Call for Proposals: The 2012 Graduate Student Forum

The 2012 Graduate Student Forum will be held Wednesday, 28 March 2012, at the Philadelphia Convention Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. The 2012 TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo begins 29 March 2012. For more information about the Graduate Student Forum, please go to TESOL’s Web site.

Graduate students enrolled full or part time in master's degree programs in TESOL (or related fields) at any institution of higher learning (during fall 2012) can participate in the Graduate Student Forum. (Please note that doctoral students have a similar but separate forum.)

To present at the Graduate Student Forum, you must register to attend. Registration is free. To register, fill out the online registration form by 15 February 2011. Registration for the Graduate Student Forum does not register you for the TESOL convention, which has a separate registration procedure.

Types of Proposals
The forum seeks three types of proposals: papers, demonstrations, and poster sessions.

A paper (15 minutes) is an oral summary, with occasional reference to notes or a text, which describes or discusses something that the presenter is doing or has done in relation to theory or practice. Handouts and audiovisual aids may be used. Presenters are encouraged not to read straight from their papers.

A demonstration (15 minutes) shows, rather than discusses, a technique for teaching or testing. The presenter should devote no more than 5 minutes to explaining the theory underlying the technique. Handouts and audiovisual aids may be used.

A poster session (1 hour) allows for short, informal discussions with other participants while a self-explanatory exhibit is on display. Posters can display research, teaching tips, curriculum development ideas, and many other topics. The exhibit is presented on a large (4 foot by 8 foot; 1.22 meters by 2.44 meters) display board that includes a title; the name and institutional affiliation of the presenter(s); and a brief text with clearly labeled photos, drawings, graphs, or charts. No other audiovisual equipment is allowed. Exhibits are set up during the lunch hour before the session and dismantled immediately after the session. Poster presenters are required to be present during the session.

This year, 45 poster sessions, paper presentations, and demonstrations will be accepted. Some participants who submitted proposals for papers or demonstrations may be given the option to present a poster session instead.

Deadline for Submitting a Proposal
All proposals must be submitted online by 7:00 p.m. EST, 11 November 2011. Proposals sent by postal mail will be disqualified. You will be notified via e-mail about the status of your submission by 9 December 2011.
Adjudication of Proposals
Proposals will be refereed by graduate students at the host university, Southeast Missouri State University, and by the host university elect, Iowa State University.

Factors Affecting Selection
The Graduate Student Forum is intended to bring together individuals from a variety of institutions and backgrounds; therefore, an important factor in proposal selection is program balance. In adjudicating proposals, the Forum Program Committee will seek balance in (a) range of topics, (b) interests covered, and (c) relevance of the proposal to the needs of graduate students in TESOL.

Another important factor is how well the proposal summary is written. Summaries should possess (a) clarity of purpose, (b) succinctness, (c) appropriateness, (d) significance for the intended audience, (e) an indication of the research quality (if relevant), and (f) evidence that the presentation will be well prepared.

Because institutional travel funding for many graduate students is contingent on their presenting a session at the convention, the Forum Program Committee seeks to maximize the number of presenters. Therefore, the committee will accept only one primary presentation per presenter, and if a presenter submits more than one acceptable proposal, the committee will select the proposal that allows the most presenters to participate.

Factors Disqualifying a Proposal
Proposals will be disqualified if they promote commercial interests, are submitted by postal mail rather than online, are not completed according to the guidelines outlined in this call for proposals (e.g., the summary exceeds one page), or are not received by 7 pm EST, 11 November 2011.

Presenter’s Responsibilities
- **Register for the forum.** (TESOL is unable to reimburse program participants for expenses.)
- Notify all co-presenters about the status of the proposal. When two or more people are presenting, the first presenter is responsible for notifying the others.
- Do not change the conceptual content of your session after it has been accepted.
- Bring enough handouts for your room size, which will be indicated in the proposal acceptance message.
- Participate in Graduate Student Forum. It is important to support the other presenters by attending talks throughout the day.

How to Submit a Proposal
Proposals that do not follow these guidelines will be disqualified.

The Title
The title must
- not exceed seven words
- accurately reflect the content
- be clear to the intended audience
- not contain a colon
Each part of a slashed or hyphenated compound counts as one word, but please do not use hyphens or slashes to circumvent the word count. Do not use quotation marks. Capitalize all major words. Here are two sample titles:

1. Participants' Perspectives on In-Service Teacher Training
2. Web Sites for Teaching U.S. Popular Culture

**The Abstract**

The proposal must include an abstract. The abstract will appear in the Graduate Student Forum Program Book, and participants will use it to decide which presentations to attend. The abstract must

- not exceed 50 words
- be written in the third-person present tense (e.g., "The presenter begins by . . . and then she/he . . .")
- not refer to published works
- be carefully edited and proofread
- be written to draw the most appropriate audience to the presentation
- spell out any acronym(s) used in the title

The abstract should also include the following information:

- presenter’s full name
- institutional affiliation
- institution address, including city, state/province, and country

Here’s a sample abstract:

This paper reports on research conducted to determine how to best develop language learning strategies. The participants were English as a foreign language learners in a Southeast Asian nation. This research compared the natural development of strategies among students in traditional classrooms with the effects of specific instruction in strategies and their use.

**The Summary**

Each proposal must have a a 250-word summary of the presentation. Only the referees will see the proposal summary; it will not appear in the Program Book. Make sure your proposal summary has the following information: (a) title, (b) type of presentation (i.e., paper, demonstration, poster session), (c) designated interest area, (d) content area, and (e) audiovisual equipment needs. Do not put your name on your summaries; summaries will be subject to blind review.

The proposal summary must

- be limited to 250 words. Longer summaries will be disqualified.
- not include names of the presenter(s) or institution(s)
- present a clearly stated purpose and point of view
- include supporting details and examples
- contain evidence of current practices and/or research
- use a format appropriate to the subject matter (e.g., paper, demonstration)
• use a variety of techniques (e.g., activities, visuals)
• indicate that a presenter can cover the material in the allotted time
• be carefully edited and proofread

In addition, each type of proposal should summarize content as follows:

**paper:** synopsis that includes central idea and supporting evidence  
**demonstration:** central purpose and description of what will be demonstrated  
**poster session:** main ideas to be presented and description of the visual display

**Deadline**  
Submit your proposal [online](#) by 7:00 p.m. EST, 11 November 2011.

**Contact**  
If you have any questions about the 2012 Graduate Student Forum, please contact [tesolgradforum@gmail.com](mailto:tesolgradforum@gmail.com).