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MEMORANDUM

November 2, 2023

TO: University Graduate Programs Committee
University Graduate Council
University Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. Mihaela Metianu, Assistant Provost for Global Engagement
Stephen Steppe, Director of Graduate Admissions

RE: Proposal to increase English language proficiency requirements for graduate admissions.

The Graduate College Admissions office along with the Center for Global Engagement propose to increase the minimum required English proficiency test scores for admission to graduate programs.

	Current Minimum Score	Proposed Minimum Score
TOEFL IBT	61	79
IELTS	6.0	6.0
DUOLINGO	90	110

Rationale: FAU's current minimum English language proficiency test scores for graduate admissions fall below graduate requirements for most of the SUS institutions. The only two institutions with lower minimum requirements are the University of North Florida and the Florida Polytechnical Institute.

Institution	TOEFL (IBT)	IELTS	Duolingo	GRE (Verbal)
FAMU	80	6.5		
FGCU	79	6.5		
FIU	80	6.5	120	
Florida Poly.	61	6		
New College	83	6.5		
UCF	80	6.5		
UF	80	6		140
UNF	61			
USF	79	6.5	110	153
UWF	79	6.5	110	153
FAU	61	6	90	

FAU Undergraduate Admission requirements for minimum language proficiency are also higher than the current graduate minimum requirements for FAU.

The current minimum scores required do not align terms of equivalency. A minimum TOEFL Score of 6.0 is equivalent with a 79 TOEFL IBT and 110 Duo Lingo respectively. Therefore, increasing the TOEFL IBT and DUO LINGO scores would align with the 6.0 IELTS score already required.

Some departments may be concerned that increasing the minimum English proficiency scores will reduce the number of applicants who are otherwise qualified academically. Departments and programs will retain the ability to submit exceptions for candidates on a case-by-case basis via the [Form 10 petition process](#).

Many departments already require test scores above the current minimum. Raising the minimum scores for **all** graduate admissions would allow us to attract international students who are stronger academically and more likely to successfully complete their coursework, theses, and dissertations.

Current English Language Proficiency Requirements for FAU Graduate Admissions

The current general admission language proficiency requirements for non-native speakers of English and students attending foreign institutions through the Graduate College is provided below.

- [Test of English as a Foreign Language \(TOEFL\)](#): The minimum university requirement for TOEFL is 500 (Paper-Based Test) and 61 (Internet Based Test).
 - FAU's school code for TOEFL is 5229
- [International English Language Testing System \(IELTS\)](#): The minimum university requirement for IELTS is a band score of 6.0. [Duolingo](#): The minimum university requirement for Duolingo is 90.
- Successful completion of Level VI in the Academic Track of the University's [Intensive English Institute](#).

Exceptions: Non-Native speakers of English are not required to submit proof of English language proficiency if they meet one of the following:

1. Completion of at least three years of secondary education from a high school based in the United States or abroad with full curriculum of instruction in English.
2. Completion of at least three years of secondary education from a high school based in a country where English is the majority native-speaking language, or where English is the primary language of instruction starting in the primary grades.
3. For undergraduate applicants only, completion of at least thirty (30) postsecondary credits, including ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, or the equivalent, with a grade of C or higher, from a U.S. regionally accredited post-secondary institution or from a recognized post-secondary institution abroad with full curriculum of instruction in English.
4. Completion of at least sixty (60) post-secondary credits or an associate degree or higher from a U.S. regionally accredited postsecondary institution or from a recognized post-secondary institution abroad with full curriculum of instruction in English.

The official FAU regulation on English Language Proficiency can be found here: [Regulation 4.009](#).