

# Westchester Community College

## TESOL Certificate Program

### Program Description

The TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Certificate Program at Westchester Community College is an intensive program that prepares new teachers who may have little or no background in teaching ESL. Offered through the college's English Language Institute (ELI) the TESOL program offers 126 hours of training including extensive supervised teaching. It also provides participants with fundamental theoretical knowledge and the opportunity to build a solid base of classroom skills, including hands-on practice teaching, in preparation for employment in the field of TESOL.

### Need for Program

The need for a TESOL certificate program at Westchester Community College arose mainly from three factors:

- Demand for ESL teaching services
- Providing training *and* extensive classroom teaching experience
- Interest in second careers

First, teaching English to speakers of other languages has been very much in demand not only in the U.S., but also abroad. The same is true locally in Westchester County, where one in four residents was born abroad. The English Language Institute at Westchester Community College provides ESL classes for over 4,000 students per year; it is one of the largest ESL programs in the region, requiring the hiring or rehiring of 65 to 80 adjunct instructors three times per year in advance of each term.

Second, experience has shown that while there are always qualified applicants, there are usually not enough with the right combination of experience and training. Even those with Master's degrees in TESOL, or graduates of certificate programs may have acquired little practical little knowledge or teaching experience of the kind relevant to adult/college ESL at Westchester Community College. One of the key strengths of the TESOL Certificate Program is the integration of extensive, supervised classroom practice utilizing the college's multi-level ESL programs.

Third, the number of people looking for a change of career, or for a second career, has been increasing. Many of these professionals have shown interest in a teaching career, especially in the ESL field, but cannot afford to spend the time or money in a master's program, typically requiring two years of study. However, there are only a few schools

in the New York City metro area that offer TESOL certificates, about three in New York City and none in Westchester County.

### **Program Design**

For these reasons, the TESOL Certificate Program at Westchester Community College was designed to meet the needs of those with some teaching experience but no formal training in TESOL, or of those who have no teaching experience but wish to pursue employment in teaching English as a second language to adults. The program is also suitable for ESL teachers who wish to advance their knowledge of adult TESOL methodology and technology.

The program offers instruction in the following areas: principles of language teaching and learning, English phonology, phonetics, and structure, effective lesson planning in reading, writing, speaking, and grammar at different levels, and in language proficiency assessment.

### **For more information, contact:**

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