

USI to offer master's degree focused on language acquisition, policy and culture

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The University of Southern Indiana's College of Liberal Arts will begin offering a new [Master of Arts in Second Language Acquisition, Policy, and Culture](#) (MASPC) degree in summer 2016. The degree was approved by the USI Board of Trustees in summer 2015, and has now been approved by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

Housed in the Department of World Languages and Cultures in USI's College of Liberal Arts, the degree is a collaboration among the University's Intensive English Program; Public Administration Department; Communication Department; and the Education Department in USI's Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education.

"We're proposing an innovative professional master's program not currently offered at universities in the United States," said Dr. Silvia Rode, chair of World Language and Cultures. "It's groundbreaking because of its blended mode of delivery; its collaborative approach that includes two USI colleges and three departments; its combined advanced training in second language acquisition (including TESOL), language policy, and culture studies; and its local, regional, national and international impact."

The master's program is designed to teach foreign languages to non-English speakers and help shape and respond to a need for regional and international public policy on multilingualism and multiculturalism. With a combination of on-campus and online courses, the master's degree can be completed in 1.5 years, which includes three summer sessions.

"This program draws on the fact that a global and multi-faceted workforce offers new perspectives, creative problem solving skills, and innovation in the workplace and the community," said Rode. "It gives rising leaders new perspectives on how they view the world in order to create an inclusive and productive work environment."

The Master of Arts in Second Language, Acquisition, Policy, and Culture includes opportunities to obtain [professional certifications](#) in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Cultural Awareness Training (CAT). The embedded certifications are ideal for employers looking to create effective workforces in increasingly global and diverse business settings. Undergraduate students interested in graduate school can get a head start on master's-level coursework by completing these certificate programs.

Certificate programs are offered based on companies' needs, time frames and number of participants. They can be offered on location, on campus and via Skype. Meeting times can be arranged to include weekends and/or evening sessions.

According to data collected by the Indiana Immigration Project, Indiana's population is experiencing a steady growth of non-English speakers. The influx of multilingual immigrants is leading to an increased need for second language teachers, including TESOL teachers and administrators with greater expertise in implementing multilingual policies in schools and state agencies. The expansion of multi-national corporations and medical facilities in the region demonstrates further need for lingual and culturally-aware professionals who can advance Indiana's role as a global player.

Graduates of the program will be qualified for a variety of careers, such as education/teaching languages at home and abroad, human resources, public relations, government, international trade, independent consulting, or in growth areas such as accommodation and food service, healthcare and social service, manufacturing, retail trade, and post-secondary education.

For more information about the program contact Dr. Silvia Rode, chair of [World Languages and Cultures](#) at 812-465-7026 or sarode@usi.edu. Those interested in applying for the degree should contact USI's [Graduate Studies](#).