Answering the Call for Chinese Educators

"Students come from all quarters of life and from different parts of the world. The diversity has made the learning environment particularly enjoyable and stimulating," shares Dr. ZhaoHong Han, professor of Language and Education and TCSOL Certificate Program Co-coordinator.

TC’s Certificate Program in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages offers a cutting edge education in the pedagogy behind teaching Chinese to individuals seeking top-notch training by a world-class team of experts. Co-sponsored by the TESOL and Applied Linguistics programs at TC, as well as the Chinese Language and Asia for Educators programs at Columbia University, the TCSOL curriculum provides students with the essential knowledge and skills that will prepare them to be exceptional language teachers.

Dr. ZhaoHong Han, professor of Language and Education and TCSOL Certificate Program Co-coordinator, cites the fast growing demand for qualified Chinese teachers in the U.S. and worldwide as an impetus for the program’s creation. "As a premier school of education, we feel obligated to respond to the demand."

Because this unique program brings students together for 12 weekends over two semesters, both pre-service and in-service teachers can make the program’s schedule work for them. TCSOL attracts a variety of learners, including international and domestic students, Mandarin speakers not yet certified to teach, or those who are certified to teach in other areas but are looking to branch out in their career. The majority of students are native Chinese speakers, but there are also non-native but highly proficient Chinese speakers from the U.S., Korea, and Japan.

Dr. Han, who is also an instructor in the program, speaks to the diversity of the students it attracts. “Students come from all quarters of life and from different parts of the world. The diversity has made the learning environment particularly enjoyable and stimulating.”

Over the course of the year, students study such topics as teaching pedagogy, language acquisition, assessment, computer assisted language learning, and intercultural pragmatics. In addition, students observe lessons and engage in practice teaching sessions, enabling them to gain experience under teacher guidance.

There are a number of directions in which graduates of this non-degree, fast-track program can go. Many teach in independent K-12 school settings in the U.S., at colleges and universities, or in private language institutes here and abroad. TCSOL graduates also have the opportunity to continue relationships and develop connections with the program’s faculty and alumni through the L2-Chinese Teaching Club. This on-going network of professionals in the field is a virtual forum for practitioners to offer and gain support, wherever their TCSOL certificate may take them.

With the ever-growing presence of China in the global economy, more and more international business is being conducted in Chinese. The TCSOL Certificate Program at TC provides the training necessary for future teachers of the language to help meet that need.

The TCSOL Certificate Program is currently accepting applications for the 2012-2013 session.

-Liz Hodel

For more information, visit: www.tc.columbia.edu/tcsol