MA TESOL CAPSTONE PROPOSAL

This form must be submitted to the MA TESOL Coordinator no later than Week 13 of the semester in which you submit your Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) form (typically your penultimate semester in the program). The exact deadline will be announced each semester, as the date varies depending on the semester.

Please note the following program requirements and policies:

- Faculty approval of your capstone proposal is required prior to enrollment in ENG 891. Only students who have an approved capstone proposal on file with the TESOL program are permitted to enroll in ENG 891.

- Students are responsible for scheduling consultation meetings with faculty about their proposal ideas prior to proposal submission. You are strongly encouraged to meet with more than one faculty member about your proposal ideas.

- Students who submit their capstone proposal by Week 13 of their penultimate semester are guaranteed constructive feedback from TESOL faculty on their submission as well as on any proposal revisions.

- Faculty do not review or approve capstone proposals during the Winter break or Summer break. Students who miss the Week 13 deadline will need to wait until the start of the following semester to submit a capstone proposal. Students who miss the Week 13 deadline are also not guaranteed faculty feedback on their capstone proposal. Students must have their capstone proposal approved before they can enroll in ENG 891.

- Students who fail to meet the Week 13 deadline risk a delay in their graduation.

1 Adapted from materials from Sonoma State University, Department of Chicano and Latino Studies

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Please type your responses (single-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font) into this form, and submit 4 hard copies to the MA TESOL Program Coordinator.

Name: Min Sun (Aaron)  
Student ID#: 913683035  
Expected Graduation Date: Dec. 2015  
English 891 Instructor (if known): Dr. Abeywickrama

Working Title of Project: Focus on metacognition—a process-oriented instructional approach in listening classroom in a Chinese EFL context

Faculty you have consulted for this project: Dr. Abeywickrama, Dr. Olsher

List the courses (in TESOL, Linguistics, or other program areas) you will be integrating into this capstone project:

ENG 731—Seminar—TESOL Listening and Speaking Skills  
ENG 734—Curriculum and Assessment

Capstone Description (350 words):

In the space below briefly describe the key questions your capstone project will address:

Listening instruction in Chinese universities is thought to be exam-oriented—teachers only or mostly teach what is in the test. This can have a negative washback on the students, as they assume that taking the class means learning how to prepare for the test, and getting a good grade on the test means they have achieved a high listening proficiency. However, this may not be the case. Many students who can score high in the test tend to find it difficult to comprehend the lectures or even communicate with people in daily interactions in a foreign context. Therefore, in my capstone project, I would like to look into the current teaching practice of listening classrooms in a Chinese EFL context. Specifically, I would like to examine if the classroom instruction promotes learner autonomy, enhance listening comprehension skills/strategies, and cater for learner needs. Here are some questions that I would like to address:

- What are the common teaching practices in the EFL listening classroom in China—process-oriented or product-oriented.
- What are some of the factors that contribute to the popularity of those teaching practices, e.g. exam-oriented education system.
- What are the beliefs that the listening instructor(s) hold(s) for teaching.
- What are some of the learner needs that the Chinese students in the targeted university have.
- How do the students perceive the listening classes that they have taken/are taking.
- What are some ways that can potentially enhance the teaching of listening comprehension and how to revise the existing curriculum.

Approach and/or Methods (350 words):

In the space below, articulate the approach and/or methods you will use to complete the capstone project:

First of all, I would administer a survey that will elicit the learner needs from the students and what is their general attitude towards the listening classes that they have taken/currently taking. I might pilot the survey during the summer to see if my survey serves the purpose of this study. Secondly, I would conduct an interview with the one or several listening instructors who are currently teaching the listening class, from which I would like to know what is their belief on how to teach listening and what is their teaching approaches in the classroom. The above methods would give me a general sense of the listening instruction in the targeted context.

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Next, I would focus on analyzing the materials used in the classroom—textbooks, handouts, and the syllabi (possibly lesson plans). By examining these materials, I can further develop my understanding of the classroom instruction—whether it is product-oriented or process-oriented, and whether it fits the learners’ needs.

With all the materials and data gathered, and based on what I have learned in ENG 731—Seminar—TESOL Listening and Speaking Skills and ENG 734—Curriculum and Assessment, I would critically evaluate the listening class in the targeted context, and hopefully I would be able to give some valuable suggestions on how to improve the listening instruction in Chinese EFL classes. I would also develop a unit and several lessons that incorporate metacognition instruction as a reference for the teachers in China.

**Timeline**

Create a timeline, in list format, that maps out what you will do and when you will do it. Consider the overall amount of time you have to complete the capstone project, from start date to conference presentation, and uploading to your professional portfolio. Your timeline should provide a biweekly or monthly overview of the steps you will take to complete your project and prepare the final capstone paper.

- June 1st—September 1st: design and pilot interview and questionnaire; collect textbooks and syllabi (possibly lesson plans); literature review
- September 1st—October 1st: administer the questionnaire and interview; analyze the result and data
- October 1st—November 1st: first draft
- November 1st—November 15th: second draft
- November 15th—December 1st: final draft

**Outline**

Using the information on page 5 of the M.A. TESOL Capstone Project Guidelines, please attach an outline of the components that will comprise your capstone paper.

1. **Introduction**
   - I will briefly describe the general situation of EFL listening instruction in Chinese universities—its focus and purpose, and identify the existing issues with instruction, which will lead to the purpose of this paper: to identify the problems with listening instructions by analyzing the curriculum and teaching materials and propose some suggestions of how to teach listening in Chinese universities.
   - I will also explain the rationale for choosing this focus, which is that based on my learning experience as an EFL student, listening instruction is mainly exam-oriented and focuses extensively on the product. However, what I have learned from the classes in MA TESOL program at San Francisco State University seems to suggest that listening instruction should also emphasize the process—what do the students do to help them comprehend the text and what they do not do that causes the comprehension breakdown.
   - This paper will follow the standard organization: 1) introduction; 2) literature review: what is the general situation of listening instruction in Chinese universities, what are some of the issues with the prevalent instruction approaches, what does the research suggest about how to teach listening comprehension; 3) body: teaching/learning goals and objectives for the target context, pedagogical approaches and rationale of the teachers; analysis of the syllabus, lesson plans, and materials, and feedback from the students who have taken or are taking the classes; 4) conclusions and final reflections: what future research or efforts can extend from this work, and how does this capstone project contribute to my future teaching as a TESOL professional.

2. **Background**

   **Literature review:**
   - What is the general situation of listening instruction in Chinese universities
   - What are some of the issues with the prevalent instruction approaches in Chinese universities

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• What is metacognitive listening and how does it work
• What does the research suggest about how to metacognitive listening instruction

3. Body
• Teaching/learning goals and objectives for the target context
• Pedagogical approaches and rationale of the teachers
• Analysis of the syllabus, lesson plans, and materials, and feedback from the students who have taken or are taking the classes
• Suggested unit outline and lesson plans

4. Conclusion and Final Reflections
• What future research or efforts can extend from this work
• How does this capstone project contribute to my future teaching as a TESOL professional

5. References

6. Appendices

Bibliography
Please attach an APA-formatted bibliography to this form, listing at least twenty (20) pertinent academic sources you plan to use as part of your capstone project.


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Capstone proposals will be considered incomplete unless a timeline, outline and bibliography are attached.

_________________________________________  ___________________________
Student Signature  Date

_________________________________________
Date Received: ___/___/____
Approved by: _____________________________

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