

**Cairo American College**  
**ESL Department**  
**Philosophy**

The mission of the ESL department is to develop the English proficiency of students, enhance their academic achievement, and support classroom teachers to ensure quality instruction.

**Beliefs about learning English:**

- Students learn best when their cultural identities are valued.
- Students may require seven to ten years to become fluent in another language.
- Language development may include a silent period during which learning takes place.
- Language proficiency includes both social and academic language skills.
- Literacy in the first language facilitates the development of literacy in the second language.
- Reading widely in any language improves all aspects of language proficiency.
- Language proficiency continues to develop after students exit the ESL program.
- Students can learn more than one language simultaneously.

**Beliefs about teaching ESL students:**

- A flexible, student-centered ESL program in a nurturing environment encourages student risk taking and promotes language acquisition.
- Access to the mainstream curriculum at the appropriate instructional levels enables ESL students to gain proficiency more rapidly.
- Content materials that integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing enhance language acquisition.
- Meaningful communication, collaboration, and interaction with teachers and peers in the classroom enable students to develop skills more quickly.
- Reading is necessary to attain higher levels of language proficiency.
- A variety of learning strategies enables students to acquire language more efficiently.