

English Language Arts Teacher Certification Majors Helpful Hints, Tips, & Reminders

- **Planning Your Coursework:** Meet with your advisor regularly to map out the most efficient path through the major. For additional assistance in this regard, view the “potential course sequences” available on the English Department’s website: <http://www.eiu.edu/english/ELArecommendedCourseSequences.pdf>. These documents offer recommendations for the order in which to take certain courses and include suggestions in terms of best scheduling practices (e.g. completing at least one or two methods courses prior to taking practicum; taking the methods courses in proper sequence, taking only one methods course at a time, etc.). These also provide you with suggestions for how you might integrate study abroad or departmental honors into your plans.
- **Monitor Your Grades:** Not only must your grade point average in the major – and overall – remain a 2.75 or higher, you must also receive a C or higher in all courses that will count toward your degree. Note that falling below a 2.75 in either category for two consecutive semesters can result in dismissal from the program (see Remediation & Dismissal Policy).
- **Be Aware of Major Requirements:** Review the Checklist for English Education Majors for specific criteria to be approved to student teach (e.g. grade point average, membership in a professional organization, attending professional conferences, etc.).
- **Watch for Important Deadlines:** Plan ahead to meet all necessary deadlines leading up to student teaching.
 - *Admissions to Teacher Licensure Programs:* Students must attend an Admission to Teacher Licensure Meeting as soon as possible, formally declare a teacher education major, and review the enclosed University Admission to Teacher Licensure Checklist (and consult the College of Education website) for important information, requirements, and deadlines (e.g. completing speech & hearing clearance, criminal background checks, content-area exams, edTPA, etc.).
 - *Applying to Student Teach:* The College of Education requires you to apply to student teach one year before you plan to student teach (e.g. students planning to student teach in Fall 2023 would apply in Fall 2022; those planning to student teach in Spring 2024 would have to apply in Spring 2023). This online application is found on the Office of Clinical Experience & Student Teaching website and is due October 31st or February 28th.
 - *Presenting at the English Studies Conference:* The department requires you to present at the Spring English Studies Conference prior to Student Teaching. This means that a student planning to student teach in Fall 2024 or Spring 2025 would need to present at the English Studies Conference in the Spring of 2024 or in a year prior. Proposals for this conference are usually due in February. (Information about this conference, and preparation for it, will be available during your methods courses but you can also check out the English Studies Conference Website for more information on deadlines, as well as copies of programs to document your participation).
 - *Complete the ELA Content-Area Exam:* Candidates must pass the content-area licensure exam and have the scores on file prior to student teaching. It is recommended that candidates take this exam during their final year of studies but do not wait until the last test available in case a re-take is necessary. Test preparation materials and sample exams are available online and study materials are also available through Booth Library.
 - *Submitting your Professional Portfolio:* In order to obtain departmental approval to student teach you must submit your Professional Teaching Portfolio to the English Education for review by the English Education Committee the semester before you plan to student teach (see the Checklist for English Education Majors for contents of this proposal). Specific instructions will be given to you when you are at this stage of study, but these portfolios are usually due during week 14 of the semester.
 - *Student Teaching Tasks:* During student teaching candidates will be required to complete the edTPA in order to graduate (licensure is dependent on passing it). There are also two ELA-specific assessments that are graduation requirements that must be completed (these will be in Live Text early within the first few weeks of the semester).
- **Keep up with Housekeeping Responsibilities:** In order to reduce stress and ensure approval to student teach, make sure to plan ahead for document storage:
 - Make sure to provide all of your English instructors (for every course except ENG 1001 & ENG 1002) with the Yellow Disposition Evaluation forms. These should be given to the instructor toward the end of the semester. These assessments are used for remediation when necessary.
 - Save copies of all of your course syllabi. An assignment in English 3402 (The Literacy Narrative) will require that you complete an assignment that lists all of the authors and major texts you have studied throughout your college career. Having these syllabi handy will be extremely useful. They can also be useful in the future when preparing for job interviews or designing courses.
 - Keep electronic copies of your best essays. Since the Professional Portfolio requires writing samples, this practice is necessary. Note that at least one of these must be a paper from a multicultural literature course. Electronic copies of essays also come in handy later in future teaching scenarios when you might need sample work to model, mark-up, etc.
 - Save all assignments from your methods courses. The Professional Portfolio requires you to include various assignments completed in these courses (e.g. unit plans, clinical experience essays, teaching philosophies). The goal is that these items can also be of use during student teaching and/or in future teaching assignments.
 - A secure online back-up system (e.g. Google Drive, Dropbox.com) is highly recommended to store all work as technology fails and having access to the above mentioned items is crucial.