

November 8, 2005: Admission and GSI Appointment Scores on the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL

BERKELEY: OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE GRADUATE DIVISION

November 8, 2005

To: Deans and Department Chairs

From: Joseph J. Duggan, Associate Dean

Re: Admission and GSI Appointment Scores on the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL

The new version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) became available in the United States in September 2005 and will be phased in elsewhere in the world later this year and in 2006.

Graduate Admission

Educational Testing Services is in the process of phasing out both the paper test and the computer-based test (CBT). The Graduate Division will, however, continue to accept paper and CBT scores as long as these tests are available and the scores are not out-of-date under existing Admissions policy. For example, for the 2006–2007 admissions cycle, scores are valid for all tests taken after June, 2004. Students taking the previous versions of the TOEFL will continue to be required to meet the aggregate score of 570 on the paper-based test or 230 on the CBT.

I appointed three standard-setting committees to recommend the minimum scores for those who are required to take the iBT Next Generation TOEFL for admission to graduate studies at Berkeley. The committees consisted of Senate faculty (at least half of each committee), non-Senate faculty, staff with expertise in second language learning or graduate admissions, and students. The minimum scores recommended by those committees were approved by the Graduate Council at its meeting of October 10, 2005.

The minimum aggregate Next Generation TOEFL score to qualify for admission to graduate study at Berkeley will be 68. This score will be enforced as a condition of admission by the Graduate Division. Although the minimum scores on the four sections of the test that together gave the score of 68 do not

need to be reached, they were, for your information: 18 for writing, 17 for speaking, 16 for listening, and 17 for reading. On each section the maximum possible score was 30. In making decisions about admission, departments may decide to set their own minimum scores on one or more of the sections as long as this does not result in a total score below the Graduate Division minimum or to set a higher aggregate score.

As in the past, to be exempt from taking the TOEFL students must have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with a grade point average of B or better at a university in the United States. They must show that all full-time course work was conducted in English. Courses in English as a Second Language, courses in a language other than English, on-line courses, and courses that will be completed after the student applies for admission will not satisfy this requirement. Please consult the Admissions chapter of the Guide to Graduate Policy (www.grad.berkeley.edu/policies/guide.shtml), Chapter B: Admission, for further details.

Appointment as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)

Since the Next Generation TOEFL, unlike the previous version, includes a speaking component, it will also serve as the primary test to determine whether the English of students who do not speak English as a native language is sufficient to justify their appointment as Graduate Student Instructors. Eventually, then, the Test of Spoken English (TSE) will no longer serve as the primary screening for this purpose if the student has passed the TOEFL with a speaking score high enough to justify appointment as a GSI. The relevant standard-setting process committee recommended 26 as the minimum speaking score to be monitored by the Graduate Division, and this score was approved by the Graduate Council at its meeting of October 10, 2005. Hiring units may wish to establish a higher minimum speaking score on the Next Generation TOEFL for their appointees, in which case the higher minimum must be monitored by the hiring unit.

A student scoring from 22 to 25 on the speaking component of the Next Generation TOEFL will, after arriving in Berkeley, have to pass the Oral Proficiency Test (OPT), administered by the GSI Teaching and Resource Center, before being appointed as a GSI. Students scoring 22 may complete a semester-long Language Proficiency Program course (100A) before taking the OPT. Students scoring below are required to complete a semester of the Language Proficiency Program (LPP 100A) before taking the OPT.

If the student was exempted from taking the TOEFL for purposes of admission to graduate standing, but does not speak English as a native language, the student must take the SPEAK test administered on the Berkeley campus by the GSI Teaching and Resource Center and pass it with a score of 50 before being appointed as a GSI. In the event that the student scores 40 or 45 on the SPEAK test, the student will be able to demonstrate proficiency by passing the OPT. Students who score 40 may complete LPP 100A before taking the OPT. Students who score below 40 on the SPEAK are required to complete LPP 100A before taking the OPT. Students who fail the OPT are strongly encouraged to complete LPP 100A, at the conclusion of which they will be retested.

Students who do not take LPP 100A after failing the OPT must wait six months before being retested.

Please consult the Appointments chapter of the Guide to Graduate Policy (www.grad.berkeley.edu/policies/guide.shtml), Chapter H: Appointments, for further details.

cc: Members of the Graduate Council

Head Graduate Advisers

Faculty Advisers for GSI Affairs

Professional Developers

Graduate Assistants