



# NEWSLETTER

Fall 2022 | Volume I & II

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### Introduction

The UVM TESOL Newsletter is a quarterly online bulletin that features practical articles and useful resources for teachers-in-training or all those interested in teaching English as a second/foreign language. Written primarily by our students and featuring local or international professionals, the newsletter will provide readers with news, information and updates on the latest research, effective classroom practices, and peer-to-peer advice on classroom resources, lesson plans, and other practical topics in the field of English language education. The ultimate goal of our newsletter is to keep everyone informed while creating a safe and productive space for professional conversations around our common interest.

## OUR VALUES

**Respect:** We advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion, access, multilingualism and multiculturalism.

**Integrity:** We are committed to ethical action.

**Professionalism:** We will focus on high quality work and outstanding accomplishments.

**Holistic education:** We focus on a comprehensive approach to teaching where we seek to address the emotional, social, ethical, and academic needs of students in an integrated learning format.

# EDITOR SPOTLIGHT

## Amber Lynch Assistant Editor

I am a senior double major in Linguistics and Anthropology, concentrating in Sociolinguistics as well as pursuing my TESOL certificate. My goal is to go to grad school and eventually teach English domestically to immigrant populations. Coming into UVM, I had no idea that I wanted to study Linguistics. To me, a linguist was a translator. I took LING 080 as an elective, but it taught me that linguistics is so much more than being a polyglot. It sparked a passion for learning about how people communicate. Language is something that we all use, but very few people know why or how we talk the way we do. I want to be one of those people. But what does one do with that information? Research and writing for sure, but I've always loved connecting with people. Teaching has always been a passion of mine, but I never knew how I could incorporate Linguistics into teaching. For me, the answer to all these questions was a TESOL certificate. TESOL allows someone to teach English anywhere. It combines knowledge of how language works with how someone can actually use that information. Learning any new language is helpful, but learning English in today's world can open so many doors. Getting my TESOL certificate checks all the boxes: my passion for teaching and helping others to make a real difference. Working on this project and meeting with people in this field made me all the more sure that TESOL was what I wanted to do.

## Lauren Atwood Developmental Editor

My name is Lauren Atwood, and I am currently a sophomore studying Linguistics and English. Even from a young age, I have always found language learning fascinating. I am now learning two languages, Spanish and Korean. It brings me so much joy when I can speak with people using a second or third language. Speaking another language enables various opportunities. To name but a few, meeting and learning about new people, places, and cultures. Having had fantastic language teachers over the years, I can honestly say that their ability to be patient and creative made my experience so positive. I dream of being that figure for my students one day. I am new to this program but eager to see where it leads. Some of my future goals are to teach English abroad while also continuing my language-learning journey. I would also love to work with kids at the beginning of my career, but ultimately I wish to teach with an adult learning focus. What I hope to gain from the UVM TESOL certification is confidence in my teaching ability and an understanding of how to be the best teacher I can be. One aspect that resonates with me is that teaching is not stagnant. In other words, it requires continual learning and implementing new strategies to improve one's ability to teach productively. This drive to be better is rewarding and acts as my motivation. Launching the TESOL Newsletter offers a new avenue for me and anyone interested in this field, an opportunity to explore different topics within the TESOL community. It also enables continued growth and understanding of ESL teaching.

## **Marguerite Althoff**

### **Developmental Editor**

I am a fourth-year double major in Linguistics and Philosophy and am also pursuing a Certificate of Public Librarianship outside of UVM. Though I am new to the world of TESOL, it is a practical combination of language and education that I am thrilled to explore. In the future, I hope to be a public librarian and utilize my knowledge of TESOL in teaching English classes to immigrant populations through libraries. I chose to pursue becoming a public librarian for the same reasons I am choosing to pursue teaching English to speakers of other languages: I am passionate about removing barriers to education, and I am passionate about language. My journey to TESOL began with a conversation with Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, William Falls at the Admitted Student Day four years ago. He asked me about my major, which was Spanish at the time. I told him that I loved learning about how Spanish worked, so he suggested that I take the introductory course to Linguistics. I did and immediately fell in love with it. After my first semester, I switched my major to Linguistics. Four years later, I signed up for my first TESOL class. I have always enjoyed tutoring and leading groups, but never had the opportunity to fully explore teaching. Being in the course helped me realize that I see myself teaching English as a part of my future, so I joined this newsletter team to meet others interested in TESOL and share in the exchange of information about this ever-evolving field.

## **Jamie Buckley**

### **Developmental Editor**

I recently graduated from UVM with a major in Linguistics, a minor in Psychology, and a certificate in TESOL; I have decided to further my education by pursuing linguistics at the graduate level. I began my undergraduate career with a certain attraction toward Spanish, a language I'd been learning since I was a toddler, but I became aware that what fascinated me the most was all the inner workings beneath the language. I chose to pursue a major in linguistics instead, which was where I learned about the TESOL program. I was hesitant at first, because, as an introvert, I didn't think I would feel comfortable teaching. I took the risk though, and I'm so glad I did. The TESOL program doesn't just teach you how to teach English, it prepares you to be confident in your knowledge and skills and how to best tailor material and classes to your students. My fellow classmates and I had an opportunity last semester to teach English to a small group of grad students at UVM. These weekly sessions allowed us to learn how to co-teach, how to create lesson plans tailored to students' weaknesses and level of English, and, most importantly, how to improvise when things didn't go our way. After graduating, I spent two months as a volunteer tutoring children in English at a nonprofit school in Guatemala, which ultimately led me to decide to pursue a PhD in linguistics. TESOL has taught me so much more than how to teach—it taught me the importance of understanding students' needs, their different learning styles, and their different backgrounds. I hope this newsletter will open the door to more students to have the opportunity to experience UVM's TESOL program.

## Diana Popa

### Senior Editor

I am a senior lecturer in the Linguistics Department at the University of Vermont. Raised bilingual (Romanian and English), I have been able to take the best of both worlds. I grew up in a multilingual context, and my passion for language learning came naturally. After getting my B.A. in English and French, I pursued an M.A. in translation studies. At the same time, I applied for a Ph.D. program that allowed me to specialize in Linguistics. A certificate in TESOL was an opportunity to refine my knowledge in teaching English as a second/foreign language. I started my career in education at a very early age and soon understood that it is a complex and rewarding profession. My job opened the door to different opportunities, and I got to explore, live and work in several countries around the globe. Being part of the UVM TESOL Program has been a great experience, and the time has come to give back to our community of learners. The UVM TESOL Newsletter is a student-led project that lets us communicate directly with current and potential students. It will include important news and updates about our program, interviews, and stories of success, as well as essential resources for those looking to teach English in the U.S., online, or abroad.

## TESOL Resources

- **UVM's TESOL Program** - <https://www.uvm.edu/cas/linguistics/tesol-teaching-english-speakers-other-languages>
- **St Mike's TESOL Program** - <https://www.smcvt.edu/academics/graduate-programs/teaching-english-to-speakers-of-other-languages/>
- **ELL Learning Services** - <https://vtadultlearning.org/services/#english-language-learning-ell>
- **VT ESL Directory** - <https://www.esldirectory.com/esl-program-search/usa/vermont/>
- **Higher Ed Grants** - <https://www.higheredgrants.info/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=54383>
- **TESOL Resource Center** - <https://www.tesol.org/connect/tesol-resource-center>
- **TESOL Career Center** - <https://careers.tesol.org/jobs/>

# TESOL Program at UVM

Getting a TESOL Certificate from UVM combines the study of theoretical linguistics, second language acquisition, cultural awareness, and English teaching methods.

The following courses are required for all students:

## **LING 080 (3 Credits)**

Introduction to Linguistics  
Fall/Spring

Introduces the cognitive, biological, and cultural influences on communication as well as modern linguistic theory. Covers primary areas of linguistic study and specialized research in the field.

## **LING 081 (3 Credits)**

Structure of English Language  
Fall/Spring

Introduces aspects of the structure of the English language, focusing on grammatical structures (syntax and morphology) rather than phonological structure. The general theme running through the course is how best to discover, describe and teach grammatical patterns in English.

## **LING 177 (3 Credits)**

Second Language Acquisition  
Spring

Explores the connection between age and processes of language learning. Focuses on how cognitive, social, and environmental influences affect success in passing as a native speaker.

## **LING 170 (3 Credits)**

TESOL and Applied Linguistics  
Fall

The popularity of second/foreign language acquisition as a research base for teaching and learning foreign languages in conventional and innovative educational settings is growing. This class will examine the relationship of SLA/ESL to other relevant areas of inquiry, such as foreign language methodology and applied linguistics.

## **LING 270 (4 Credits)**

Techniques and Procedures in ESL  
Spring

The capstone experience in the TESOL Certificate Program. Students learn by engaging, describing, and analyzing shared, thought-provoking experiences designed to directly relate to developing skills, attitudes, and awareness necessary for effective teaching English for speakers of other languages (TESOL) or English as a foreign language (TEFL).



# The Secret Recipe: The Growth Mindset

Throughout my teaching career, I have often come across articles, talks, workshops, and classes that discuss in detail what makes a good teacher, why become a teacher in the first place, and the role of teachers in the community of learners or a community at large. However, like many other professionals in my field, I have always felt that it must be more to teaching than being ready to learn, educate and deliver. Somehow, I knew there must be a secret recipe to success. Why can some teachers and students go much further than their peers in pursuing a happy and fulfilling work life? How can challenges and programmed limitations become the launchpad for those with a dream? After years of experience, I can say without a doubt that the answer is always the same – they all possess a growth mindset. But what is the growth mindset, and how can it help teachers and students find the path to success?

In 2006, Carol Dweck, the Lewis, and Virginia Eaton Professor of Psychology at Stanford University, published a book called *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. In her simple yet powerful theory, Dweck talks about two opposing mindsets people possess and ultimately embrace: the fixed and the growth mindset. While the fixed mindset relies on the belief that we are born with a fixed amount of intelligence and ability, the growth mindset knows that with practice, perseverance, and effort, people have limitless potential to learn and grow. The emphasis here is on the process of growth. Challenges are tackled with confidence, and mistakes are viewed as an opportunity to learn. In other words, people with a growth mindset view themselves differently than those with a fixed mindset.

A growth mindset operates under the assumption that our innate abilities can be enhanced by our willingness to learn, and our effort and persistence are the ones to dictate how adept we become at any given pursuit. As Dweck notes, “a person’s true potential is unknown (and unknowable); (...) it’s impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training”. Does that mean we are all a few hours away from becoming the greatest writer of all time, the best athlete, or the most famous painter in the world? Not necessarily. Nevertheless, it does mean that any aptitude and talent can be refined with experience, effort, resilience, and determination, ultimately leading to great success regardless of the starting point. And since mindset is present in virtually every aspect of our lives, it will heavily influence the lens through which we see the world.

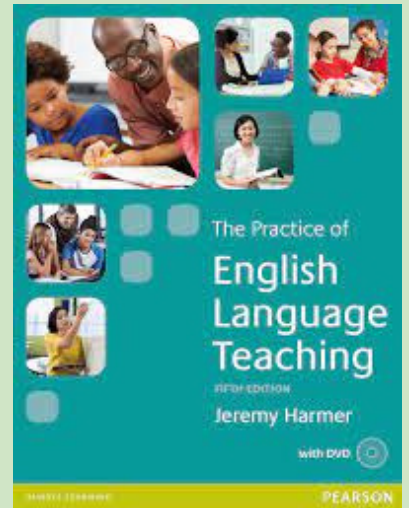
I now invite all my teachers-in training from our TESOL program to consider their mindset for a moment. From decision-making to career goals, our mindsets heavily influence the lens through which we see the world. The growth-mindset teacher has the ability to positively impact student performance, in addition to fostering a growth-oriented learning culture. Teachers’ mindsets will also change how they relate to those around them. A growth mindset is infectious! It teaches everyone an important lesson: we all can learn, and we will succeed!

**Diana Popa**

# BOOK REVIEW

## The Practice of English Language Teaching (5th Ed.) - Jeremy Harmer

This is the first book students are required to read as a part of the TESOL program. This resource breaks down the basics of what teaching English can look like in several different contexts. Harmer starts with general theories of language learning, then progresses to learning about the students. He promotes the idea that different methods and procedures are most appropriate for different types of learners, and goes on to explain approaches to teaching language as a system as well as language skills. Finally, the book concludes with how these methods can look in the classroom with considerations of incorporating technology. Included with the book is the 3 hour DVD that contains footage of English lessons all over the world, as well as interviews with the teachers regarding their process for lesson development and any reflections they had after the lesson concluded.



My personal experience with this book so far has been limited, as the class this book supports has been focused on the theories behind language teaching and how that can manifest in methods at this point. These chapters include very little information on practical applications of these approaches. The TESOL course uses additional resources detailing possible techniques to supplement the theories of this book, which round out the practical aspect that seems to be missing from this book. Overall, combined with the use of supplementary materials covering the practical realization of these theories as well as the included films and interviews, this book provides a great introduction to approaches to language teaching, but is in no way a comprehensive guide.

**Amber Lynch**

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT - Maryan and Alireza

Maryan and Alireza Fath are International Graduate Students who took the ESL class les by TESOL students in Spring 2022. What did they have to say?

**"They made the content interesting." When asked to elaborate, the main thing that stood out was the individualized focus. "They learned what we found interesting and incorporated that into the lessons." The main thing they took away was English grammar and pronunciation, which was a priority in preparing for the TOEFL Exam. "Every day was something new!" they added, highlighting the song lyrics they filled in and the viral videos they watched. A common theme was how the teachers were "individual and specific" with their choice of activities, adding how they progressed in informal and casual speech in addition to grammatical structure. "We had a lot of fun!"**

# Experiential Learning: An Opportunity to Get Involved

Over the summer, we had the opportunity to interview one of our community's most dedicated ELL teaching teams. Patti Tursi, Erika Monaghan, and Robin Suarez are on the EL/ML team at Shelburne Community School. Shelburne Community School is part of Champlain Valley School District, serving students in grades PreK- 8. Currently, the language backgrounds of the school's multilingual learners are as follows: Pashto, Romanian, Nepali, Spanish, Portuguese, Dari, Chinese, Burmese, German, Hebrew, French, and Czech.

One of the team's dearest EL projects is the summer camp program. The idea behind it is to extend the year-round programming, which the team considers essential for continuity purposes, and to allow students to explore experiential language learning. The team confirmed, "There was always something for someone to learn." Erika and Robin know Shelburne and Charlotte community very well from working and living there and found some great trips to take their students on every day. Patti's role was to design and coordinate a coherent poetry curriculum for students of all ages to express their observations and ideas through poetry. The poems students created could be about anything, but they had to be built around the experiences that the group and the individuals had in the class.

The summer program has not only been successful for more than 12 years but has also grown to include three schools in the Champlain Valley School District. Their immediate goal is to find a way to add Hinesburg under their umbrella. The summer program has always had the support of the administrators as well as Title III funds from the State of Vermont. Since the summer program is expanding, there is always a need for help and a willingness to mentor. Patti, Erika, and Robin took the opportunity to express their interest in a potential collaboration with our UVM TESOL teachers-in-training over the summer and facilitate mentoring for those interested in having a rewarding teaching experience.

When asked what advice they would give our novice professionals, the team unanimously agreed that being relationship-driven has been a crucial aspect of their teaching career. As a teacher, you can be an expert in your field; however, you will only be entirely successful once you genuinely get to know your students extremely well. You have to establish rapport to know how to cater to their individual needs. Next, be observant. Learn from your students, be open to communicating at their level. The third word of advice was to lean on your peers. Collaborate with your fellow teachers. Be willing to share ideas, ask for feedback and put yourself out there to create a solid professional connection. Being vulnerable is the last and most important piece of advice the team provided. Be ok with what you do not know and be honest about it. There will always be someone who will know something more than you. Start by acknowledging it "Oh, I don't know. What do you know about that?" If you know and understand that you will grow with your students, you will be impressed with how many new and exciting things you will learn on your journey.

**Diana Popa**



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT - Nick Drennon

Nick ('21) was a Linguistics and Spanish double major in addition to a recipient of the TESOL certification. I asked him: Why enter the program?

"My main goal was teaching," he says. "My classes already overlapped." With a linguistics major mostly complete, he was already partially there when he learned about the program. His goal was to participate in the JET and teach English in Japan. He highlights "the [TESOL] classes really simulate what teaching is like"

What are you doing now? Did you end up teaching abroad?

"So COVID happened..." and unfortunately Nick wasn't able to join the JET program. He now works for a nonprofit, but the skills he learned from TESOL are still important. "I am a bilingual advocate" he adds, pointing out his experience with communication and critical thinking continue to be relevant. "TESOL teaches you how to think outside of the box," which is relevant in any and every field.

Do you have any advice you want to share?

"Study another language!" he stated without any hesitation. "I'm still trying to be bilingual, I would use it all the time". He additionally highlights, "If you have any thoughts of going abroad TESOL is so marketable." Nick concluded with how important multicultural awareness is and that anyone can benefit from finishing the program.

## COMING SOON - Let's Talk TESOL!

We are excited to announce the launch of **Let's Talk TESOL**, a TESOL - themed podcast!

Our first episode will cover misconceptions surrounding the TESOL program and the ESL discipline more broadly.

Launching December 15th, check our Insta page! @uvmtesol

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT - Emily Moran

Emily ('21) worked towards becoming a Speech Language Pathologist at her time at UVM. Why take on the TESOL Certificate as well?

"It gives you a leg up in communicating with several different types of people." She is currently teaching an ELL class and noticed there is a lack of research in the field. She noted how important TESOL is for helping support teachers of students from many backgrounds. She had been a substitute teacher before for a multilingual class, but the lack of support for ESL teachers was frustrating.

How did the TESOL program help?

She looks back fondly at LING 270. "It gives a great practical application of the content," highlighting how "the textbook was super helpful." She appreciated how the program looks at multilingualism "as a benefit, rather than a drawback." There was a lot of flexibility and independence in the lesson plans, and practice presenting helped give a sense of what a career in the field would look like.

What are your goals for the future? How does TESOL play into them?

Emily is currently continuing her studies in SLP at Massachusetts General Hospital, intending to work with kids in the healthcare field. Despite her not directly going into TESOL long term, she comments that the training "Can help in any job, regardless of the field, The skills are still important." Awareness of multiculturalism and identity is relevant in any discipline.

## Contact Form

Do you have any questions?  
Scan here to fill out an interest  
form and we'll be in touch!



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT - Jamie Buckley

After graduating from UVM with a TESOL certificate, I had the opportunity to volunteer at a nonprofit school in Guatemala where my sister had previously worked. The School of Hope, a school that's funded by a nonprofit called Education for the Children, provides education to disadvantaged children in the Jocotenango area. For eight weeks, I worked one-on-one with three different students to help better their English. The students varied in age and level of English, so I customized my approach to each session to make sure they got the most out of it. With one student, we typically just talked and I offered feedback if necessary. The other two kids were younger and needed more guidance, so we often focused on one activity or topic. It was really great to be able to apply what I had learned through the TESOL program, tailoring my sessions based on each student's needs. I also learned that I preferred teaching one-on-one, and with less structure than in a classroom full of students. Of course, this isn't typically possible as most ESL classes are much bigger, but it's important to know your strengths as a teacher—one of the many lessons I learned in the TESOL program. Teaching English to nonnative speakers and helping students prepare for whatever comes after was extremely rewarding for me. You're able to help students succeed both academically and socially, and you can see their improvement in real time. I'm grateful for the UVM TESOL program and the opportunity that I had to work with these students.

## Follow us on Instagram!



**@uvmtesol**

*News, updates on the podcast, changes to the program, upcoming editions, and opportunities to work and travel!*

# WHERE TO GO NEXT?

5 Step plan for teaching  
English abroad or online

## YOU ARE HERE!

STEP  
01

### Research

Check out all the resources: TESOL Newsletter and podcast and more!

STEP  
02

### Connect

Write an email to a professor in the TESOL Program. They can help answer your questions and provide guidance when choosing a class.

STEP  
03

### Enroll

Enroll in the first mandatory class Ling 080 - Intro to Linguistics. It's your first step. Check with one of the program professors if you think you might need to enroll in a different class.

STEP  
04

### Complete the program

Complete the program (all 5 mandatory classes). Receive your TESOL Certificate when you graduate UVM.

STEP  
05

### Get hired & teach English

Get hired to teach English abroad or online.

Get in touch with us!



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