

NCTQ Rejoinder

Program: Master of Arts in Teaching, Elementary Education (K-8) (MATELK8)

Standard	Comment
English Language Learners (0/4)	Teachers must be prepared for classroom settings that are likely to include diverse populations speaking several different languages. The program fails to meet the standard because there is no required course that delivers instructional strategies addressing the specific early reading needs of English language learners and requires candidates to practice such strategies.

English Language Learners: Teacher candidates in WGU programs reside across the nation and in multiple U.S. territories. The University recognizes the importance of providing training in meeting the needs of diverse student populations, including those whose first language is not English. Rather than designate a single course to serve in that capacity, WGU has chosen to integrate the key principles of effective instruction for English Language Learners throughout its pedagogical methods courses. This enables teacher candidates to develop and practice their skills many times throughout their program in various contexts, including under the supervision of a classroom host teacher. The listing below provides a sampling of activities related to meeting the needs of English Language Learners that WGU requires of teacher candidates enrolled in this program:

FTC5 Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration (4 CU): This course helps teacher candidates to review and synthesize the concepts and materials introduced throughout the Foundations of Teaching domain and apply them to teaching situations, including those related to meeting the needs of English Language Learners. There is an entire competency area in this course devoted to this topic: *The graduate understands the special learning needs of English language learners and describes methods and strategies to address student language learning needs.*

EIT5 Instructional Planning and Strategies (2 CU): This course focuses on multiple topics related to effective teaching practice through a set of performance assessment tasks that require teacher candidates to demonstrate their competence in curriculum design and evaluation; lesson planning and materials development; and adapting instruction, accommodating diverse learners, and using technology to facilitate learning. Additional content deals with empirically based methods of teaching, both general case (e.g., learning strategies) and content specific (e.g., reading methods). An important part of the curriculum requires teacher candidates to consider how to implement various instructional strategies to meet the needs of students who are English Language

Learners, hearing impaired, have a specific disability (e.g. reading disability-dyslexia, writing disability-dysgraphia, language disability etc.), physically disabled, or gifted/accelerated learners.

ETT5 Instructional Presentation and Follow Up (4 CU): This course helps teacher candidates learn how to select, develop, and evaluate instructional materials and strategies to accomplish specific learning goals by planning for effective instruction, and then implementing those plans through a set of performance assessment tasks. Specific content in the course includes how to make content comprehensive for English Language Learners. In addition, the course helps candidates determine if a particular resource is appropriate for the needs of different groups of students, including those who are English Language Learners, hearing impaired, learning disabled (e.g., reading-dyslexia, writing dysgraphia, language disabled, or physically disabled), and/or gifted/accelerated learners, and it prompts teacher candidates to consider important factors when choosing instructional resources and materials for students with special needs, including English Language Learner (ELL) students and students with learning disabilities.

EIO5 Instructional Planning, Strategies and Presentation Integration (2 CU): This course requires teacher candidates to demonstrate knowledge of and ability to integrate the principles of instructional planning, strategy, presentation, and follow-up. Candidates in this course demonstrate synthesis of what they learned in EIT5 and ETT5 by completing an objective assessment.

EAT2 Literacy and Elementary Reading (2 CU): This course helps teacher candidates develop a solid knowledge base in the concepts and teaching methods related to reading and literacy through a set of performance assessment tasks. Relative to meeting the needs of English Language Learners, the course contains a significant body of content and learning resources designed to help candidates think more deeply about those whose first language is not English, particularly in the context of developing reading/literacy skills. One performance assessment task requires candidates to first watch two Teachscape videos on Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and Reading and Writing for English Language Learners, and then to complete a series of activities that focus on developing and implementing curriculum, instruction, and assessment designed specifically to meet the needs of English Language Learners.

ELT2 Literacy and Elementary Language Arts and Handwriting (2 CU): This course addresses specific methods for teaching writing, spelling, listening, speaking, and handwriting, as well as literacy assessment. Teacher candidates must complete a set of performance assessment tasks that require them to consider how best to differentiate instruction for English Language Learners, students with reading disabilities (dyslexia), writing disabilities (dysgraphia), and gifted learners.

EFT5 Specific Teaching Practices: Math and Science (2 CU): This course focuses on developing interesting and creative methods for teaching mathematics and science, balancing content and computation, and blending content knowledge into best teaching practices. A series of performance assessment tasks requires teacher candidates in this course to develop instructional activities and in some cases, complete lesson plans. The WGU Lesson Plan Format contains a section that provides for differentiation of students with special needs, including those whose first language is not English.

EHT5 Specific Teaching Practices: Health, Visual Performing Arts, and Social Studies (2 CU): This course helps teacher candidates develop a repertoire of specific teaching skills and provides them with opportunities to develop instructional materials for social studies, health, and visual and performing arts. Course content and activities require candidates to consider, for example, how to adapt lessons for students with special needs, including delayed large motor skill development, advanced physical ability, and students learning English as a second language.

ELO5 Specific Teaching Practices: Elementary Education Integration (2 CU): This course permits teacher candidates to demonstrate knowledge of and ability to integrate the principles related to teaching reading and literacy; language arts and handwriting; mathematics and science; and health, visual and performing arts, and social studies. It requires candidates to synthesize what they have learned and demonstrate their competence through an objective assessment. Differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is an important principle addressed throughout the previous methods courses, and it is also covered in ELO5.

FFT2 Supervised Teaching Practicum Elementary Education, Final and Professional Portfolio (3 CU): The professional portfolio is a written document containing a comprehensive Teacher Work Sample (TWS), which requires teacher candidates to plan and teach a multi-week, standards-based instructional unit consisting of seven components: (1) contextual factors, (2) learning goals, (3) assessment, (4) design for instruction, (5) instructional decision making, (6) analysis of student learning, and (7) self-evaluation and reflection. Throughout the TWS, teacher candidates must consider how best to meet the needs of all students in their classroom, including those whose first language is not English.