

## Preguntas hechas frecuentemente/Frequently asked questions

### Is it okay if I am not fluent in Spanish when applying to the Bilingual Block and the Bilingual/Biliteracy Education graduate program?

As a Bilingual teacher, you'll be teaching literacy, math, science, social studies, and other content area subjects in Spanish as well as English, so it is very important to be proficient in both. Our classes are taught in English and Spanish and our class discussions, course readings, written assignments, and other activities are done in both languages.

Many of the future teachers in our program grew up in Spanish-speaking or Spanish/English/Spanglish multilingual families. Depending on where they lived and attended school, few had the opportunity to read and write in Spanish in school or had teachers who used Spanish, especially after 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Many have been told "you don't speak English correctly" at the same time other people were telling them, "Así no se dice" o "Hablas como pocha". Understandably, many future bilingual teachers ask themselves, "Will my Spanish be good enough?"

### Exactly! Will my Spanish be good enough?

To become a bilingual teacher, you'll need to demonstrate your ability to use Spanish and English in at least three ways:

- To succeed and get the most out of your classes in the Bilingual Blocks and Student Teaching.
- To pass the Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT). This exam assesses your proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish. It's required for certified Bilingual teachers in Texas and administered by the Texas Education Agency. Lots of students are nervous about this exam, but during the Blocks many become more confident and develop the Spanish proficiency to pass this test.
- To compete for jobs. A high level of Spanish/English bilingual/biliteracy proficiency is needed to work in dual language programs, the fastest growing form of bilingual education in Texas and the U.S.

### That sounds like a lot. How will the program help me continue to develop my Spanish?

All professors in the program are Spanish/English bilinguals who have lived in bilingual families and taught bi/multilingual students for many years. They understand that becoming (more) bilingual is a developmental process that takes place over time. They are **experts in supporting students** who are improving their Spanish proficiency while they are learning the field of bilingual education.

The professors understand that many of our students experienced subtractive forms of bilingual education, in which Spanish-speaking children were quickly "transitioned" into English only instruction early in the elementary grades. **Our classes are designed to support your biliteracy growth.**

Texas State University has many resources to support students who are developing Spanish proficiency, including mentoring to help you develop your Spanish literacy and workshops to prepare for the BTLPT. **Alkek Library** has a large collection of Spanish language books and materials for children and for future teachers. <https://guides.library.txstate.edu/ci3332>

Many of our students choose to **minor in Spanish** so they can continue to develop proficiency in Spanish. <http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts/world-languages-literatures/spanish-minor/>

### **What if I'm still not sure? Who can I talk to ask if my Spanish is strong enough to become a bilingual teacher?**

Talk to the Bilingual/Biliteracy Education Program coordinator, Dr. Patrick Smith, or reach out to any of our professors. They can answer your questions and show you examples of course readings, assignments, and projects. They can also do an **informal interview with you in Spanish** and recommend **materials and strategies for improving your Spanish** before you begin Bilingual Block I.

We can also introduce you to current students and to graduates of our program who are now working as bilingual and dual language teachers across Texas.

### **Who are the professors in the Bilingual/Biliteracy Education Program?**

Dra. Kiyomi Sánchez-Suzuki Colegrove	<a href="mailto:kiyomi@txstate.edu">kiyomi@txstate.edu</a>
Dra. Luz Angélica Maldonado Rodríguez	<a href="mailto:l.maldonado@txstate.edu">l.maldonado@txstate.edu</a>
Dra. Luz A. Murillo	<a href="mailto:l_m456@txstate.edu">l_m456@txstate.edu</a>
Dra. Charise Pimentel	<a href="mailto:Charise.Pimentel@txstate.edu">Charise.Pimentel@txstate.edu</a>
Dr. Patrick H. Smith, Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:patricksmith@txstate.edu">patricksmith@txstate.edu</a>

You can read more about the professors' research and teaching areas: <https://www.education.txstate.edu/ci/Graduate-Programs/Bilingual/Program-Faculty.html>

### **¿Quieres saber más?**

The College of Education's Advising Center's website has everything you need to know about

- Application requirements
- Transferring credits to Texas State from community college or another university
- Required courses and when to take them
- Your student teaching semester
- Graduation requirements

<https://www.education.txstate.edu/advising/Degree-Planning/Majors-and-Programs/ELCB.html>

For more information, please contact Professor Patrick H. Smith at [pht19@txstate.edu](mailto:pht19@txstate.edu)