

# A New Home for S&T's Intensive English Program



The experience of studying abroad is a testament to strength and the pursuit of happiness. This is especially true for English language learners who, through their efforts to learn a new language, embody tenacity and dedication to academic achievement. Not only do they face the hardships that come with higher education, but they do so while adapting to cultural shifts and new forms of communication.

Fortunately for students at Missouri S&T, there is support in the area of language proficiency. Since its creation in December 1993 with the admission of students from Turkey, the Intensive English Program (IEP) has assisted international students and community members from over 70 countries in achieving the proficiency level required for their studies and has promoted effective transition to academic programs at the university. Current IEP students hail from Afghanistan, China, Ethiopia, Mexico, Kuwait, and Taiwan.

The program has undergone a transition of its own, moving from International Affairs (IA) to English and Technical Communication (ETC). The IA was dissolved on September 1, 2022. According to an announcement sent to the campus, the reorganization was prompted by “the changing nature of international outreach and current trends.” As a result, all units and roles that previously reported to Dr. Jeanie Hofer, former Vice Provost of International Affairs, now report to departments that are more closely aligned to their functions.

Within the IEP program itself, classes have been reorganized, effective January 2023.

Dr. Thu Tran has been the Program Administrator for IEP since 2012. He commented on what the move means for the program and its students. “International students will continue to receive support regarding improving their English language proficiency. This mainly affects the program’s reporting structure. I do hope to gain more administrative support.”

Tran believes the move will strengthen “the program by giving [IEP] students more opportunities to interact with students and faculty of the English department. Collaboration between English-language learners and English majors will be smoother, and the IEP will receive more support from the faculty in the department.”

This latest development is not the first step towards integration of the program into campus academic life. In 2021, classes in the program were moved from the Southwestern Bell Cultural Center, where they had historically been taught, to main campus buildings. Classes which were scheduled directly through the IEP can now be registered for through the registrar. These changes all served to establish the IEP as an international unit rather than a support division. With cultural and linguistic barriers at play, bringing English-language learners closer to other members of the campus community is a tremendous benefit for their social and linguistic development.