

## Commonly Asked Questions about the English Credential Program

### 1. I want to be a middle or high school English teacher. What steps should I take?

Your first step should be to read about the program on the Department of Secondary Education website: [ed.fullerton.edu/seced/future-students/credential-programs/](http://ed.fullerton.edu/seced/future-students/credential-programs/).

There are two paths into the credential program. You can either take the CSET, which is a state-mandated standardized test designed to test language arts competence **or** you can complete the Subject Matter Prep Program (SMPP). The SMPP is a state-approved program of study that is designed to prepare you to teach at the secondary level. If you are complete the SMPP, you are exempt from the CSET. Everyone must take the CBEST standardized test.

### 2. What's the difference between the SMPP and a regular English degree?

On your transcripts and your diploma, the degrees are exactly the same, and the SMPP and the regular English degree are fairly closely aligned. Below is a chart that details the differences:

Regular English Major Course Work	Course Work Common to the Regular English Major and the SMPP	SMPP English Major Course Work*
Upper Division Writing Credit: English 307 (3 units)  Electives (12 units) (200 level and above English courses)	Language Course (3 units) English/Linguistics 303, 305  English 300: Analysis of Literature  Survey Courses (6 units) English 211, 212, 221, 222, CPLT 324, 325  English 316: Shakespeare  Major Author (3 units) English 315 or 317  Period and Genre (9 units) (see list of period and genre course)	Upper Division Writing Credit: English 302 (3 units)  1 additional survey course English 211, 212, 221, or 222 (3 units)  1 Comparative Literature Class CPLT 324 or 325 (3 units)  1 additional language course English/Linguistics 303 or 305 (3 units)  English 434: Adolescent Literature

- Note: It is far easier to follow the SMPP checklist than to use this chart as a guide for course work. This chart is meant to show how the two degrees align.

### 3. I want to do the SMPP, but there are English electives I want to take? Can I take them even if they aren't on the SMPP?

Of course! While the units won't count toward your English degree, they do count toward your 120 units to graduation. You are only in college once and should follow your interests.

### 4. How hard is the CSET? What kinds of questions are on it?

If you google CSET, you can find information about the test and practice questions. You are required to take all four sections of the English/Language Arts test. Test takers are given four hours to complete the test regardless of whether they take one section or four sections. It is recommended that you take two sections at a time. Many factors contribute to how difficult test-takers find the test, but it is true that most people have to take the CSET several times. Sign up early, study, and pay close attention to deadlines.

**5. I took the CSET, but my test scores won't be in by the application deadline. Can I turn them in late?**

Contact the Department of Secondary Education for the policy on this. It is contingent on the year.

**6. I noticed there is some non-English coursework on the SMPP. Why?**

You are required to take a designated communications and theater course as well as education prerequisites (EDSC 304, 310) to complete SMPP requirements. While those classes don't count toward your English degree, they do count toward SMPP certification.

**7. The secondary education website lists several prerequisite credential courses that aren't on the SMPP. Do I have to take those? Do I have to take them before I start the credential program or can I do it while I am in the program?**

There is a series of secondary education prerequisites that you must take before you start the program: EDSC 304, 310, 320, 330, and 340. You can take EDSC 410 before you start the program (recommended) or your first semester in the program.

**When do I apply to the credential program?**

You apply the semester before you want to start the program. If you want to start in the Spring, your apply in the Fall, and if you want to start in the Fall, you apply in the Spring. Check the secondary education website for application deadlines and details on how to apply.

**8. What is the credential program like?**

You can find a detailed description of the credential program on the secondary education website (see above). It is a one-year program (it cannot be shortened or lengthened) and includes student-teaching at a local public school. The program is intense, and we strongly discourage students from working while in it.

**9. I have additional questions. Who do I contact?**

If you have application questions, contact Dr. Kristen Shand, Director of Admissions at [kshand@fullerton.edu](mailto:kshand@fullerton.edu). If you have questions that are specific to an English credential, contact Dr. Kira Leekeenan at [kleekeenan@fullerton.edu](mailto:kleekeenan@fullerton.edu).