



International Applicants

I. International Applicants

If you are not a U.S. Citizen, a U.S. Legal Permanent Resident or a Political Asylee to the U.S. you are considered an international applicant.

II. Description of Degree

The Master of Arts in English as a Second Language exists to train a group of language educators for professional credibility within the international profession of TESOL, teachers of English to speakers of other languages and dialects. Our mission is threefold: first, to continue education for those teachers and administrators who interact with second language learners within the public and private school sectors in the environment of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas; second, to prepare new teachers, researchers, and administrators for working with second language learners, particularly of English, throughout the world under varying social, political, economic, and cultural conditions; and third, to legitimize the profession of English as a second language for the local, state, national, and international communities by basing applications to fieldwork, (whether in the ESL/EFL classroom, program administration, or research) on solid theoretical background both in theoretical and applied linguistics.

III. Program Requirements

1. Online Application

The application to UTPA's graduate programs can be completed online at www.utpa.edu/gradapply

2. Application Fee

The University application fee of \$50 application fee can be paid online by credit card or electronic check (in the online application), or in the form of money order or check and sent to the Office of Payments and Collections. In the case of money order or check, the applicant is responsible for submitting a copy of the receipt to the Graduate Studies office for documentation. All application fees are non-refundable.





3. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores

The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) requires all International applicants, whose native language is not English (and domestic applicants who do not qualify for any of the Exceptions to the English proficiency tests) to complete and have submitted the scores of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) before the application deadlines.

a) Important TOEFL information

- The institution code to forward your scores to the University of Texas-Pan American is **6570**.
- Scores must be sent directly from Educational Testing Services (ETS) to UTPA. Student copies are not be accepted.
- Scores are valid for two years. If the test date was more than two years ago, the applicant must retake the examination and request that an official report from ETS be sent to UTPA.
- UTPA does not accept institutional (or residual) TOEFL exams taken at another U.S. institution.
- The minimum acceptable total score is 500 for paper/pencil tests and 173 for computer-based tests (Note: some programs require a higher score, please check the program requirements page for more information). For more information please visit [TOEFL iBT Score Comparison Tables \(pdf\)](#).
- The test bulletin of information and registration forms are usually available at American embassies and consulates, offices of the United States. Information Agency, or online at www.ets.org.

b) Exceptions to the TOEFL

- Lifetime residents of Australia, Canada (other than Quebec), New Zealand, United Kingdom, or the United States (other than Puerto Rico).
- Students who have recently and successfully completed at least 30 hours of university level academic studies in one of the countries listed.
- Students who have completed two semesters of freshmen composition and earned a “C” or better.

4. Evaluation of Educational Records

International applicants must have their transcript(s) evaluated by Foreign Credentials Service of America (FCSA). [Click here for the FCSA application](#). Additional information is available at www.fcsa.biz or (512) 459-8428.

- Students may send copies of their transcript(s) directly to FCSA. The student must bring the original copy of the transcript to the Office of Graduate Studies and a copy will be made to be placed in the student’s file. This can be done at any point after the application is submitted or during the student’s first semester, but must be done before the student registers for the second semester. Students not complying with this requirement will not be able to register for future semesters.
- Failure to submit a complete/correct application and official transcripts from all institutions attended will result in one of the following: rejection of application, withdrawal of admission offer or disciplinary action including expulsion if the student is enrolled.
- All submitted documents become the property of UTPA and will not be returned. Admission documents will remain on file for one year if the applicant does not attend the University. Documents will be





retained for seven years for students enrolled in a master's level program and for ten years for students enrolled in a doctoral program. Please review the [Student File Retention Schedule](#) for more details.
Austin, TX 78757-2411

Should you have any questions about this, please contact FCSA at:
Phone (512) 459-8428 • Fax (512) 459-4565
E-mail: info@fcsa.biz • Website: www.fcsa.biz

5. English Translation of Educational Records

In addition to the official transcripts required for admission, an English translation must be included to allow for accurate interpretations.

6. Financial documentation

In accordance with immigration regulations, all international students are required to submit to the Office of Graduate Studies documentation showing sufficient funds (minimum of \$22,000 subject to change) to cover all expenses (living and academic) for the first year of study.

- Documentation must be in the form of letters from the bank or of statements showing specific dollar amounts available. These documents are not valid unless dated within three months of the date of acceptance.
- If funds that are from a source other than the applicant or their immediate family, the sponsor must submit a letter of support, state the amount of funding pledged, and attach copies of recent bank statements.
- These documents are not valid unless dated within three months of the date of acceptance.
- If you have been offered a scholarship you will need to provide documentation and dollar amount of the scholarship to our office.
- If you have been offered an assistantship by the university you will need to provide documentation and dollar amount of the assistantship to our office.
- Mexican nationals may also apply for the Mexican Non-Resident Tuition Waiver and provide all financial documentation that it requires (see the OIAS for application or download form).

For more information about financial documentation and immigration documents please contact
Office of International Admissions and Services (OIAS)

LAC Room 156, 1201 W. University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78541-2999

Phone 956.381.2922 • Fax 956.381.2281

E-mail: intladvise@utpa.edu • Website: <http://www.utpa.edu/dept/isa/>

7. Current Immigration documents

All international applicants must submit a *current copy of your valid passport* so that we may ensure that the spelling of your name is consistent on all immigration and university documents.





- If approved for admission the Office of International Admissions and Services will issue an I-20 which you will need to take to the nearest U.S. Consulate and apply for a student visa (detailed instructions will be included with the I-20).
 - For international applicants who plan to attend on a visa status other than F-1 or F-3 student status, proof of that status is required. Include copies of all immigration documents.
 - If you have applied for U.S. Residency but have not yet received it you must attach copies of immigration documents.
 - If you are in the U.S. but currently having no legal status (undocumented) please note so on the application. Please contact OIAS as you may qualify for in-state tuition based on Texas Senate Bill 1528.
 - Information and documents needed to obtain a student visa will be sent to you if you have been accepted to UTPA
8. Three Letters of Recommendation from academic and/or professional sources (submitted online).
9. Personal Statement detailing reasons for pursuing the graduate degree and professional goals (submitted online).
10. Minimum TOEFL score required is 550 paper/213 computer/79-80 internet
11. Bachelor's degree with a GPA of at least 3.0

IV. Deadlines

	Fall	Spring	Summer I	Summer II
Deadlines for Priority Registration	Feb. 1	Sept. 1	Sept. 1	Sept. 1
Application Deadlines*	June 1	Oct. 1	March 1	April 1

* Applicants must submit all application documents and meet all other requirements by the published deadline date for the semester to which they are applying in order to be considered for admission. Note: Priority deadlines have been established that allow ample time for the application review to be completed before the first day of registration.

V. Offers of Admission to the Graduate School

Official admission offers will be made only by the Office of Graduate Studies and are valid only for the semester requested on the application. Through the [Online Application Web site](#), you will be able to view the status of your application. Students who are accepted but do not attend the semester requested on the application must submit an application for readmission to enroll for a later semester. An additional application fee will be charged if the student reapplies more than one year from the semester originally requested. [Re-Apply](#)





VI. Program Contact Information

Program Website: http://www.utpa.edu/dept/english/grad_maesl.html

Program Advisor: Dr. Edward E. Heckler

Email: heckler@utpa.edu

Phone: (956) 381-3426

VII. Application Checklist

1. Online application
2. Application fee
3. Official transcripts
4. Test of English as a Foreign Language(TOEFL) scores
5. Evaluation of educational records
6. English Translation of Educational Records
7. Financial Documentation
8. Current Immigration Documents
9. Three letters of recommendation
10. Statement of Purpose
11. Bachelor's degree with a GPA of at least 3.0

VIII. Additional Information

a) Establishing Texas Residency

Under Texas State Law, an applicant or enrolled student is classified as a resident of Texas, a non resident, or a foreign student. Residency for admission and tuition purposes at a public college or university in Texas is different from residency for voting or taxing purposes.

- In order to qualify as a Texas resident, an individual must reside in Texas for 12 continuous months and establish domicile in Texas the 12 month prior to census date. An applicant or student who is claimed as a dependent on a parent's most recent federal tax return will be classified based on the parent's qualification for residency.





- International students eligible to establish legal domicile in Texas may also qualify for Texas residency status; see the Residency FAQ for details. For a listing of the visa types which allow you to domicile refer to the College for Texans Residency page.
- A student's residency classification is based on information from his/her admission application. If an applicant or student is classified as a nonresident and wishes to be reclassified as a resident, it is necessary to submit the Residency Questionnaire prior to census date of the semester in which they are seeking reclassification.
- The Residency Regulations for the State of Texas can be found at:
<http://www.collegefortexans.com/residency>
- Complete tuition/admission residency regulations for the State of Texas can be found at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Website.
- Please send all residency documents for graduate students to the following address:

The University of Texas-Pan American
Office of Graduate Studies
Administration Building 116
1201 W. University Drive
Edinburg, Texas 78541-2999

b) Students transferring from a U.S. high school, college, or university

- If you currently hold an F-1 or J-1 visa from a U.S. high school, college, or university, your immigration information stays at your current school until you notify your international advisor of the date you wish to transfer to UTPA.
- At that time you, in discussion with your current advisor, will determine a date for you to be released in SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). Please do not do so until you have been accepted by UTPA.
- When the release date arrives, UTPA will have access to your immigration records and issue a new I-20.
- Please notify our office of any address changes that may have occurred since you submitted your application for admission or our correspondence may not reach you.

c) Students Re-applying to the Graduate Program

Students re-applying within one (1) year of their initial application to the graduate program to which they have already been accepted or within one (1) year of the date of last enrollment in the graduate program to which they have been accepted, may use the one-page Graduate Application for Students Reapplying to Program. Note: In both cases, students have been accepted previously into the graduate program that is listed on the Re-application form. No application fee is required when using this form. If you would like to confirm whether you can use this form or not, please call the Office of Graduate Studies at 956/381-3661 or write to gradschool@utpa.edu

