AY 2017-2018 ADDENDUM to Graduate Student Handbook

The following changes to the 2016-2017 Graduate Student Handbook are effective for the 2017-2018 year.

SUMMARY

English Language Proficiency: Countries qualifying for automatic exemption from a language test. For a defined list of countries, Slate now automatically exempts applicants from needing a proficiency test. The list of countries has been updated and expanded from the past.

English Language Proficiency: Acceptable English Language tests. Text has been added to allow acceptance of a new English language evaluation at UC that has been calibrated versus TOEFL. This second test can be performed for those exchange students or visiting applicants on site at UC (students need an M identification number), by the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) in CECH. *N.B. there is a specific process for applying to take the CESL test and instructions are included here as an appendix*

English Language Proficiency: Expanded conditions for programs to request a waiver for an applicant. Text has been added to provide flexibility for the Graduate School to grant a waiver for an applicant who has completed a baccalaureate (or higher) degree from an entirely English-instructing university. Text has been added to provide flexibility for the Graduate School to grant a waiver for other nationally administered professional tests that require evaluation of both oral and written English (e.g. USMLE). Text has been added to provide flexibility for the Graduate School to grant a waiver for permanent residents who have lived in the US. *N.B. in all the cases above programs (and not the student) must submit the waiver request.*

3.0 GPA minimum for admission. The process for admitting students with a below 3.0 GPA has been simplified. There will no longer be a requirement to submit a waiver request to the Graduate School. Instead, the handbook now includes a requirement that programs provide supporting evidence and a rationale of how such applicants will be able to complete a graduate program that requires achievement of a 3.0 GPA or higher, including any special help offered by the program for such students. This requirement will be fulfilled by text entered in Slate as part of the process of offering admission to such an applicant, and will no longer require having a waiver approved by the Graduate School.

174 graduate credit rule. Update to include 'W' grades and audited courses as eligible credits in the tally of attempted credits. This change gets us aligned with how the State tallies the credits for which they provide graduate student subsidy.

> On the following pages, the text replaces the indicated sections of the 2016-2017 handbook, for use in 2017-2018.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT *(section starts on page 27)*

English proficiency is required of all applicants whose native language is not English. Students can demonstrate proficiency in a number of ways at the graduate level. PLEASE NOTE, many colleges and programs have higher requirements than those listed below. Applicants should contact the programs to which they are applying for details.

STANDARDIZED TESTS OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY. Most students fulfill the English requirement by taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Testing System (IELTS), or the PEARSON Test of English (PTE). For IELTS an overall band score of 6.5 is sufficient for graduate admission. For PEARSON a score of 47 is sufficient. TOEFL requirements vary based on the type of TOEFL test taken and scores are valid for up to two years. The minimum university requirement is:

- 520 (paper-based test), or
- 190 (computer-based test), or
- 80 (internet-based test)

For applicants or students who are on campus, there are two other tests that can satisfy the English proficiency requirement.
- For students who have joined UC as conditional admits, satisfactory completion of level 112 of Intensive English instruction at ELS Language Centers. More information on the ELS Language Center at UC can be found at their website.
- For exchange students or visiting scholars on campus, achieving a score of 3 or better on the Graduate Placement Test (GPT-VS) administered on campus by the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) in CECH. Programs, and not students, must initiate the request for CESL testing (**see attached instructions**).

AUTOMATIC WAIVER OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING. When completing a graduate school application, international students will automatically be exempted from the English Proficiency testing requirement if they have received a baccalaureate or higher degree from one of the following countries where English is the official language:

Anguilla	Guyana	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Antigua and Barbuda	Hong Kong (public Uni)	Scotland
Australia	Ireland, Northern	Seychelles
Bahamas	Ireland, Republic of	Sierra Leone
Barbados	Jamaica	Singapore
Belize	Kenya	Solomon Islands
Bermuda	Lesotho	South Africa
Botswana	Liberia	Swaziland
British Virgin Islands	Malawi	Tanzania
Cameroon	Malta	Tonga
Canada (except Quebec)	Mauritius	Trinidad and Tobago
Cayman Islands	Montserrat	Turks and Caicos Islands

Dominica	Namibia	Uganda
England	New Zealand	United Kingdom
Fiji	Nigeria	Vanuatu
Gambia	Papua New Guinea	Wales
Ghana	St. Kitts and Nevis	Zambia
Gibraltar	St. Lucia	Zimbabwe
Grenada		

CONDITIONS FOR PROGRAMS TO REQUEST A WAIVER OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TESTS.

Based on the criteria below, request for a waiver of the English proficiency requirement may be made by the applicant's Program Director (with appropriate documentation) to the Director of the Graduate School. The Director will approve or deny the language-proficiency waiver requests submitted by the program.

Waivers will be considered if the applicant has fulfilled one of the following:

- received a baccalaureate or higher degree from an entirely English-instructing institution. This requires that all programs at the institution are taught in English, not just the program in which the applicant earned their degree.

- passed a nationally administered professional test that requires evaluation of both oral and written English (e.g. USMLE, Cambridge CPE passed with a B).

- holds a US immigrant visa for permanent residency (also known as green card) and has been a full-time resident of the United States for at least 3 years.

- the applicant has taken the TOEFL (or PEARSON, or IELTS) in order to enter another institution in an exempt English-speaking country, is currently actively enrolled in that institution, and can document achieving our minimum standardized test scores.

3.0 GPA REQUIREMENT FOR ADMISSIONS *(section starts on p. 12)*

ADMISSION TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS
ADMISSIONS POLICY

The University of Cincinnati welcomes graduate applications from students who:

• hold a baccalaureate degree from a college or university regarded as standard by a regional or general accrediting agency, and

• have at least a *B* average (3.0/4.0 system) in relevant undergraduate course work or otherwise give evidence of promise that is judged satisfactory by the admitting program and the Graduate School. Programs that wish to admit applicants who lack this 3.0 minimum GPA requirement must provide supporting evidence and rationale of how such students will be able to complete a graduate program that requires achievement of a 3.0 GPA, and indicate any special help offered by the program to ensure the applicant's success given the GPA deficiency.

174 GRADUATE CREDIT RULE

(replacing second paragraph on page 37)

Graduate students who have attempted 174 graduate credit hours at the University of Cincinnati are not eligible for a university award for enrollment at or beyond the 174 hours. Hours attempted include hours for which credit has been awarded, as well as withdrawn courses, audited courses, and hours in progress or incomplete. All graduate hours attempted at the University of Cincinnati, regardless of program or student status, count toward the 174 total.

(replacing fifth paragraph on page 31)

Graduate students who have 174 graduate credit hours (including attempted credits with grades F, I, UW, SP, IP, UP, W, etc. and audited courses) at the University of Cincinnati are not eligible for an award funded by the university for enrollment beginning with the semester in which said student will exceed the 174 attempted hours (See 174 Graduate Credit Rule). This is due to the regulations governing state support of the university, so exceptions are not considered.

The Graduate Placement Test for Visiting Students
Administered by Center for English as a Second Language (CESL), University of Cincinnati

Introduction

The Graduate Placement Test (GPT-VS) is designed for international visiting students who consider applying for the graduate programs at the University of Cincinnati (UC) and do not have a TOEFL or IELTS score. **The test can only be taken by international exchange students at the University, or visitors who are physically present at the UC main campus.** The GPT-VS is evaluated by a grading scale equivalent to TOEFL and IELTS score scales, and will be accepted as an alternative to TOEFL/IELTS scores.   There are two components in the GPT-VS: the Oral English Proficiency Test for Academic Purposes (OEPT-Academic) and the ESL English Writing Placement Test (ESL ENPT). The cost of the test is $50.

OEPT-Academic

OEPT-Academic is a test of listening and speaking skills that assesses students' oral English proficiency in both social and academic communication contexts. The test result indicates a student's communication competence and language proficiency expected in graduate classrooms and other academic settings. There are two sections in the OEPT-Academic: Conversational Section and Academic Section. In each section, students will need to produce a 3-4-minute monologue in response to the prompt.

ESL ENPT

ESL ENPT is a test of English academic reading and writing skills. The test result indicates a student's competence in reading comprehension and academic writing expected for studying at the graduate level. There are two steps in the ESL ENPT: reading and writing. Students will need to read the given article first, and then follow the instruction to write the essay. This test is timed for 90 minutes.

Evaluation

The evaluation of students' OEPT-Academic and ESL ENPT will be conducted by professionals with expertise in language assessment following standardized rubrics. The overall GPT-VS score is the average of OEPT-Academic and ESL ENPT.

Tables below demonstrate the equivalence of OEPT-Academic, ESL ENPT TOELF, and IELT score scales.

OEPT-Academic

OEPT-Academic Score	TOEFL iBT Speaking Score	IELTS Speaking Score
1	0-14	0-4.5
2	15-19	4.5-6
3	20-24	6.5-7.5
4	25-30	8-9

ESL ENPT

ESL ENPT Score	TOEFL iBT Writing Score	IELTS Speaking Score
1	0-14	0-4.5
2	15-19	4.5-6
3	20-24	6.5-7.5
4	25-30	8-9

According to the English Proficiency Requirement of the Graduate School, an overall **TOEFL iBT score of 80 or an overall IELTS score of 6.5** is sufficient for graduate admission. Based on the equivalence demonstrated in the tables above, an **overall score of 3 from the GPT-VS** is required to meet the admission minimums at the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati. **Please note that individual graduate programs may have higher requirements, so please check program websites for additional information.**

Instruction to the Graduate Placement Test for Visiting Students

Introduction

The Graduate Placement Test (GPT-VS) is designed for international visiting/exchange students who consider applying for the graduate programs at the University of Cincinnati (UC) and do not have a TOEFL or IELTS score. The GPT-VS is offered online through Blackboard/Canopy for those who have a university ID, or in-person by appointment.

Register for the GPT-VS

Step 1. Students must be nominated by a graduate program. Students cannot apply on their own.

Step 2. Graduate programs send the following information of students to the CESL Testing office (oept1@uc.edu)

1. *Student's full name (Last, First)*
2. *UC M# (optional)*
3. *UC username (6+2) if taking online*
4. *Email address*
5. *UC Department/Program proposing the student*
6. *UC Department contact information (name and email address of the contact person)*
7. *State the goal is to have student take the GPT-VS test, and which departmental account (Fund, Cost Center, and Functional Area) should be charged for the test (if the student is paying, they should provide a cheque for $50 to reimburse the program)*
8. *Test format (in-person with availability, or online)*

Step 3. After registration, student will receive a test enrollment email with instruction to taking the test.

<u>Take the GPT</u>

If taking the GPT online, students will be enrolled in the Blackboard/Canopy Community site. Students can take the test any time within the given one-week time frame.

If students choose to take the GPT in person, the testing time and location will be provided for students in the enrollment email. Students should get to the testing location at least 15 minutes prior to the testing time.

<u>Score Report</u>

Score report will be sent to the Graduate School, students, and corresponding graduate program contacts within 3 business days after the completion of the test.

<u>How are the results used in a graduate application at the University of Cincinnati?</u>

1. The CESL sends score report to the Graduate School, who uploads it into the student application.
2. Program staff determine if the GPT-VS score fulfills the English proficiency requirements of the program and of the Graduate School.

If score fulfills minimum requirements of the Graduate School and the specific graduate program, program staff contact the Graduate School to update the application as satisfying English Proficiency Requirements (staff should email Kyle Johnson).