



# UMBC

## TESOL PROGRAM

### NEWSLETTER

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## In This Issue

In this combined issue for Spring, Summer, and Fall 2021, read the latest news from current students, faculty, and alumni of the UMBC TESOL program. Students following the P-12 certification pathway for the MA TESOL describe their internship experiences, and a current student writes about what it is like studying online

from abroad. Read about recent professional development events hosted by the TESOL program, the activities of some of our faculty members, and awards and accomplishments of current students and alumni. We also say farewell to program graduate assistant BB Kim while welcoming our new graduate assistant Lucia Demarchi. Enjoy!

## Events held in Fall 2021

Tips on Taking the ESOL Praxis Exam (2nd Edition)  
Thursday, October 21 at 7:15 pm EST.  
Online

TESOL Club CookOut  
Sunday, October 24 at 4:00 pm EST  
Off-campus

Peer Mentoring Workshop: Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Resources from Online Teaching during COVID-19.  
Thursday, October 28 at 7:15 pm EST.  
Online

Decolonizing Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages  
Tuesday, November 16 at 4:30 pm EST.  
Online

Fulbright ETA/English Language Fellow Workshop  
Wednesday, November 17 at 7:00 pm EST.  
Online

An Intimate Conversation with Public School ESOL Teachers in Different Stages of their Careers (2nd Edition)  
Monday, November 29 at 4:30 pm EST.  
Online

Breaking into Adult Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.  
Monday, December 6 at 7:00 pm EST.  
Online

Screen Painting Night  
Friday, December 17 at 6 pm EST.  
On-campus

## Application Deadlines

### Summer Session

May 1 for domestic applicants only

### Fall Semester

April 1 for international applicants  
August 1 for domestic applicants

### Spring Semester

November 1 for international applicants  
January 1 for domestic applicants

We offer rolling admissions.  
Applications are reviewed when they are complete.



Virtual Yoga with Sara Clement

## Program Faculty and Staff

Francis M. Hult  
Program Director

BB Kim and Lucia Demarchi  
Newsletter Editors and Program Graduate Assistants

Sara Clement  
Program Research Assistant

Lakisha Skinner  
General Assistant

2021 TESOL Faculty  
Jill Basye-Featherston, Christopher Browder, Colleen Grisham, Laura Hook, Jiyeon Lee, Sherry Lyons, Marybelle Marrero-Colon, Kati Milter, Shannon Sauro, Kara Silanskis, Brian Souders, Mary Tabaa, Ray Terhorst.

To submit a contribution or alumni note for the next newsletter write to [TESOL@umbc.edu](mailto:TESOL@umbc.edu)

## Tales from the Field

### A Phenomenal Phase II Internship Experience

Antoinette Irons



Antoinette Irons

At my host school, I built lasting relationships with the teaching, administrative and support staff. I established connections with students. My students made gains in fluency, expressing target words effortlessly, and in literacy, developing phonemic awareness, and reading with partners.

I had a supportive mentor who modeled the behaviors of an exemplary ESOL teacher. At no time did I feel I was alone in the experience. My mentor set aside time weekly to discuss future lesson plans, review practice, share specific pedagogical tips and solicit ideas for upcoming activities. From this routine, I developed a disciplined approach to practice teaching. I am confident this discipline will help me hold myself accountable in the future. Teaching in a pandemic resulted in two of the most impactful experiences of my internship. At first, online teaching appeared as an insurmountable challenge, but with every challenge comes opportunities. I mastered using online tools such as Padlet, Jamboard, Flipgrid, and Kami to bring the content to life. Aside from technological expertise, I forged closer relationships

with my professional learning community, relying on each other's strengths to engage learners and find new ways to support their language development.

**"The highlight of my mentorship experience was my mentor permitting me to bring my flavor to each lesson. This modus operandi served me well in co-taught classes where my authentic self established a presence and strong connections with students."**

Throughout my internship experience, I have learned a few valuable lessons. Always remain positive; things do not always go as planned. Display a willingness to learn from others; mentor, cooperating teachers, and supervisor. Collaborate with other professionals; a refining tool in your career. Spend time planning and reflecting; these habits define the teacher you will become.

This internship experience has given me the confidence to step into an ESOL classroom as the teacher of record. Without this opportunity to practice techniques learned in the classroom and observe other professionals, I would tremble at the thought of facing my students this coming Fall.

## Tales from the Field

### Conditionally Hired for the Phase II Internship

Jignasha Parikh



Jignasha Parikh

Success in life comes when you simply refuse to give up, with goals so strong that obstacles, failure, and loss only act as motivation. - Anonymous

And this can't be truer in the present unpredictable world that we are living in today.

This past year has undoubtedly been a special one for everyone and so it was for me. When I immigrated to this country, I only had hopes and dreams of continuing my one passion and obsession in life - teaching and inspiring young lives. So, after raising a family with two beautiful children, I decided to embark on my journey once again and go confidently in the direction of my dreams. The MA in TESOL program at UMBC took me a step closer to live the life I so imagined. Therefore, when I finally found my dream destination, and was appointed as a conditional hire at one of the area's largest school districts, I was over the moon. I was always confident that all my TESOL

courses would have grounded me well for my new position, which would also be a part of my phase 2 internship. However, it soon dawned on me that this was going to be an altogether new learning experience primarily due to the pandemic and also since I was combining my internship with the position.

Initially, I assumed that the process would be a breeze, but I was mistaken! Of course, there is no elevator to success, one must take the stairs. First-year teaching in itself has new challenges knowing the curriculum, the school, its students, the staff, the district's philosophy and expectations, the grading norms, and to top it all the endless observations (both formal and informal) by all my supervisors - the principal, the consulting teacher, content specialist, staff development teacher, my co-workers, my UMBC mentor and my UMBC supervisor. However, I must admit that all these observations did groom me well and taught me to always be prepared for any circumstances. As a result, when I look back, I feel more confident, organized and valued. Truly, sometimes we are tested not to show our weakness, but to discover our own strengths.

Teaching and doing the internship together during the pandemic has not been an easy job, especially trying to strike a balance between both was the most challenging. At a personal level,

I had to make a lot of sacrifices, and for some time I lived in deep guilt of being torn between my family needs and trying to rekindle myself. After all, if you don't sacrifice for what you want, what you want becomes the sacrifice. Working on lesson plans and SLOs have taught me the importance of building relations and understanding individual differences. It has inspired me to be that one person whom any child can easily reach out to for support and guidance. In the words of Bethany Hill, "Every child that you pass in the hall needs to be heard; maybe you were meant to hear it."

As the year winds down, my mind drifts back to all those important life lessons that no text has taught me, especially that of enduring patience, boundless flexibility, and unconditional grace. As I continue with my new journey, and embrace more fond memories, old and new, I will always keep in mind that, "True teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own" - Nikos Kazantzakis. I will continue to compete with my own self and strive to make every single learning experience a rewarding one for all.

## MD TESOL Guide

Now Available



Sherry Lyons

Our own Sherry Lyons and colleagues Luis Javier Pentón Herrera and Drew S. Fagan have co-authored the *Maryland TESOL Handbook for Educators of English Learners*, a free open-access resource and guide for educators teaching learners of English of all ages and levels in the State of Maryland.

The handbook features demographics about learners of English in Maryland, information about program types, tips on becoming an ESOL teacher in P-12 and adult education settings, ways to advocate for learners of English, and more.

If you're planning on teaching ESOL learners in Maryland, this is for you!

Access the full book here:

<https://marylandtesol.wildapricot.org/Handbook>

## Perspective from an Asynchronous Student Living in Japan

Uraness Anne Feuz-Kawano



Anne Feuz-Kawano

When I started looking into TESOL, I found UMBC and was very pleased with its reputation as an outstanding program! Plus, I have the added benefit of having my tuition paid for me because I am an employee within the University System of Maryland (USM), as I have been working for a different University of Maryland on a small U.S.

Navy base in southern Japan for 12 years. My interest in TESOL certainly stems from my

experiences and the personal relationships that have developed during my 19 years living in Japan. I find the main challenge of being a UMBC TESOL student while living in Japan is simply the difference in time zones! I am impressed with all the webinar opportunities for TESOL students and wish I had the ability to participate in more of them; being 13/14 hours ahead of EST, it is difficult to do so, although not impossible! The university I work for has a year-long program that brings ELL's from an intermediate to an advanced level, and it is my dream to take over that program.

Also, as the wife of a Japanese citizen, I will be here until I die, literally, so I think I will always have the valuable knowledge and skills I need from the TESOL program to use in my lifetime in Japan in whatever

capacity I need, whether it's academic or private teaching, or simply living here as a foreigner. I am finishing my second semester of the TESOL program and am so proud of everything I have learned in the program so far. Much of what I have learned in the program is absolutely relevant to my everyday life. I am able to employ so much of what I learn to my daily experiences in Japanese society as well as in my home, as my husband is an EFL learner and depends on me a great deal for improving his English.

The TESOL program has taught me so much about myself as a language learner and foreigner. I have personally grown a great deal in the two semesters I have been a TESOL student, and I am truly grateful for that!

## Here is an overview of the events held in Spring 2021

BB Kim

To create engagement and connection during the pandemic, the UMBC TESOL program continued to host professional development webinars. Here is an overview of the events.

### Understanding and Using K-12 English Language Proficiency Assessments to Promote Beneficial Outcomes for English Learners

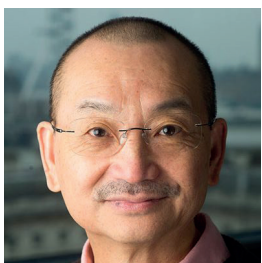


Dr. Ahyoung Alicia Kim

Her talk focused on how educators can use ACCESS scores to promote beneficial outcomes for ELs.

As a part of the TESOL Workshop and Lecture Series, Dr. Ahyoung Alicia Kim, a researcher at WIDA at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, led a presentation on WIDA ACCESS for ELL, an English language proficiency assessment used across 40 U.S. states and territories, including Maryland.

### English in a Multilingual World In recognition of English Language Day.



Dr. Constant Leung

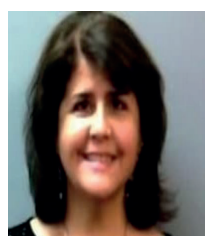
The webinar was moderated by TESOL faculty members and program director, Dr. Francis Hult. English Language Day is recognized by the United Nations each year on April 23rd. UN language days aim to raise awareness about global multilingualism and cultural diversity.

Dr. Constant Leung of King's College London was invited to discuss the state of English in the world today and the social responsibilities of English language educators who teach multilingual student populations.

### An Insider's Guide on Preparing a Competitive Public School Job Application



Charlene Durant



Nylca Vandillen

Teacher candidates gained valuable insider tips and knowledge as Charlene Durant and Nylca Vandillen, recruiters with Anne Arundel County Public Schools, gave a presentation on how to prepare a strong application and went over what to expect when applying for a P-12 teaching job.

### An Insider's Guide to Fulbright for English Teachers



Students interested in working and teaching abroad were invited to learn more about the Fulbright program. The session was moderated by TESOL faculty member Dr. Brian Souders, who is also UMBC's Fulbright advisor. Of

note, thanks to Dr. Souders, UMBC has been named a Fulbright top-producing institution in the nation. To speak on behalf of the Fulbright program, Christina Crawford, an M.A. TESOL student and 2014-2016 Fulbright alumna, shared her experience teaching English in Austria. Leah Ginty, an M.A. TESOL and 2019-2020 Fulbright alumna, also joined the conversation and talked about her experience working in Benin. And last but not least, Mike Schapiro, an M.A. TESOL and 2019-2020 Fulbright alumnus, talked about his Fulbright experience in Colombia.

### An Intimate Conversation with Public School ESOL Teachers at Different Stages of their Careers



Joanne Amaro



Bridget Simmons

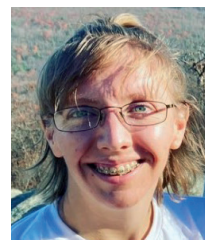


Tema Encarnacion

Baltimore Highlands Elementary School. This webinar was especially valuable to teacher candidates, as it helped them to understand what goes on day-to-day in the classrooms.

To find out what it's really like in the classroom, we invited three ESOL teachers at different stages of their careers to talk about their experiences. The three teachers were Joanne Amaro from Old Mill High School, Tema Encarnacion from Annapolis High School, and Bridget Simmons from

### Tips on Taking the ESOL Praxis Exam



Sarah Gawens



BB Kim

To help better prepare TESOL graduate students to take the Praxis, Sarah Gawens and BB Kim, MA TESOL students, shared their experiences and offered tips on how to pass the exam.

Continued on next page

## Virtual Webinars continued

Participants had hands-on experience as they went into small breakout rooms and worked on sample Praxis questions.

**Webinar on Writing a Thesis with Current Thesis Students Christina Crawford and Rida Neuhoff**


Christina Crawford

Rida Neuhoff

Students interested in completing their thesis had an opportunity to connect with M.A. TESOL thesis candidates, Christina Crawford and Rida Neuhoff. Christina's thesis examines the cultural contents of secondary ELT readings used in Austria. Rida's thesis focuses on language learning in online communities.

## Congratulations, Scholarship Recipients!

### Teaching Fellows for MD Scholarship



Marisol Barrera

Marisol Barrera, MA TESOL student, has been awarded the highly competitive Teaching Fellows for Maryland scholarship by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). The fellowship fully supports the studies of a pre-service teacher who will teach in one of Maryland's high-need schools upon completing their degree. Congratulations, Marisol!

### Fullbright Scholarship



Elliott Eig

Elliott Eig (MA TESOL '21) has been awarded a prestigious Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) scholarship to teach in Panama for the 2021-22 academic year. Elliott was chosen from among more than 11,000 applicants for this year's competition cycle of the flagship exchange program sponsored by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Congratulations, Elliot!

## TESOL Faculty Involvement



Dr. Shannon Sauro

Sauro, S. Bridging the digital wilds and the language classroom with fanfiction. Invited talk for the Georgetown University Roundtable, Washington, DC, USA. (March 2021)

Sauro, S. Online fanfiction for language teaching and learning. Invited talk for the 3rd Online study day: Language teaching and learning in the digital age, Besançon, France. (March 2021).

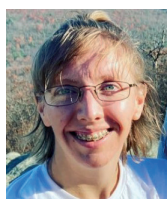
Sauro, S. "I identify as a fan, like, since the beginning of time": Incorporating fanfiction into English teacher education in Sweden. Invited keynote for the Exploring Language Education Conference, Oslo, Norway. (May 2021).

Dr. Francis Hult

Hult, F.M. (2021, 24 June). English in a multilingual world. Keynote address at the Conference on Multilingualism. University of Konstanz, Germany. Online.

Hult, F.M. (2021, 12 July). Language rights and the Sustainable Development Goals post COVID-19. Keynote address at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum Side Event *Youth for Linguistic Rights: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Way to Recovery*. Online

## TESOL Students Land Public School Teaching Jobs



Sarah Gawens

Sargent Shriver E.S. in MCPS



Izumi Howe

Kingsview M.S. in MCPS



Nishi Sheth

Murray Hill M.S in HCPSS

Antoinette Irons  
Sligo M.S. in MCPSBB Kim  
Monocacy M.S. in FCPSHeather Boedeker  
Fields Road ES in MCPSShazia Khan  
Goshen ES in MCPSDeborah Milani  
Marriotts Ridge HS in HCPSSMiriam Walter  
Talbot Springs ES in HCPSS

## Alumna Terra Greene is Selected as Teacher of the Month



Terra Greene

In February 2021, M.A. TESOL alumna, Terra Greene, was selected as Pegasus staff member of the month at Brookland Middle School in Washington, D.C. The Teacher of the Month award is given to teachers based on their commitment to the school and community.

When asked about why she thinks she was chosen, she replied, "I was simply doing my job and introduced a newsletter entitled, ESL Mindful Minute, that considers teachers' full schedules, giving them valuable resources for the virtual learning environment in a minute's worth of reading, but with more resources available in text and video form, should they choose to delve deeper. In our school, we have push-in instead of pull-put services, but I am unable to go into everyone's classroom. So, I also designed a portal providing interactive information for teachers whose classes do not receive direct ESOL support."

## TESOL Staff Transition

During Summer 2021, we had a transition in our program as BB Kim left the position of program graduate assistant (GA) and Lucia Demarchi joined us.



BB Kim served us for two years as our program GA and is now starting a position as an ESOL teacher at Monocacy Middle School in Frederick County. Besides teaching, BB is participating in the Leadership for Emergency Academic Preparedness (LEAP) program at Hood College. She is also involved in a year-long, FCPS sponsored professional development program, called Expectations Into Action (EIA). Prior to coming to UMBC, she taught English at Daegu University in Korea for seven years. She has a BA in Speech from University of Hawaii and an MA in Communication from Hawaii Pacific University.



Lucia Demarchi is an international student who comes to us from Argentina, where she gained a number of years of experience teaching English as a foreign language for middle grades. She has already begun working with learners of English in the Baltimore area, volunteering for the Esperanza Center. In addition, Lucia also has research experience working with scholars at the Universidad del Valle Atemajac (Mexico) and the Universidad del Salvador (Argentina). She is an MA TESOL student.

## TESOL Club Happenings



Virtual Meet-and-Greet

To kick off the spring term, the TESOL club hosted a virtual meet-and-greet to create a space for students to connect and get to know each other better.



End-of-the-term magic show

The TESOL club enjoyed an evening of fun and magic with Justin Willman to close out the spring term.

## Jessica Soto-Perez

### Memorial Award Recipient



BB Kim

Congratulations to TESOL program graduate assistant, BB Kim. She has been selected by the UMBC Graduate Student Association (GSA) to receive the Jessica Soto-Perez Memorial Award. The award honors a graduate student who strives, during their time at UMBC, to aid graduate students in their academic and professional pursuits.

## Alumni Notes

Cara Aaron, MA '15, is an ESL instructor at St. Timothy's School.

Renée Burgos, MA '08, is a high school ELD teacher in Delaware County Intermediate Unit, PA. She is working towards an Ed.D. at West Chester University.

Sherry DeFrancisci, MA '17, works as an assistant director at the Adult Learning Center of Strong City Baltimore.

Mary June Beasley, MA '10, is a teacher at Trinity Catholic School.

Ryan Good, MA '17, is in his fourth year working as an EFL teacher at English First in Indonesia. In March 2020 he was accepted into the English Language Fellows program to teach on the island of Timor in Indonesia.

Sue Hale, PBC '20, works as a literacy tutor with Baltimore City Elementary School students. She has accepted an open contract offer from Montgomery County Public Schools.

Kathryn Claire Nee, MA '06, is an admissions specialist at UMBC and an ESOL faculty at CCBC.

Jignasha Parikh, MA '21, works as an ESOL teacher at Neelsville Middle School in Montgomery County Public Schools.

Carmen Starling, PBC '08, is a first grade teacher in Howard County Public Schools.

Erika Sun, MA '20, works as an ESOL teacher at High Point High School in Prince George's County Public Schools.

Laurel Williams (nee Doerfer), MA '03, is an EL Title III Education Specialist for the Maryland State Department of Education.

MA - Master of Arts in TESOL

PBC - Post Baccalaureate Certificate in TESOL

# Congratulations, Spring and Summer '21 Graduates

We would like to congratulate our Spring and Summer '21 graduates and certificate awardees.

Best of luck in the future!



## Master of Arts in TESOL

Kenya Avalos  
Homeretta Ayala  
Liz Bauer  
Michael Beyrent  
Hae Joon Chang  
Jiuk Choi  
Chiara Collette  
Christina Crawford  
Anjali Branch  
Terrica Duncan  
Elliott Eig  
Melissa Griggs  
Tamara Hawkins  
Timothy Mallard  
Danielle Manos  
Jignasha Parikh  
Nishi Sheth  
Katherine Smith

Kate Zimmerman  
Joanne Amaro  
Elizabeth Celi  
Terrica Duncan  
Katherine Friske  
Erica Gonzalez  
Izumi Howe  
Antoinette Irons  
Ji Hyun Ryu  
Jennifer Stotler

## Post Baccalaureate Certificate

Jonathan Browning  
Leah Davidson-Wolf  
Beth Edwards  
Brian Horlick-Cruz  
Katlin Iszard  
Hannah Jackson  
Megan Jiron  
Maria Lee  
Aaron Levin  
Karla Swartz  
Joby Taylor  
Sydne Arnold  
Megan Frekot  
Pat Michael  
Hannah Shulse  
Liliana Stelmach