



EMILY

TESOL & SPANISH TEACHING

ABOUT MY MAJOR

I'm studying TESOL and Spanish. They're two separate majors, but they complement each other. TESOL focuses on technical things, like linguistics, phonetics, grammar, language acquisition, and learning about the history of language. There's also a more sociological side where we talk about how language is used throughout the world and what it looks like in an educational setting. We talk a lot about immigration, because within TESOL, the population that we will be working with is very different from other educational majors. So we talk a lot about policy in terms of how that's going to affect our students. Spanish definitely complements what I'm doing in TESOL, because I'm the one learning the second language.

CHOOSING MY MAJOR

I had a lot of great experiences in high school, most notably the debate team, where my coaches and teachers were really transformative for me. I decided that I wanted to pursue education to be a mentor, as a teacher or professor in the future, whatever that looks like. I really found value in what we talk about in TESOL and Spanish. We talk about social-political problems in the world, and I really like learning about these things. It gives me a platform to think critically because to change these things is kind of the point of education, so that's what led me to this path - thinking about how education links social justice and advocacy.

MINORS & CERTIFICATES

Any additional language you would want to learn would pair well with my majors. Right now, I have a French Certificate. There's a new certificate in the College of Education called the Social Foundation certificate. It's new, so I never got a chance to do it, but if I could go back and start school now, I would totally would because you learn about the education system in general and look at it from a more critical and political standpoint.

INTERNSHIPS

I worked at Highland Elementary's dual language immersion program with kindergarten students and fourth grade students. That experience was really cool because it was my first introduction to bilingual education and combined my majors very well. I was a general classroom assistant and I worked specifically with students who were new to the US, whether that meant they had been here for a few months or a year. The students were emergent bilingual, so they haven't learned a lot of English yet. I worked with them in interpreting some things and helping them understand what was happening in the class.

ADVICE

Think about why you want to be a teacher. What's pushing you to do education? Because I think a lot of people go into education because the system worked for them, and they enjoyed school. I did too and I really saw value in education. However, when you become a teacher, you realize that the system doesn't always support everybody. So I think that having a lot of empathy and being critical about why you want to go into education is really important to consider. You have to be able to realize that teaching is more than just about the content you're focusing on. It's political work. It's advocacy.