

**Proposed Policy and Process for
Request to Waive the Indiana English Proficiency Exam (IEPE)
upon Graduate Admission
September 14, 2016**

What is the IEPE?

This is an exam of English proficiency administered to every incoming international graduate student. The exam is intended to assess the readiness of non-native speakers of English to study (listening, reading, writing, oral interview) in English at the graduate level. Students not performing well on this exam are assigned to take one or more courses in the Second Language Studies program to improve skills.

What is the university policy on waiving the exam?

The exam is waived at the request of the admitting “department” (which means to the campus in reference to the School of Education, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies). Permanent residents of the U.S. are not required to take the exam.

What has been our policy before now?

We have not had a formal policy but have generally not encouraged waivers. Our practice has been to exempt students if we notice that they come from a country where English is an official language, or if we are requested to do so on the basis of a recent degree earned in the U.S.

Why propose a formal policy?

Informal policy and practice in waiving the IEPE exam is not transparent to faculty or students, and not efficient when carried out as an admissions process. It leaves little record, and therefore cannot be captured for data analysis regarding the relative success of students who do or do not take the exam.

Proposed Policy

Applicants meeting or exceeding admission requirements and approved for admission to graduate programs in the School of Education may be exempted from IEPE examination by request of the admitting faculty and approval of the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

Proposed Process

An applicant may request that faculty seek waiver of the exam, or faculty may initiate a request for waiver. The request for waiver should come from a program coordinator or department chair using the Request for Waiver form.

Approval for a waiver will be based on one of the following bases:

- **Applicant's first language is English**
- Applicant has lived and worked in a country where English is the official language or an official language, not as an academic student or an intensive English student, for two or more contiguous years within the immediate past three years
- Certificate or MSED applicant has earned an undergraduate degree from a US institution within the previous two years, earning a 3.0 GPA or higher (if the applicant's submitted transcript does not yet show the earned degree, final grades for the degree must be pending)
- Doctoral applicant has earned a masters degree from a US institution within the previous two years with a 3.5 GPA or higher (if the applicant's submitted transcript does not yet show the earned degree, final grades for the degree must be pending)

Additional supporting information, including prolonged communication with the applicant in person or at a distance and/or a well-written candidate's statement, are positive factors and may be deciding factors in an otherwise ambiguous case. They are not sufficient on their own.

A case may be presented on other grounds by a member of faculty to cover unusual situations under which English fluency has been established. For example, when an applicant acquired fluency early in life and has retained it by means other than those listed above.