

Application for Spring Research Fellowship 2009
The Senate Graduate Studies Awards Sub-Committee

**Plan of Research for the 2009 Spring Term:
A Skill and Task Based English for Academic Purposes Curriculum**

For the major essay component of my Applied Linguistics TESL MA program, I plan to design a twelve-week English for Academic Purposes (EAP), integrated skill and task based curriculum for Chinese undergraduates majoring in business administration and intending to study on exchange. These types of intensive-English programs are becoming popular in China as North American and Chinese universities establish affiliations and study overseas is increasingly seen as necessary experience for employment.

Regarding my plan of research, after outlining common components of EAP curricula and contrasting EAP with other curriculum types (e.g. English as a Foreign Language and English for Specific Purposes), I will conduct a needs analysis of Chinese undergraduate students studying business at Brock. By surveying these students and their professors for learning objectives, gaps between what can be done and what needs to be done, and ideas on what direction an EAP course should take, and combining these results with results from the literature, I will define my course objectives, categorizing them into skill areas such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, fluency, accuracy, and pragmatics and task areas such as presenting with Power Point, facilitating discussions, taking notes, researching, and referencing. So as not to focus solely on fluency to the detriment of accuracy and complexity, units will also incorporate some sort of focus on form, ideally chosen from students' salient errors. My plan is to apply current research in each of the skill and task areas to content and authentic material similar to what students study in Brock's lower-year business classes in twelve 90-minute lessons. In one class, for example, with the objectives of describing, researching, presenting and facilitating, each student must research and write a summary of a product's life cycle, present their findings, and then compare them with other students' findings in a discussion. As describing product life cycles requires the ability to talk about the past, present, and future, the lesson's focus on form, would be tense usage.

With a course outline such as this, it is my intention that students can adequately prepare for study overseas and teachers can rely more on research-based best practice and less on intuition. This outline can also be tailored to fit into Brock's Intensive English Language Program in order to attract business students from abroad, which would result in increased enrolments for our school. With the assistance of my supervisor, I intend to publish my research, course outline, and sample lessons in an outer-circle, Asia-based applied linguistics / TESL journal (e.g. JALT Journal, Asian EFL Journal).

Scholarships and Contributions to My Research

Scholarships

September 2008 to August 2009 Graduate Fellowship - \$8,500.00

September 2008 to August 2009 Graduate Teacher Assistantship - \$6,276.00

Contributions to My Research

To assist in the needs analysis component of my research on curriculum design, I will be presenting a poster at the Department of Applied Linguistics April 9th, 2009 Poster Session: Mental and Social Processes - Linguistic and Contextual Factors of Concern for Japanese Readers of EFL