

# Learning to Teach English

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The Kalmanovitz School of Education has increased the opportunity for its students to experience the global community by offering a Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program. A TESOL certificate enables students to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in adult education settings and abroad. Certificate holders with a B.A. can go on to earn a master's TESOL.

The program is small but growing. Gail Kirby, the director, teaches with several other professors, including a curriculum specialist from the Mount Diablo Unified School District and the ESL program chair at College of Alameda.

TESOL is founded on a belief in the importance of cross-cultural communication and the key role that the English language can play in global understanding and world peace. The program is unique because teachers do not need to know their students' languages. Instead, they use other methods.

"We use a lot of visuals and body language," says professor Heidimarie Rambo.

Language is not the entire focus, adds Kirby.

"We are teaching to the whole person," she says. "We teach about the language and the logical steps needed to make a sentence, as opposed to a native speaker who learns more organically."

The TESOL methodology helps non-native speakers who need to learn English for specific reasons. For some, language is a matter of survival, while others want to communicate at a professional level. Still others hope to bridge the gap between colloquial language and collegiate language.

"Teachers have to think about and develop lessons based on the students' backgrounds," Rambo says.

Both professors say TESOL training can allow graduates to experience the global community because they can use these teaching skills to support themselves while abroad.