

English

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ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

English – [BA](#), [MA](#), [Minor](#)

Linguistics – [Minor](#)

Teaching English/Second Language – Certificate

Technical Communication – Certificate

The English Department offers Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts programs, minors in English and Linguistics, and certificates in Teaching English as a Second Language and Technical Communications. Additionally, in cooperation with the School of Education, the department prepares undergraduates and graduates for careers in secondary school teaching. Finally, the English Department provides a wide array of general education courses in composition, literature, film, and creative writing.

An English major or minor is valuable preparation for any career in which critical thinking, nuanced analysis, and clear communication are essential. Many of our majors pursue graduate study in English, education, creative writing, or law; the major provides an excellent foundation for all of these fields. First and foremost, however, students of English are humanists, deeply concerned about the welfare of others. Through imaginatively inhabiting the worlds writers create, English students gain empathy, tolerance, and perspective, habits of mind that will benefit them throughout their lives.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

Provides individuals with specialized training to teach successfully in a wide variety of ESL programs. Both undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled in any degree program at Cal Poly may pursue this certificate. The 30-unit TESL program provides a solid background in theoretical and applied linguistics, cross-cultural

communication, second language acquisition, and methods of TESL. The program is designed for two career options:

- (1) The Post-Secondary/Adult option prepares individuals to teach in college level and adult education programs. Those wishing to teach at the college level are advised that an MA in English or a related field is the usual minimum requirement for full-time positions.
- (2) The K-12 option prepares individuals having a single or multiple subject credential to teach ESL in elementary and secondary schools.

Technical Communication. Commercial, academic and governmental organizations employ technical communicators as writers, editors, public relations experts, information designers, documentation and project managers, and as mixed media creators. The technical communicator is, first and foremost, an accomplished writer who produces clear, precise, timely, and effective prose. However, technical communicators also are adept at integrating texts and images into cohesive creations that exist equally well on paper and on the computer screen. Technical communicators write online and print computer documentation, create and manage complex sets of technical specifications, write overviews of scientific and technical processes, and produce a diverse range of documents that are used both by the expert and by the layperson. Technical communicators often serve as translators, interpreting the continually changing language of advanced technology into a language we can all easily understand.

The technical communication program is designed for women and men who desire careers in writing, editing, information design, publications management, and media development. The certificate program is available to Cal Poly students who are enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program and is also available through Open University, offered by Cal Poly Continuing Education. This program requires the completion of approximately 30 units of work – roughly the same number of credits required for most minors. A current course list and more information about our program are available in the English Department office and at the Technical Communications Program website:
<http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/techcomm>.

Program Learning Objectives

BA English

- A. Think critically and creatively.
- B. Write clearly and effectively in a variety of formats.
- C. Explicate literary texts.
- D. Conduct literary research and incorporate it into papers.
- E. Recognize the diverse range and historical development of British and American literary works and traditions, as well as selected literary works from other traditions.
- F. Be conversant with a wide range of historical and critical literary terms and categories.

- G. Understand how literary texts reflect, critique, and produce culture.
- H. Develop a specialized knowledge of particular authors and works.
- I. Understand the structure of language and how language varies over time, across social situations and social groups.
- J. Participate in face-to-face exchanges of ideas with faculty, fellow students, and authors in the classroom and other academic or social settings.
- K. Participate in small seminars where ideas are tested and sharpened.
- L. Sustain an engagement with literature.