

Proposed Amendment – section 5070.3 (first paragraph only)

International applicants whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate or graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. academic institution or an overseas academic institution of high standards whose language of instruction is English must demonstrate proficiency in English. English proficiency is demonstrated by achieving a score of 550 or better on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a score of 79 on the TOEFL-IBT exam, a band score of six (6) on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), a minimum score of 57 on the Pearson Test of English (PTE), or a grade C or better on either the Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) or Cambridge English: Proficiency (CPE) exam. Regular admission to the graduate program in English, however, requires a minimum score of 600 on the TOEFL-PBT,, a score of 100 on the TOEFL-IBT, a score of 7.5 on the IELTS, ~~or~~ a score of 68 on the PTE, or a score of B or better on the CAE and CPE. Applicants may not submit, and graduate programs may not accept, other tests of English ability in place of these tests (TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, CAE, CPE) without prior permission from the Graduate Council. Departments may set higher requirements, particularly for students who have applied for graduate teaching assistant positions. International students who have an undergraduate or graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. academic institution or an overseas academic institution of high standards whose language of instruction is English are not normally required to take the TOEFL. Academic programs may, however, require that international students with a U.S. degree take the TOEFL as an admission requirement. In addition, international students may be required by their academic advisors to take a university administered English writing placement test. The results of this test will be used to advise students in regard to supplemental on-campus classes required to strengthen their English skills.

Rationale

The CAE and (to a lesser extent) CPE exams of English proficiency are accepted by a number of graduate programs in the United States (link below/attached spreadsheet). Among these are several institutions, e.g. Miami University, Western Michigan University, that may be considered peer institutions to WSU and with whom we may compete with for graduate applicants. Acceptance of the CAE and/or CPE exams would reduce barriers to graduate admissions and increase our competitiveness for applicants who have taken these exams. CAE and CPE equivalencies to the TOEFL and IELTS exams are well documented (see justification below). Acceptance of these exams with clearly stated minimum scores should not increase the workload required for admissions of international graduate students nor should WSU incur any increased costs associated with the acceptance of these exams. In effect, this requested change in policy is entirely in line with WSUs stated goal of increasing the enrollment of international students.

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/why-choose-us/global-recognition/index.aspx/?s=1>

Justification

CAE and CPE grades of C are equivalent to an IELTS band score of 6.5 (or better). i.e. The proposed CAE and CPE minimum requirements are more rigorous than are the IELTS/TOEFL minimums. These equivalencies are taken from Cambridge Assessment documentation (first link below) but are consistent with documentation from institutions that accept the CAE and/or CPE (other links).

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/28894-cae-comparing-scores.pdf>

<http://www.wittenborg.eu/english-proficiency-tests.htm>

<https://medium.com/ielts-genius/ielts-toefl-or-cae-which-test-is-right-for-me-eaa50b209a63>