

# Welcome to TELL

Welcome to the Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) Program. In each course, participants learn key theories, principles and research-based best practices for teaching English Learners (ELs--sometimes called Emergent Bilinguals, EBs). Each week participants are asked to enact a practice they learn and then reflect on it in terms of their teacher knowledge. This application and reflection are a key component of teacher learning. The course readings and assignments support participants in achieving the program's overarching purpose which is to advance the education of language minority students through teacher development. The program meets this purpose by developing teachers who know how to differentiate instruction and transform their teaching in ways that enable their development as teachers and the learning of the ELs they teach. As a result of this program, participants, particularly content-area teachers, will be able to work with linguistically and culturally diverse learners in their regular classroom in ways that reflect pedagogic practices that are inclusive of all learners. The completion of the entire TELL Program results not only in teachers being able to adjust curriculum to develop the academic language and literacy of ESLs in their regular classroom, but also, in many cases it results in an ESL Endorsement. The courses in this 16-credit program includes coursework in Foundations of Bilingual Education, Understanding Language Acquisition, Assessment for Linguistically Diverse Students, Developing Second Language Literacy, Integrating Content and Language Instruction, and Family, School, and Community Partnerships. The course support teachers in developing a series of [conceptual tools](#) that can guide their thinking and practice.

## Inclusive Pedagogy Conceptual Framework

The Foundations of Bilingual Education course is pivotal in establishing the [Inclusive Pedagogy Framework](#) as a way of learning about language minority students. Inclusive Pedagogy is a conceptual framework for professional growth that enables educators to respond in educationally appropriate ways to the linguistic, cultural, and learning diversity of students in their classrooms. Although introduced in the first course, Inclusive Pedagogy provides the conceptual framework for all courses in the TELL program. It serves as the lens through which we examine factors impacting the school experience of language minority students in the United States.

Inclusive Pedagogy consists of five characteristics: Collaboration, Guiding Principles, Essential Policy, Critical Learning Domains, and Classroom Strategies. Each of these characteristics is defined by a standard, goal questions that promote common understandings, and a reflection for change question that promotes united advocacy. While in the TELL Program our focus is on ESL students, the Inclusive Pedagogy Framework can be used to address the needs of all special population students: ESL, multicultural, learning disabled, and gifted/talented.

The [five characteristics of Inclusive Pedagogy and their defining standards](#) are as follows:

- **Collaboration:** Meeting the needs of today's language minority students demands collaboration across academic disciplines, institutions, and school-home cultures.
- **Guiding Principles:** Effective instruction for language minority students must be guided by theoretical and moral principles.
- **Essential Policy:** Essential policy, including standards, classification issues, and legalities, must be an integral part of advocacy for language minority students.
- **Critical Learning Domains:** Learning involves development in cognitive, social/affective, and linguistic domains.
- **Classroom Strategies:** Teachers must understand the what and the why of effective classroom strategies for language minority students.

At the end of each course, participants are asked to demonstrate their understanding of language minority students through completion and presentation of a major project that communicates their knowledge of course content and their deepened understanding of Inclusive Pedagogy.

## ProfessorsPlus Delivery System

A distance-learning format was selected for the endorsement over traditional university-centered courses to deliver professional development at multiple school sites that could be adjusted to the needs of rural, suburban, and urban populations and the work schedules of in-service educators. In addition, video-anchoring and the use of a certified, on-site facilitator ensure consistent, high quality content delivery.

The TELL Program uses the ProfessorsPlus™ distance-education delivery system. The Professors part of the course includes the development and provision of a range of useful materials including video segments, CD-ROMs, readings, and engaging interactive learning experiences guided by the chapters in an edtech book. The video segments and CD-ROMs create, in essence, a multimedia textbook. The video segments and CD-ROMs capture the perspectives of educational experts including professors, researchers, teachers, family and principals highlighting content by juxtaposing it against real-world voices and examples of students, educators, parents, and other community members. This makes the relationship between theory and practice immediately visible.

The Professors part also includes the development of an edtech book that guides and supports active learning; encourages thoughtful, analytical reflection; and models appropriate strategies teachers can use with language minority students.

The Plus part of the delivery system is an on-site, masters-equivalent facilitator with extensive public school classroom experience. This facilitator is responsible for creating a sense of community among learners. Employing teacher immediacy to foster interaction, the facilitator shares objectives, uses active learning strategies to promote student engagement, provides opportunities for performance, assesses learning, and communicates with professors.

## Sociocultural Theory

A sociocultural theory of learning undergirds all of our TELL coursework. From the first session of the first course, participants are engaged in a learning community designed using the principles of sociocultural theory. We believe that learning occurs best in social activity in which both teachers and learners participate. In these courses, each facilitator develops a community of learners who focus on learning about culturally and linguistically diverse students and altering, improving, adjusting their practice to better meet the needs of ELs and promote the development of language and literacy (particularly academic literacy) in a second language. The courses take an asset-based orientation supporting teachers in building on learners' strength as they promote their language and literacy development.

Although video segments and CD-ROMs provide interesting and provocative content, most of the learning occurs in course activities and discussions in which teachers try out and apply the things we teach. The activities teachers engage in are immediately transferable to their own teaching with ELs. The videos and readings provide scientific

conceptions for the ideas, while the activities cause participants to confront how they might adjust their teaching in relationship to what they learn. The learning activities and assignment help participants' knowledge, images, and conceptions of themselves as asset-based teachers emerge regularly as they apply them in their teaching and thinking. The facilitator's interactions and the design of the course materials support cognitive, social, and linguistic development, modeling what is needed in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. We ask participants to work together because we respect their quality and depth of knowledge about teaching and know they can scaffold each others' learning. Most importantly, we believe that the best opportunities to learn involve opportunities to integrate new learning with prior knowledge. The TELL courses consistently ask participants to take responsibility for learning in environments that provide access to new information and the tools to learn and apply it.

In this program, we emphasize the [Standards for Effective Pedagogy](#) for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. These five standards have emerged from research on teaching and learning based in sociocultural theory. These standards are:

- **Joint Productive Activity:** Teacher and students producing together
- **Language and Literacy Development:** Developing language and literacy across the curriculum
- **Contextualization:** Making meaning: Connecting school to students' lives
- **Challenging Activities:** Teaching complex thinking
- **Instructional Conversation:** Teaching through conversation

By [using these standards](#) to create a model for teaching, we engage teachers in environments that orchestrate their productive participation in a variety of activities that produce meaningful learning and enable them to provide more productive learning environments for their ELs.

## University/Public School Partnership

The TELL Program has been developed within the Brigham Young University–Public School Partnership, which is a collaborative partnership between Brigham Young University and five local public school districts: Alpine, Jordan, Nebo, Provo, and Wasatch. This BYU-Public School Partnership, originally part of a consortium created by John I. Goodlad to encourage the simultaneous renewal of teacher education and schooling has existed for over 30 years. This partnership is guided by the following statement of belief:

## WE BELIEVE THAT

- public education is the cornerstone of a civil and prosperous democratic community;
- education is a public imperative, a moral endeavor, and a shared responsibility for all members of society;
- public schools exist to provide access to education for all, which includes both academic mastery and personal development for the purpose of maximizing students' potential to participate fully and productively in society;
- the university supports schools by preparing educators who master their disciplines and who understand and implement curriculum and instruction that support their students' learning and development through ongoing research and inquiry leading to dialogue and action that directly benefit schools.

In addition the BYU-Public School Partnership adheres to the following five commitments.

- **Civic Preparation and Engagement:** the Partnership prepares educators who model and teach the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for civic virtue and engagement in our society.

**Engaged Learning Through Nurturing Pedagogy:** the Partnership develops educators who are competent and caring and who promote engaged learning through appropriate instructional strategies and positive classroom environments and relationships.

**Equitable Access to Academic Knowledge and Achievement:** the Partnership develops educators who are committed to and actively provide equitable access to academic knowledge and achievement through rigor and mastery of curriculum content and instructional skills.

**Stewardship in School and Community:** the Partnership assists educators in becoming responsible stewards in their schools and communities by dedicating themselves to shared purpose, renewal, and high standards of educator competence and learner performance.

**Commitment to Renewal:** the Partnership fosters in educators a commitment to renewal through consistent inquiry, reflection, and action within their professional practice, resulting in continuous improvement.

In addition to McKay School of Education and University Faculty from other colleges, the administrators and teachers from the five partnership districts were central in the development of this initiative and contributed heavily to the construction and implementation of the TELL program. As you use these books to guide your learning, you will notice that teachers and administrators from the partnership schools played an essential role in authoring and developing these courses with BYU faculty.



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