Proposed Graduate Certificate in Teaching English*  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Department of English

Purpose
The purpose of the graduate certification is to reinforce the analytic and practical skills necessary for successfully teaching English Studies in secondary and post-secondary institutions, including community colleges.

We also hope that by achieving this practical certification, students will learn more about the profession of English Studies and gain greater understanding of the practicality of the M.A. in English. The certificate will professionalize these students and enhance their careers at the secondary and post-secondary level. We expect that students will therefore make better informed decisions about pursuing advanced degrees in English.

Please note that this graduate certificate does not fulfill Illinois “certification” requirements for teaching in public school.

Target Audience
Non-M.A. seeking and M.A. seeking students may complete this program. Most students who apply to the M.A. program in English at UIS state that they want to teach at junior or community colleges or that they want to pursue a Ph.D. in order to teach English Studies at the university level. Other applicants state that they want to improve their high school teaching, buttressing it with more substantial disciplinary knowledge and skill. In both cases, learning the pedagogies and theories associated with the methods of teaching composition and of teaching literature are critically important.

Repeatedly for the past few years, English graduate students have argued that a lack of experience in teaching has hobbled their efforts at obtaining teaching positions at community colleges or as adjunct faculty at universities. It has also negatively impacted their assistantship applications to doctoral schools. Without experience, they have reported, they are unlikely to get teaching assistantships, which Ph.D.-granting institutions routinely offer as part of their aid packages. It is markedly more difficult to achieve UIS’s mission to be a top five public liberal arts university without high-quality graduate students.

Because this certificate is based upon practice in the classroom, it will be delivered as an on-ground or blended program. As a result, the likely audience for this certificate will be local or regional residents.

Proposed Curriculum
The certificate, which is 18 hours, may be completed on its own or count toward the 36-41 hour Master of Arts in English. The certificate will consist of four courses and a two-hour practicum (18 hours total). Two of the courses currently exist in the M.A. in English degree program. The third course is Sociolinguistics and English Studies (syllabus attached), and the fourth required course is Teaching Literature (syllabus attached). Both will be proposed as this graduate certificate is going through governance channels. The practicum (syllabus attached) needs to be
organized and developed with supervisory input among participating tenure-track English faculty.

Courses for the Certificate:

ENG 572: Critical Theory and Practice (currently entitled Graduate Colloquium) 4 credits
Designed to help students develop the necessary skills to conduct research methodically and to write as a scholar, this course prepares students for other graduate classes and familiarizes them with the professional discourse of scholars. Offered Fall. [See attached syllabus]

ENG 550: Special Topics in Composition and Rhetoric: Teaching Writing 4 credits
This course provides an extensive and in-depth examination of historic and cultural movements, issues, and personalities that have influenced the teaching of writing. Requires a lab in the fall in which students, paired with faculty mentors, observe the methods of the course within a composition classroom. Offered Fall. [See attached syllabus]

ENG 551: Teaching Literature (new course) 4 credits
This course requires students to apply pedagogical and literary theories and methodologies to the literature that they read as scholars. Students will create four undergraduate literature courses, including syllabi, teaching units, and assignments, as well as a teaching philosophy. The course requires students to observe the methods of the course in a literature classroom and to complete teaching demonstrations within class. Offered Spring. [See attached syllabus]

ENG 552: Sociolinguistics and English Studies (new course) 4 credits
This course is intended to prepare teachers of English at the secondary and post-secondary level to teach students with variable sociolinguistic backgrounds. Students will write a policy statement regarding language, develop a teaching unit, lead discussion in class, and complete an analysis of discourse in education or other academic community. Offered Spring. [See attached syllabus]

ENG 553: Teaching Practicum (new course) 2 credits
Pre-requisite: ENG 550 (Teaching Writing). Students will be required to shadow a faculty mentor teaching ENG 101 or ENG 102. Students will be expected to attend all classes, complete an observation journal and be responsible for teaching and marking essays for one major writing assignment of the course. Students must meet at least twice (at midterm and at the culmination of the course) with the instructor assigned to the practicum. Offered Spring. Pass/Fail. [See attached syllabus]

Fall
572: Critical Theory and Practice
550: Teaching Writing

Spring (Completion of Certificate)
551: Teaching Lit
552: Sociolinguistics and English Studies
553: Practicum

Relation to Degree Programs
Because we have recently shifted our M.A. program to a blended format, the certificate program might be easier to complete for students outside of the Springfield local area. However, because
this certificate would incorporate teaching demonstrations and a practicum in which students would be mentored and learn to teach English at the college level, we would expect a greater on-campus presence from these students, particularly if they wish to complete the program in a year.

With the exception of the practicum (ENG 553: Teaching Practicum), all of the courses required for the certificate could be used for the M.A. if students chose to continue in the program. Depending upon their chosen closure, M.A. students must complete 36-41 hours of coursework. Completing this certificate would give students 16 hours towards that total (because ENG 553 Teaching Practicum is excepted). If they choose to continue into the degree program, they would need to officially apply through procedures described below.

**Occupational or Student Demand**
Demand for experienced teachers at the community college and university level is rising as tenure lines diminish. Reports of the Modern Language Association find that increasing undergraduate instructional needs have been met by hiring greater numbers of non-tenure-track, contingent faculty. Approximately two-thirds of the teaching in English is done by non-tenure-track faculty members, most often in first- and second-year courses (Demography of the Faculty, 2008 and Education in the Balance, 2008). These courses in English include freshman composition and introductory literature courses. As the numbers of undergraduates rise, and as tenured faculty teaching freshmen and sophomore courses decrease, an increased need for well-trained teachers of these courses becomes apparent.

In addition, secondary school teachers must obtain recertification credits to renew their certification for the state of Illinois. Completing this certificate is a shorter avenue than an M.A. for obtaining recognition beyond isolated recertification credits. This should make the certificate program, and hopefully our M.A., more appealing.

**Staffing or Resource Requirements**
The English Department has the resources to serve this constituency of students. We would need to create a practicum, a Teaching Literature course, and a Sociolinguistics and English Studies course. Because we have the faculty with expertise in the area of pedagogy, including that of literature, of language, and of composition, creating and staffing these courses will not be problematic. These courses can be offered as part of our usual contingent of graduate courses, and any graduate student in English can enroll in any of them except the practicum and receive the usual graduate credit. All courses will be staffed by tenured or tenure-track professors.

**Administrative Issues**
Responsible Administrative Unit
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, English Department.

Admissions

*Eligibility.* An applicant should hold a B.A. in English, but any baccalaureate degree holder can apply. Prerequisite courses (usually equivalent to our minor) would likely be necessary for an applicant who does not have a B.A. or B.S. in English.

*Admissions process.* Applicants would apply to the university and to the department.
They would submit two recommendations, an analytic writing sample, and a statement of purpose for applying for the certificate. The application portfolio would be assessed by the English Graduate Admissions Committee. The main difference between certificate applicants and M.A. applicants is that M.A. applicants need to submit GRE scores. Near the end of the certificate program, if students would like to continue for their M.A., they would need to apply to the program by reactivating their initial application and submitting GRE scores.

*Advising.* The Director of Graduate Studies in English would be the advisor for these students.

*Tracking.* All students would have files on their progress kept in the Department office and in a database the Director of Graduate Studies keeps.

*Catalog copy and relevant syllabi are attached.*