- What are the professional development needs of ELC teachers? Do we meet these needs?

4. Teacher turnover at the ELC will be high and fairly constant.

**ACTION STEPS**
4.1 We provide simple and straightforward training materials.
4.2 We keep training materials current.

**Research Questions**
- Where do ELC teachers go after they leave the ELC?
- What career goals do current ELC teachers have?

5. Teachers’ goals, motivations and commitment levels vary.

**ACTION STEPS**
5.1 We strive to meet the needs of those who will benefit the most from what the ELC can offer them.
5.2 In our efforts to help those who want to actively participate and improve their skills, we don’t get distracted by those who may be less committed or less eager to improve.

**Research Question**
What skills, goals, and experience does the Executive Council look for when hiring new members?

An asterisk (*) indicates that the marked research question has come from the ELC Research Agenda Document.

6. Teachers need effective classroom management skills in order to facilitate teaching and learning.

**ACTION STEPS**
6.1 We provide training in classroom management issues and techniques.
6.2 We provide training in the enforcement of ELC and BYU policies.
6.3 We encourage team teachers to communicate with each other in these areas.

**Research Questions**
- How do classroom management issues compare across ELC proficiency levels?
- What classroom management issues do teachers feel the least prepared to address?

7. Teaching and learning are facilitated when teachers understand course objectives.

**ACTION STEPS**
7.1 We make skill area binders as clear and accessible as possible.
7.2 We urge skill area coordinators to continue to improve and update the binders.
7.3 We ensure a sufficient number of binders are available.

**Research Questions**
- How have ELC course objectives changed over time?
- What trends and needs have influenced the evolution of the ELC curriculum?

8. Effective collaboration and communication improve the ELC.

**ACTION STEPS**
8.1 Teachers regularly communicate with team teachers.
8.2 Teachers share syllabi and materials.
8.3 Teachers participate in peer mentoring.
8.4 Teachers participate in collaborative research projects.
8.5 Teachers communicate with each other and program administrators about how the ELC might be improved.
8.6 We provide opportunities for those who want to collaborate.
8.7 We require all skill area coordinators to distribute a list of faculty teaching the same courses.
8.8 We provide teachers with a list of the three other teachers in their track.

**Research Questions**
- To what degree do teachers collaborate and communicate across class tracks, and what form does this collaboration take?
- What effect does teacher collaboration have on teacher development and student learning?
9. Professional development activities benefit teachers and the ELC.

**ACTION STEPS**
9.1 We encourage the development of effective materials.
9.2 We encourage collaborative action research.
9.3 We encourage conference attendance and participation.

**Research Question**
What are teachers’ goals for participating in professional conferences, and how are those goals met?

10. Effectively assessing student skills improves teaching and learning.

**ACTION STEPS**
10.1 Teachers take LING 660.
10.2 Teachers share tests with other teachers.
10.3 Teachers are required to see the tests before their students take them.
10.4 Teachers research assessment procedures for the skill areas and levels they teach.
10.5 Teachers provide feedback on assessment procedures.

**Research Questions**
a. To what degree does Just-In-Time (JIT) teaching take place at the ELC?
b. How do teachers use tests to inform and influence their teaching?
c. How do teachers use needs assessment in their classes? What effect does needs assessment have on teaching and learning?

11. Observations are an effective form of professional development.

**ACTION STEPS**
11.1 We explain purposes and consequences of observations to teachers.
11.2 We provide observation feedback to teachers.

**Research Questions**
a. How do teachers feel about observation feedback?
b. What forms of feedback do teachers want from their supervisors?
c. How does observation influence professional development?

12. Professionalism benefits the ELC and teacher career development.

**ACTION STEPS**
12.1 Teachers come to class dressed professionally and adhere to BYU dress and grooming standards.
12.2 Teachers communicate with each other by daily checking their personal boxes, e-mail, and phone messages and returning communications promptly.
12.3 Teachers support and encourage students while managing classes well.
12.4 Teachers support and exemplify English-only and other policies.
12.4.1 We provide easy, current, and abridged online access to written statements of policies and procedures with full versions accessible through a link.
12.4.2 We notify all faculty of policy changes with an e-mail referring them to the updated online version.
12.4.3 We require all teachers who miss a meeting to make up the hours at the end of the semester.
12.4.4 We provide opportunities for faculty to contribute to policy and procedure discussions through meeting notes, blogs, etc.
12.5 Teachers meet their nonteaching commitments.
12.5.1 Teachers attend and facilitate extracurricular events.
12.5.2 Teachers rate Level Achievement Tests (LATS).
12.6 Teachers come to class prepared and teach well.
12.6.1 Teachers spend at least one hour per day preparing for class.
12.6.2 Students provide teacher feedback.
12.6.3 Teachers are provided with ongoing, systematic observations.
12.6.4 Teachers use class time wisely.
12.6.5 Teachers use communicative activities in class.
12.6.6 Teachers apply appropriate feedback from observers.

**Research Questions**
a. How do IEPs and other intensive language programs encourage language use?
b. How do teacher lesson plans compare in structures and activities?
c. How does a teacher’s participation in LAT rating influence their teaching?

13. Transparent and equitable substitution policies will enhance teaching and learning and teacher morale.

**ACTION STEPS**
13.1 We provide an equitable and accessible substitution policy.
13.2 We generate an authorized list of substitutes.
13.3 We provide a system for providing emergency substitutes.
13.4 We provide teachers one sick day a semester for each course they teach.

**Research Question**
How do teachers choose a substitute?

14. Effective tutoring can enhance student learning.

**ACTION STEPS**
14.1 Tutors receive orientation (including task sheets).
14.2 Teachers provide written instructions to tutors, tutors sign it, and students bring it back.
14.3 Tutors look at tutor binders in the SASC.

14.4 Students receive help in each skill area.

14.5 Writing teachers take students to the SASC and show them where and how to sign up.

14.6 Skill area coordinators provide materials for tutors in the SASC.

Research Questions
a. How do students feel about their tutoring experiences?
b. What kinds of help do students seek from tutors?

teachers affect students.

ACTION STEPS
15.1 Teachers are observed and provided feedback on their classroom rapport.

Research Question
a. What experiences, values, knowledge, and skills characterize effective adult ESL teachers?
b. What can administrators do to help teachers acquire desirable experiences, values, knowledge, and skills?
c. According to students, what are the qualities of a good language teacher?
d. How do student impressions of good teacher qualities compare across cultural groups?

REFERENCES


