



**Position Statement on the Status of, and Professional Equity for,  
the Field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages**

The field of teaching English to speakers of other languages is a unique distinct academic and professional discipline with unique linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical dimensions that requires specialized education and training. Those in the field often have the rigorous education, credentials, and experience equivalent to that of their peers in English language arts and literature, foreign language instruction, and other related academic disciplines. However, in many academic settings and institutions, instructors and faculty of English for speakers of other languages in both English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) programs are not respected as being part of a unique discipline, and often do not receive the same professional treatment or benefits as their peers in other academic areas.

It is TESOL's position that all educational authorities, government agencies, and academic institutions recognize the field of TESOL as a unique academic and professional discipline that is distinct from, but on par with, other academic subjects. Accordingly, TESOL recommends special and unique designation of the field.

In addition, TESOL is opposed to policies that treat ESL/EFL instructors and faculty differently from their counterparts with comparable credentials in other disciplines. TESOL is in favor of commensurate salaries, benefits, working conditions, and workloads across disciplines in order to foster academic and intellectual equity and integrity in academic institutions and in society at large.

*Approved by the Board of Directors  
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