

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 19, 2010

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and Advisors

FROM: Jake Harwood, Interim Chair, Undergraduate Council (UGC)
Celeste F. Pardee, Curriculum Associate, Academic Affairs

RE: Second Language Requirement for Undergraduate International Students

International students who are native speakers of languages other than English now have another option for satisfying the Second Language Requirement for a baccalaureate degree. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS), when taken for admission to the University, will also fulfill this General Education Foundations Requirement. The addition to the Second Language Requirement was initiated by Undergraduate Council in February 2010, and approved by the Faculty Senate on 5/3/10. Effective in Summer/Fall 2010, this exam option is available to all undergraduates, regardless of catalog year.

Amended Second Language Requirement,

<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2010-11/policies/secondlang.htm>:

International students who are native speakers of languages other than English may fulfill the second language requirement with the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or with the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), provided that it was an admissions requirement and their score was satisfactory for admission to the University of Arizona. U.S. citizens and international students from countries where English is the official language may not use the TOEFL or IELTS to satisfy the Second Language Requirement; those students must meet the requirement through one of the options stated above.

Justification:

* When the TOEFL score was approved in 2007 to satisfy the General Education Second Language requirement, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) was not in use. All international applicants whose native language was not English took the TOEFL for admission to the University.

* The Office of Admissions began accepting the IELTS in lieu of the TOEFL in 2008, and this exam has been gaining popularity among international students.

* The minimum IELTS score, like the TOEFL score, is considered an indicator that an international student has an English proficiency at the second-semester or fourth-semester language skill level required for any bachelor's degree.

* The minimum IELTS score for admission exceeds the proficiency level of the minimum TOEFL score (i.e., IELTS 6.5 = high advanced English proficiency; TOEFL PBT 500 = high intermediate proficiency) so it actually is a better indicator of a student's English communication skills.

Management of the Policy:

In the UAccess Student System, the TOEFL or IELTS score, if required for admission to the University, will automatically fulfill the Second Language Requirement in the international student's degree audit, just as the score on a UA language proficiency exam may satisfy the second-semester or fourth-semester language requirement for U.S. citizens.

Questions about the amended Second Language Requirement may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curriculum Associate, at 621-5375, or at cpardee@u.arizona.edu.