

MA TESOL Policy regarding student requests to waive ENG 426

Revised September 22, 2006

Criteria for waiving

To waive ENG 426 *Second language acquisition*, the student must demonstrate that:

1. a prior course was successfully completed as part of the student's academic coursework or training elsewhere;
2. the course was devoted to the study of theory, research, and concepts in second language acquisition. Students should demonstrate that the course was the equivalent of a one-semester, in-depth course. Courses that largely focused on second language teaching issues or those that combined the study of issues in second language acquisition with an examination of language teaching methods **cannot** be used to waive ENG 426. Furthermore, one-shot workshops on SLA issues also **cannot** be used to waive ENG 426. Students who are unsure whether their prior coursework satisfies the ENG 426 requirement should consult with one of the professors who teach ENG 426 soon after their admission to the MA TESOL program.
3. a grade better than B- was received in the completed course.

ENG 426 final paper requirement

Students who are allowed to waive ENG 426 are still required to complete the final paper requirement assigned in ENG 426.

The final paper enables the MA TESOL faculty to gauge whether a student has fulfilled the graduate writing requirement. Note, however, that the **major** purpose of this paper is for the ENG 426 professors to evaluate the students' ability to synthesize and contextualize what they know about SLA concepts. This paper is a carefully constructed essay that reflects on a language learning experience and clearly expresses the student's ideas about the language learning experience with respect to SLA theory, research, and issues.

Students are responsible for contacting one of the ENG 426 faculty members to get information about the specifications for this final paper. This paper should be submitted to the ENG 426 professor handling the student's waiver request **prior to the last day of instruction** during the semester in which the student would have taken ENG 426.

Foreign language requirement

Students who are allowed to waive ENG 426 are still required to fulfill the foreign language requirement for the MATESOL degree. Students must consult with their advisor to certify completion of the foreign language requirement.

Students who are able to waive ENG 426 and have already studied a non-Indo-European language prior to entering the program and can verify proficiency can write the final paper on any previous language learning experience. Students who are able to waive ENG 426 but have never studied a non Indo-European language must take a non Indo-European language class sometime before the final semester of their MATESOL program. (Note: these are the same guidelines used for students who take ENG 426 in our program).

If students studied a non Indo-European language more than five years ago, they are strongly encouraged to take a non Indo-European language class and use this experience as the basis for the final paper assignment.

To recap: The FL requirement should NOT be strictly viewed as a component of the ENG 426 final paper, nor vice versa. Students certainly reflect on their FL learning experience from an SLA perspective in this paper, but they do not satisfy any aspect of the FL requirement by simply writing about it.

How to proceed

Students who wish to waive ENG 426 are responsible for contacting one of the faculty members who teach ENG 426 and making an appointment to discuss their waiver request. Students should also bring documentation (transcripts, syllabi listing topics covered, textbooks used, samples of tests and papers) when meeting to discuss the waiver with the faculty member.