

FRESNO CITY COLLEGE'S "ENGLISH FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS" DEPARTMENT WORKS HARD TO SUPPORT MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS

Gavin Ruland | News Editor
gruland@therampageonline.com

All year round, Fresno City College offers English classes on all of their campuses for

multilingual students. The "English for Multilingual Students" department offers nearly 30 courses to strengthen these student's English skills and set them up for future English courses at FCC.

U.S. News article "U.S. News Special Report: Stockton, Calif., Is the Most Diverse City in America" ranks Fresno as ninth among the most racially diverse large cities in California. In a city as diverse as Fresno, citizens who don't speak English as their first language may need extra help in their day to day lives.

On FCC campus, multilingual students can find support with reading and writing classes, grammar and speaking classes at all levels.

EMLS instructors Alyssa Tobar, Michael Takeda and Department Co-Chair Jennifer Vahanian are some of the many members of faculty that work to support these students.

"When you learn a language, it's really hard, and especially if your pronunciation is off, and people in the community around you say, 'I don't understand you,'" Vahanian said. "So what happens naturally as we teach them and as we work with them, is their confidence improves."

EMLS offers their classes at different language skill levels in person and online for fall, spring and summer semesters. EMLS faculty want to ensure the students that come to their programs have the skills they need to move on with their education "Whatever a student's goal is, even if it's just to learn some new vocabulary to share with their friends, or to be able to talk to their kids, [their] teacher, or to write an academic paper, whatever it is we're here to help them reach those goals," Tobar said.

EMLS has a large number of immigrant and refugee students that have come from all around the world. These classes bring people together and prepare them, not just for their future education but their future in the U.S.

"The thing [students] have in common is the desire to learn

English, incorporate into local culture and activities is the thing that bonds them, regardless of country or language of origin," Takeda said. "They are all coming from the same place, in terms of their fears and comfort being in a new country, even if they've been here for a while. Our job is to provide a safe place for them."

EMLS & Linguistics

The English for Multi-Lingual Students/Linguistics Department at FCC offers reading, writing, pronunciation and listening/speaking courses for students seeking to improve their English and study skills. The EMLS program is designed to equip students with the necessary skills required for academic work at the college level for degrees, certificates, or transfer. We have four levels of instruction from low-intermediate through advanced (one level below English 1A). We offer hybrid classes (partly online) at our advanced and high-intermediate levels, instruction in our computer lab, and specially trained tutors who attend EMLS classes and are available to work with students in the PASS Center.



A SCREENSHOT FROM THE EMLS & LINGUISTICS WEB PAGE, DETAILING THE MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS GOALS. TAKEN ON SEP. 5.

Through the EMLS department, multilingual students get the tools and resources they need to succeed in their English classes. The EMLS classes that FCC has to offer, accommodate for students academic English skills of all levels and help them move forward.

The EMLS department's mission statement states, "The EMLS department at Fresno City college is dedicated to assisting non-native English speakers improve their English skills, and offers tutoring, conversation practice, counseling and individual support so that students can achieve all their educational and career goals. The department supports all of our students regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, status, accent and/or language."

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY: STUDENT-LED SOCIAL CHANGE AT FCC

Collins Tanomkhum | Reporter
ctanomkhum@therampageonline.com

One of Fresno City College's newer classes, Grassroots Democracy (POLS-17), has

begun its third fall semester in the Old Administration Building. This course offers both applied and theoretical training for students of social justice.

Although Professor Nick Hernandez teaches the class, he emphasizes the independent aspect of the course.

"There's a lot of student autonomy. It is 100% student-led, meaning that students are responsible for identifying the issue that they want to address," Hernandez said.

Hernandez believes this course gives students more agency and room for collaboration with others on campus. The class focuses on community issues that directly impact students. Campaigning is one way students work towards change.

"It can be really powerful for students, instead of relying on some of these other more powerful institutions, to find solutions," Hernandez said.

Within the class, communication is key. Students work together in pairs or groups to tackle problems in their community, and discussion is encouraged to share new ideas.

"The benefit of the class is you get students from different backgrounds to participate in it, because they bring with them such diverse perspectives," Hernandez said.

Students Natali Silva Aguilera and Grey Fletcher voiced their excitement for the semester, while another student, Jamie Ruiz-Hernandez, expressed fatigue over the course load.

"To be honest, [I'm] exhausted. There's a lot going on. I'm not used to classes going at it very quick," Ruiz-Hernandez said. "I like the challenge, though."

Students were eager to tackle their chosen subjects despite potential obstacles. Aguilera explained that she's excited to step in on her chosen topics, the environment and physical disabilities, citing them as important subjects to her personally.

"I'm pretty excited. I got to learn a lot about

how we're gonna be going through the process of getting to know people and getting to try to solve the problem that other people have," Aguilera said.

Fletcher shared their passion for aiding the homeless by spreading awareness of limited food and water resources. To better support their community, Fletcher hopes to gain more confidence throughout the semester.

"Unless you've ever really been homeless, you wouldn't understand how difficult it is to actually access food and water, and how many people discriminate against homeless people," Fletcher said.

Placing his studies in mental health and gender-based violence, Ruiz-Hernandez seeks knowledge from the class to help people involved. Though Ruiz-Hernandez holds a passion for many social issues, he specified the importance of awareness in his chosen topics.

"Violence against women, I think that's something people really need to grasp the concept on, because it's still going on everywhere," Ruiz-Hernandez said. "Also, a focus on sociopathy and narcissism. People don't seem to really get the undercurrent behind it in our politics or in our daily lives."

Students are expected to begin work on their projects in the coming weeks.

"Some projects may fail, and that's okay. Some deadlines aren't met and that's okay, as long as they're picking up those skills, working towards a goal and learning something about an issue," Hernandez said.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) TOMMY YANG, HECTOR MARTINEZ, NICK HERNANDEZ, LEONARDO NAVARRO AND RYLIE ZARAGOZA DISCUSS THEIR CHOSEN SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE OLD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING ON AUG. 28. PHOTO BY COLLINS TANOMKHAM.

EVENT CALENDAR

Sept. 10 Volleyball tournament
12:30 p.m. (Veterans Square)

Sept. 10 Transfer Day 9 a.m.
(University Mall)

Sept. 10 Pride Center OpenHouse
11 a.m. - 3 p.m (Pride Center)

Sept. 10 Wellness Wednesday 12
- 2:30 p.m. (Small Fountain)

Sept. 11 9/11 Ceremony 9 a.m.
(Veterans Square)

Sept. 12 Musical Faculty recital
7:30 p.m.(OAB Auditorium)

Sept. 16 Club Rush 10 a.m. (Veterans Square)

Sept. 16 Valley Solidarity Assembly
5:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. (OAB-188)

Sept. 16-18 Fall Vendor Fair All Day
(University & College Mall)

Sept. 17 After Hours 4 p.m. (Student Lounge)

Sept. 23 Transfer Tuesday 8:30
a.m. - 12 p.m. (West Fresno Center)

Sept. 23 Pancakes With Purpose
9 a.m.

Sept. 26-Oct. 7 Switched Cabaret
7:30 p.m.(Theatre)

Sept. 29 Progress Reports Due
Date All Day (Campus Wide)

Oct. 1- Oct. 22 Pumpkin Decorating Contest
All Day (Student Lounge)

Oct. 2 A Matter of Velocity:
Opening Reception 5 - 7 p.m.
(Art Space Gallery AH-101)

Oct. 4 Frida Fun Walk/Run 8
a.m. (Fresno City College)

Oct. 7 Transfer Tuesday 8:30 a.m.
- 12 p.m.(West Fresno Center)

Oct. 10 Last Day to Drop a Full
Term Class All Day (Campus
Wide)

Oct. 13 Start of 2nd 9-week session
All Day (Campus Wide)

Oct. 15 Club Rush 10 a.m. (Veterans Square)

Oct. 15 After Hours 4 p.m.(Student Lounge)

Compiled by Miley Araujo