TESOL Degree and Certification Scholarships

www.uab.edu/education/esl/empower

<mark>Read all information below before completing/submitting an EMPOWER grant 2024 application form</mark>

The EMPOWER program is a federal grant which provides tuition support (pays some tuition and some fees) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham toward graduate degrees in education and ESOL certification for selected practicing teachers and pre-service teachers, currently teaching in grant-partner school districts. Coursework and additional professional development in partnering schools address all aspects of multilingual learners' (MLs) educational experiences, with an emphasis on promoting authentic family engagement to advance ML learning and school readiness.

Grant-Partner School Districts

These are the districts that are a part of the EMPOWER program:

- Alabaster City Schools
- Birmingham City Schools
- Hoover City Schools
- Jefferson County Schools
- Pelham City Schools
- Shelby County Schools
- Tarrant City Schools

3 Degree Tracks applicable to the grant program's cohort C scholarship:

- **These 3 degree track options are applicable for the EMPOWER grant program cohort C**:
    - Traditional MA in ESL
    - Alternative Track of the MAEd in ESL (*also called Alternative Master's Program (AMP)*)
    - EdS in TESOL Certification Track
- <mark>**You must determine which degree track you are eligible/applicable to take, *before* you complete an EMPOWER grant application, as you must indicate which degree track that you would be taking, on your EMPOWER grant application form.**</mark>
- To be applicable/eligible to apply for and take the <u>Traditional MA in ESL degree track:</u>   You must currently hold a valid Class B certification in any TEACHING field***** through the ALSDE (Alabama State Department of Education)
- To be applicable/eligible to apply for and take the <u>Alternative Track of the MAEd in ESL (also called Alternative Master's Program (AMP):</u>   You must currently hold a bachelor's degree (any major) from a regionally-accredited college and with a minimum GPA of 2.5.

- To be applicable/eligible to apply for and take the <u>EdS in TESOL Certification Track degree track</u>: You must currently hold a valid Class A certification in any TEACHING field***** through the ALSDE (Alabama State Department of Education)

    o ***** TEACHING field: Instructional Leadership does not count as a "teaching field."

- If accepted into the grant program and the degree program: At the end of each academic term, your academic performance and professional dispositions as a graduate student will be evaluated by EMPOWER personnel and this term-by-term evaluation will determine your continuation in EMPOWER.

- If pursuing an MAEd: you would need to earn a minimum 3.25 GPA to earn this degree and certification. If pursuing an EdS: you would need to earn a minimum 3.5 GPA to earn this degree and certification.

- More information available the ESL degree programs website https://www.uab.edu/education/home/graduate/esl

- *If you need assistance in determining your eligibility/which degree track is applicable to you, please contact Dr. Josie Prado at jprado@uab.edu far in advance of the grant application deadline (Aug 26).*

Eligibility for EMPOWER grant scholarship program:

The grant program is geared to teachers and paraprofessionals currently teaching/serving in public schools in the grant-partner school districts. To be *eligible* for the **EMPOWER grant program**, you would need to:

   o Meet the eligibility requirements to be accepted into the degree track program. Please see the ESL degree programs website https://www.uab.edu/education/home/graduate/esl Our degree programs do NOT require applicants to take the GRE or the MAT. **You must determine which degree track you are eligible/applicable to take, before you complete an EMPOWER grant application**, as you must indicate which degree track that you would be taking, on your EMPOWER grant application form. If you need assistance in determining your eligibility/which degree track is applicable to you, please contact Dr. Josie Prado at jprado@uab.edu far in advance of the grant application deadline.

   o If the Grant-Applicant would be taking the traditional MA in ESL *or* the EdS in TESOL Certification Track degree track: Persons who would be taking *these* tracks, if they have already taken any undergraduate or graduate class in ESL/TESOL, then they would not be eligible for the EMPOWER grant program.

   o <u>If the Grant-Applicant would be taking the Alternative Masters in ESL degree track</u> *(only applicable to persons who would be taking the Alternative Masters in ESL degree track)*:

      ▪ Prior taking of any graduate-level ESL/TESOL class(es) does not affect eligibility to participate in the EMPOWER grant program, for persons who would be taking the Alternative Masters in ESL degree track.

      ▪ You must take the PRAXIS ESOL subject (#5362) exam, and receive a score of 155 or higher, by October 1, 2024 <u>and</u> you must confirm to EMPOWER Program Manager, Aileen McElwain at aileenmc@uab.edu that you have achieved a score of 155, no later than October 1, 2024, in order to be eligible/to be considered for the EMPOWER grant program.

         • A passing score of 155 or higher on the PRAXIS ESOL subject (#5362) exam is a UAB requirement for acceptance into the UAB Graduate School - Alternative Masters in ESL degree program. You will be required to include/submit an official copy of your ESOL Praxis Exam score report in your UAB Graduate School application packet. It takes up to 2 weeks after taking the exam, for you to receive your official score report.

- General information regarding the PRAXIS ESOL subject (#5362) exam is available at https://praxis.ets.org/test/5362.html and https://www.ets.org/praxis/site.html and https://www.ets.org/praxis/site/test-takers/where-to-test.html

- If you are interested in taking the test online from home: You would have to register online and you would have to meet their requirements, such as, a computer with a web-camera (you would be "watched" while you are taking the test, via the camera). Information available at: https://www.ets.org/praxis/site/test-takers/where-to-test.html   and https://www.ets.org/praxis/site/test-takers/register/at-home-testing/requirements.html

- Upon request, UAB School of Education offers prospective students a discount-code applicable for a discount on a 30-day subscription/access to 240 Tutoring, a Praxis Exam online tutoring website. If you would be taking the *Alternative Masters in ESL degree track* and if you want information about 240 Tutoring and a discount-code applicable for a discount on a 30-day subscription/access to 240 Tutoring, then, send an email to Aileen McElwain aileenmc@uab.edu requesting such and she will send you the informational pamphlet with the discount code. Once you create your account on the 240 Tutoring website, the 30-day timeclock starts that day.

- To be accepted into the grant program, you must be employed by one of these EMPOWER-grant-partner school districts during the 2024-2025 school year, as a **teacher** or a **paraprofessional in a classroom**(s):
  - Alabaster City School District
  - Birmingham City Schools
  - Hoover City Schools
  - Jefferson County Schools
  - Pelham City School District
  - Shelby County Schools
  - Tarrant City Schools

- Grant program participants need to be working in/employed by a school in any of the grant-partner school districts, each school year, while completing the degree program. It is allowable to move between grant-partner school districts during the grant period, as long as each school you serve in is in one of the grant-partner school districts and you inform the EMPOWER grant Program Manager regarding your new school assignment.

- Must have regular access to at least 1 Multilingual Learner during each school year that you would be matriculating through the degree program *(must be serving in a classroom where you have regular access to at least 1 Multilingual Learner, 2024-2025 through the 2026-2027 school year)*.

- Must complete a 2024 EMPOWER application during the 2024/Cohort C application period. Even if you completed an EMPOWER application in a previous year, you are still required to complete a 2024 EMPOWER application, so that we can collect current information from all applicants/all candidates.

- Grant program participants agree to follow the course plan set by the EMPOWER program (take each class with the other cohort members, unless a special exemption is made).

- Be available for and participate in a few grant-related in-person class and program activities, for a few of the classes (2-4 classes) within the degree program. We understand Educators have limited schedules due to school responsibilities. The few in-person class activities will be scheduled outside of times that Educators have school responsibilities. A vast majority of the class-activity will be asynchronous/online.

- Please note that priority for selection will be given to PK-3rd grade educators.

Grant Scholarship Program Information

- **Class/grant program format:** All of the classes are online. Some classes include required internship hours/activity. As a participant in the EMPOWER grant program, there will be a few grant-related in-person activities, throughout the program. Some may be required and would be scheduled outside of times that Educators have school responsibilities. All grant selectees/participants will be required to attend an in-person grant program orientation, before their first semester.
- **Cohort Course Plan:** Grant program participants agree to follow the course plan set by the EMPOWER program (take each class with the other cohort members on their degree track, unless a special exemption is made). *See the EMPOWER traditional Masters/ EdS Course Plan and a Alternative Masters Course plan, below*
- **Cohorts:** There are 3 cohorts of grant-participants. All cohorts begin in the Spring Semester, which starts in January. Cohort A began their degree track/grant program in January 2023. Cohort B began their degree track/grant program in January 2024. **Cohort C is the final cohort in the grant program**. Selectees will begin their degree track/the grant program in January 2025. *See details regarding Cohort C below.* Due to the large number of interested applicants/educators and limited grant funding, not all applicants will be accepted.

- **Program length:** Educators who get selected to participate in EMPOWER grant Cohort C <u>and</u> successfully apply to the graduate degree program, would begin the EMPOWER-program-specific ESL degree program/course plan, in January 2025 (UAB's Spring 2025 semester).
    - The traditional MA Ed track takes 6 semesters/2 years (Spring, Summer, Fall, Spring, Summer, Fall) to complete.
    - The EdS certification track usually takes 7 semesters to complete.
    - The Alternative Master's degree track usually takes 7 semesters to complete. May vary based on previous courses taken.
- **Cohort C costs and tuition support for <u>traditional Master's in ESL</u>:** The grant program usually covers tuition and fees for 6 to 8* of the 10 classes which are usually taken in the traditional MA Ed in ESL degree program track, *depending on funding available.
    Participants pay for: ☐ Tuition and fees for classes not covered by the grant
    ☐ Books for all classes
    ☐ Other fees such as a Graduate School application fee, an internship fee, and graduation fee(s). Fees range from $50-100
- **Cohort C costs and tuition support for <u>Educational Specialist certification track in TESOL</u>:** The grant program usually covers tuition and fees for 6 to 8* of the 12 classes which are usually taken in the Educational Specialist in TESOL degree program track, *depending on funding available.
    Participants pay for: ☐ Tuition and fees for classes not covered by the grant
    ☐ Books for all classes
    ☐ Other fees such as a Graduate School application fee, an internship fee, and graduation fee(s). Fees range from $50-100
- **Cohort C costs and tuition support for <u>Alternative Master's (AMP) in ESL track</u>:** The grant program usually covers tuition and fees for 10 to 12* of the 14 classes which are usually taken in the Alternative Master's (AMP) in ESL degree program track, *depending on funding available.
    Participants pay for: ☐ Tuition and fees for classes not covered by the grant
    ☐ Books for all classes
    ☐ Other fees such as a Graduate School application fee, an internship fee, and graduation fee(s). Fees range from $50-100

Cohort C Timeline   *(Details above and below)*

July 22 – August 26, 2024	EMPOWER grant (scholarship) **application period** (Must complete a 2024 application to be considered for a Cohort C scholarship)
Monday August 26, 2024 11:59pm	Deadline to submit a 2024 EMPOWER application to be considered for cohort C. Even if you submitted an application in 2022 or 2023, you still must submit a 2024 application, as we need to collect current information.
27 August – mid-October 2024	Applicants may be contacted between August 27th through mid-October, to be interviewed (interviews usually occur over Zoom)
August/September 2024	*Persons who would be taking the Alternative Master's Program degree track only*: EMPOWER Applicants who would be taking the AMP degree track must take the ESOL subject Praxis Exam until receiving a score of 155, by October 1st as it takes up to 2 weeks after taking the exam, for you to receive your official score report. It may take several testing attempts to earn a score of 155 or above.
October 1, 2024	*All persons who would be taking the Alternative Master's Program degree track (only)*: Before or by October 1st, EMPOWER Applicants who would be taking the AMP degree track must confirm to EMPOWER Program Manager Aileen McElwain at aileenmc@uab.edu that you have earned a score of 155 or above on the ESOL subject Praxis Exam, otherwise you would likely not be able to participate in the grant/scholarship.
Mid-October 2024	All persons who completed a 2024 EMPOWER (cohort C) application will be informed if they were selected for the grant/scholarship program. An acceptance-response deadline will be communicated and enforced.
Mid-October -- early Nov 2024	Grant/scholarship Selectees complete/submit an application to the UAB Graduate School and degree program. *One must be accepted to UAB Graduate School/ the degree program in order to participate in cohort C.*
November 15, 2024	UAB School of Education's Graduate School/degree program application deadline. You must submit a completed Graduate School/degree application packet by Nov 15.
Late-November – early-December	Grant/scholarship Selectees attend an EMPOWER grant program orientation (in-person) and complete/sign an EMPOWER Program Commitment Letter. Selectees register for their Spring 2025 semester class(es) *(wait for instructions to ensure you register for correct class-section(s))*
January 2025	Cohort C begin classes (See UAB's academic calendar webpage, Spring 2025 semester)

(See more information below)

Cohort C Traditional Master's and EdS degree track course plan

The cohort MA/Eds course plan is subject to change

SEMESTER	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME
Spring 2025	EESL 610	Second Language Acquisition
Summer 2025	EESL 612 EESL 613 EESL 615	Curriculum, Programs, Policies Teaching ESL in a Multicultural Society Grammar and Linguistics for ESL Teachers
Fall 2025	EESL 630	Methods and Materials for Teaching ESL
Spring 2026	EESL 660 EESL 670	Effective Teaching and Learning Engaging Families and Communities
Summer 2026	EESL 640 EESL 690	Teaching ESL through Reading and Writing Internship in ESL
Fall 2026	EESL 625 EESL 600	Phonology for ESL Teachers *Capstone Project*
2 ADDITIONAL COURSES REQUIRED IF PURSUING AN EdS IN TESOL	EPR 594 EPR 596	Intro to Educational Research Design Intro to Qualitative Research Methods *(ERP 594 is pre-requisite to EPR 596)*

Cohort C Alternative Masters in ESL (AMP) degree track *typical** course plan

The cohort AMP course plan is subject to change

*Displayed is the typical course plan yet actual course plan varies/is affected by previous classes taken

SEMESTER	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME
Spring 2025	EESL 510	Second Language Acquisition
Summer 2025	EESL 512 EESL 513 EESL 515	Curriculum, Programs, Policies Teaching ESL in a Multicultural Society Grammar and Linguistics for ESL Teachers
Fall 2025	EESL 530 ECY 600	Methods and Materials for Teaching ESL Introduction to Exceptional Learners
Spring 2026	EESL 525 EESL 570	Phonology for ESL Teachers Engaging Families and Communities
Summer 2026	EESL 540 EPR 511	Teaching ESL through Reading and Writing Measurement and Evaluation
Fall 2026	EESL 560 EHS 556	Effective Teaching and Learning Classroom Management
Spring 2027	EESL 589 EESL 590	Internship Seminar Internship in ESL

Applying for EMPOWER Cohort C grant/scholarship:

==Deadline:== Monday August 26, 2024 11:59pm. Late-submitted applications will not be reviewed nor considered. Even if you submitted an application in 2022 or 2023, you still must submit a 2024 application, as we need to collect current information.

==Review the EMPOWER grant scholarship information (everything above and below), preview the application form, and prepare to apply:== Read all information on this document and review the application form before completing/submitting an application form. It is recommended that you preview the online application form and work on preparing your application well in advance before the deadline. You cannot save your work on the form and submit the form later – the application form must be completed all at one time. You may only submit one 2024 Cohort C application– the form will lock you out if you have already completed and submitted/ you click on the green arrow to "submit". To review an empty application form, click on the link (below), scroll through the form, then close the page. ==Be prepared to upload your most recent degree transcript, when you complete the application form:== A section of the EMPOWER grant application form requires the applicant to upload a copy of the transcript from their most recent degree. An unofficial transcript copy is acceptable for the grant application form.

If after reading all information on the EMPOWER webpage and on this document, and reviewing the application form, if you have an unanswered question, then contact Aileen McElwain at aileenmc@uab.edu. If you make a mistake completing your application/you need to resubmit your application, please email-coordinate with Aileen McElwain at aileenmc@uab.edu, as soon as possible and no later than Tuesday August 27th at 9:00am.

==EMPOWER Grant Cohort C/2024 Application Form:==

Read everything above before accessing the form

https://uab.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1RGxPZOvF0aG3u6