The TESOL MA Portfolio Project
A pilot program beginning 2023

The culminating requirement for all students pursuing an MA in TESOL in BYU's Linguistics Department is the completion of a thesis, project, or portfolio. The portfolio is a type of project designed as a way for students to formally aggregate evidence of their learning and mastery in several key areas that can be presented partially in an online format. Thus, it provides a comprehensive view of how a student has achieved program and course outcomes and is a valuable resource for prospective employers.

Like the thesis and project options, students completing the portfolio must select a chair from among the TESOL faculty along with two other committee members made up of faculty from the Linguistics Department or other affiliated faculty. This committee approves the student's program of study at the beginning of the program and then adjudicates the student's portfolio during the portfolio defense at the end of the program.

Portfolio Option
The TESOL MA portfolio includes two major components. One is the nominal online portfolio which is public- or employer-facing, is hosted on a publicly accessible website or hosting service, and includes the materials described in this document.

The second component is supplementary requirements which are also described in this document and consist of 1) a comprehensive written exam on TESOL topics, 2) two timed writing essays, 3) a job market analysis, and 4) an untimed reflective essay.

In the defense, the portfolio project is evaluated on all components. Note that students will receive initial support for components of the online portfolio in the classes indicated, but students are expected to refine and improve these throughout the MA program.

ONLINE PORTFOLIO
1. **Curriculum Vitae**
   The CV must be current and well-formatted with sections on employment and education as well as relevant information about service, presentations, publications, curriculum or materials development, etc.
   Supporting courses: Ling 610

2. **Teaching and Learning Philosophy**
   This is a concise but well-written statement of the candidate's guiding philosophy of teaching and learning in a TESOL context that would be pertinent for any employment situation.
   Supporting courses: Ling 610, Ling 611, Ling 612

3. **Evidence of Excellence in Teaching**
   This must include at least 3 teaching demonstration video clips, 3 formal lesson plans. It could also include observation reports from colleagues and supervisors as well as student evaluations and ongoing efforts to respond to student sentiment. High quality annotated videos or screencasts are encouraged.
   Supporting courses: Ling 610, Ling 611, Ling 612, Ling 631, Ling 670, Ling 671, ELC

4. **Evidence of quality assessments**
Substantial evidence of language assessment or testing that indicates a student's understanding with principles of validity, reliability, test design, and effective language assessment principles. This could include a language test or test items, a rubric with associated prompts and scoring guide, or other evaluation projects meant to be used for language assessment or testing.
Supporting Courses: Ling 660

5. **Evidence of Critical Thinking—Effective Quantitative Reasoning and Data Management**
Substantial evidence of meaningful contributions in research or evaluation designed to answer important questions or solve significant problems. This might include evidence of the development and/or analysis of instruments designed to gather data and the critical thinking involved in the analysis of that data.
Supporting courses: Ling 620, Ling 640, Ling 660

6. **Evidence of Critical Thinking —Creativity and Development**
Substantial evidence of meaningful contributions in the development and application of pedagogical materials. This could include specific materials designed for courses taught as well as artifacts from the development of curriculum or materials associated with coursework.
Supporting courses: Ling 620, Ling 640, Ling 660, Ling 677, Ling 678, plus applicable electives

Online Portfolio Design and Function
The online portfolio will be evaluated on each of the following criteria:
a. Design and organization—each page is concise with a clear purpose that is intuitively and deliberately organized. The color scheme is not distracting and lends to organization.
b. Accessibility and navigation—all links are active. Accessibility options are available.
c. Professionalism and appearance—the portfolio has a clean and up-to-date appearance. The images, language, videos, and other materials are professional and of sufficient quality. It includes appropriate personal information including contact information.

REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS
7. **Comprehensive Exam**
This exam includes content from all required courses within the TESOL MA program. It will be an essay-based test completed by computer. It will be timed, proctored, and graded by the student's project committee. Students must take the exam within a two-week window that ends two weeks prior to the defense in order to give professors sufficient time to read and evaluate exam responses.
Supporting courses: All

8. **Timed Writing Tests**
Students will complete two 45-minute timed writing essays from a small bank of potential topics that ask students to respond to teaching scenarios by synthesizing knowledge gained in their TESOL MA program. These essays will be evaluated based on content mastery (including current theories, approaches, and literature related to the topic), application to real-world scenarios, clear organization, and written clarity.

9. **Job Market Analysis**
The job market analysis is meant to evaluate the current and short-term prospects for teaching, curriculum design, assessment, or other jobs within or adjacent to the TESOL field and within the

interests of the student. As such, students should submit an analysis of current and short-term prospects for jobs in an official report format. The report should not merely be a list of 20 or so jobs available in a specific area, though it might include this. Instead, the report should be a narrative analysis, with appropriate tables, figures, and appendices, that shows the major trends within a particular career track and which align with the student's interest. As part of those trends, students should examine not just the educational level required for target jobs, but other required education, skills, or characteristics as well as preferred, optional, and soft skills sought after. The analysis must review at least 20 jobs, all of which must be recent (i.e., posted within 6 months of the student's scheduled defense).

10. Reflective Essay

Students must submit a reflective essay that describes their learning journey over the course of the TESOL MA program. This document is not meant to be a collection of praise for the department or a list of all the student's successes. Instead, it should be an honest appraisal of the student's knowledge, experience, and goals coming into the program, and an evaluation of how their knowledge and experience changed through the TESOL MA program with reference to specific instruction or activities. The essay should also elaborate on situations in which the student's goals were not met and how the student overcame or adjusted to this reality. The essay should also provide some insight into specific components that were added to the online portfolio. For instance, the student could explain the choice to include a particular teaching example or a specific language assessment. Finally, the essay should conclude with an overview of what the student gained from the TESOL MA program. Overall, this essay is meant to demonstrate not only that the student developed as a TESOL professional through the program, but more importantly that they developed critical reflective skills which will allow them to constantly improve professionally and personally because of the TESOL program. The essay will be evaluated based on evidence of professional development in the program, specificity of examples, inclusion of meaningful goal achievement or reworking, clear communication, and written clarity. While there is not strict page limit, documents shorter than about 3,000 words will likely lack sufficient depth and/or specificity to be positively evaluated by the portfolio committee.

Portfolio evaluation

The portfolio project is meant to be distinct from and substantially more sophisticated than any intermediate portfolio assigned for a specific class. The portfolio project will be evaluated by a committee of three professors (chair and two readers) during a normal graduate defense. The evaluation can result in one of four possible outcomes: Pass, pass with revisions, recess, and fail. If a recess is required, students may be given one additional attempt to meet requirements before being dismissed from the program. During the defense, professors can ask questions about any aspect of the portfolio, teaching experience during the TESOL MA, classroom content covered over the TESOL program, and supporting materials.