

## Graduate Studies Committee Template

*Prior to presenting at the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) for review, please provide answers to the following questions, as relevant. Please contact Matthew Boots ([mboots1@iu.edu](mailto:mboots1@iu.edu)) with any questions.*

**Title:** Accepting DuoLingo for Graduate Admission

**GSC presenter:** Sarah Lubienski

### This proposal is for a...

- program change    new program    policy change    new policy

### Include responses to each question, as relevant:

1. What are you proposing and why? (If proposing a change, then the description and rationale should be relevant to the change(s) only.)

We propose to include the [Duo Lingo English Exam](#) as an option for admissions. This exam considers reading, writing, speaking and listening, and combines skills into scores for literacy, comprehension, conversation, and production.

#### We propose to revise our policy as follows:

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or Duolingo English Test scores are required for all international applicants whose first language is not English. TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores must be from a test date no more than two years prior to the date an application is submitted. The School of Education typically requires a score of 79 on the TOEFL internet-based test, 6.5 on the IELTS, or 115 on the Duolingo English Test for admission to its graduate programs.; Prospective students whose TOEFL, IELTS or Duolingo scores do not meet the standard listed above may still apply. Exceptions may occasionally be made when other application credentials are strong.

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Score cutoffs for Duolingo were decided as follows:

According to Duolingo:

- 110 on Duolingo [corresponds](#) with TOEFL scores of **76-81** & IELTS of 6.
- 115 on Duolingo corresponds with TOEFL 82-86 and IELTS 6.
- 120 on Duolingo corresponds with TOEFL scores of 87-92 & IELTS of **6.5**.

We require 79 TOEFL and 6.5 IELTS, so we propose to require **115** as the Duolingo minimum.

For Undergraduates, [IU requires](#) 79 TOEFL, 6.5 IELTS and 105 Duolingo.

2. How will this impact enrollment?

It could help enrollment among international students. Students are increasingly requesting to use Duolingo scores. The test is \$49 (free to send scores to 40 or more schools) and is far cheaper than TOEFL and IELTS (\$255, includes 4-5 schools, plus \$4-20 per extra school). It seems likely that some students who are on the fence about applying to IU are deterred by this.

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3. How will this impact students' time to degree?

Assuming we do not see issues with students' academic English skills when they come in with Duolingo scores, it should not impact time to degree.

4. How will this impact specific student populations and/or DEI issues?

It is helpful to our international applicants and may attract a few additional applications.

5. How will this impact School of Education resources, including faculty loads?

NA

6. How will this be effectively sustained over time?

We can monitor and revisit the cut score or the acceptance of Duolingo scores in future years. One potential concern is whether our students will succeed on the TEPAIC if they come here. I corresponded with Sun-Young Shin, Assoc. Prof in the Department of Second Language Studies. I shared a concern that I heard about Duolingo assessing more conversational English rather than academic. He wrote:

*As a language testing specialist, I share your some concerns about the Duolingo English Test (DET). It has been criticized in the field of language assessment because it does not assess test takers' academic language ability, discourse level competence, or interactional competence. It is thus still questionable whether the DET can be used as a legitimate indicator of required English proficiency as more established academic English proficiency tests like TOEFL iBT and IELTS do. However, due to its efficiency and practicality, it has been accepted as a proof of English language proficiency for undergraduate admission to many universities including IU. I did research to see how strongly DET scores are correlated with our in-house academic English test called Indiana Academic English Test (IAET) and found that it is highly correlated with the IAET scores. I'm not sure how well DET can be related to TEPAIC scores because most of them have reported their TOEFL iBT or IELTS scores, but **I would not oppose accepting the DET scores as an alternative to TOEFL and IELTS.***

7. What was the departmental vote tally for this proposal? (e.g., "12 in favor, 2 opposed, 3 abstained")

NA

## Updates to Bulletin to include Duo Lingo English Exam

### Admissions

#### Application Procedures

All prospective students seeking admission to a graduate degree, certificate, or licensure program must submit a complete application file according to the requirements set by each program. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Depending on the program specifications and on the applicant's citizenship (U.S. or international), applicants to degree, certificate, or licensure programs may be required to submit any or all of the following:

- A completed online application (required of all applicants). The online application is campus-specific and non-transferable. Applicants are responsible for submitting an application to the campus where they wish to pursue a degree, certificate, or licensure program.
- An application fee (required of all applicants). Online applications require a nonrefundable payment by credit card and cannot be processed before the fee is paid in full.
- A personal goal statement (required of all applicants) addressing academic and professional background and objectives.
- A current resume or curriculum vitae (required of all international applicants; also required of domestic applicants to some programs).
- Transcripts (required of all applicants). International applicants must provide official transcripts and degree certificates from every institution of higher education attended. Domestic applicants to degree programs must submit official transcripts from every institution of higher education where they earned a degree. Domestic applicants to non-degree (certificate or licensure) programs must submit official transcripts from every institution of higher education where they have earned a degree. Unofficial transcripts may be accepted for the admission review, but official transcripts must be submitted in the first semester if a student is admitted.
- Letters of recommendation (required of all applicants) that address the applicant's academic and/or professional capabilities. The number of letters required (one, two, or three) may vary depending on the program.
- An academic writing sample (required for a few select programs).
- GRE Scores (required of all international applicants and some domestic applicants). Some master's programs and licensure programs may waive the GRE requirement for U.S. citizens whose cumulative undergraduate GPA meets a pre-defined minimum. Applicants who are required to submit GRE scores must submit official scores from a test taken within five years prior to the date an application is submitted. Unofficial GRE scores may be accepted for the admission review, but official scores must be submitted in the first semester if a student is admitted.

- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or Duolingo English Test scores (required of all international applicants whose native language is not English). International applicants who are current degree-seeking students at a U.S. institution of higher education may be exempted from the TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo requirement. U.S. citizens who have been educated primarily outside the U.S. in a language other than English may be required to submit TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo scores. Applicants who are required to submit TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo scores must submit official scores from a test taken within two years prior to the date an application is submitted. Unofficial TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo scores may be accepted for the admission review, but official scores must be submitted in the first semester if a student is admitted.
- Praxis or Indiana CORE Assessment Scores (required for teacher preparation programs, including the Secondary Transition to Teaching program and other initial licensure programs).

More details about these requirements, including which materials are required for each specific program, and where and how to submit required documents, can be found in the How to Apply section of the School of Education website.

<https://bulletins.iu.edu/iu/educ-grad/2022-2023/admissions/application-procedures/index.shtml>

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### Admission Criteria

The following are the minimum criteria for admission to the School of Education's graduate degree, certificate, and licensure programs offered on the Bloomington campus.

- A four-year bachelor's degree (or equivalent), requiring four years of full-time study or equivalent, from a college or university holding full regional or national accreditation, is required for admission to all graduate programs. Applicants with a bachelor's degree from an institution holding only state accreditation may be granted conditional admission if their other application credentials are strong. Applicants in the last semester of a four-year undergraduate program may be granted conditional admission until such time as the bachelor's degree has been awarded. International applicants are generally expected to be bachelor equivalent to be admitted to a program. They are encouraged to confirm with OIS that they have satisfied this requirement after submitting their application and transcripts.
- The minimum acceptable undergraduate grade point average (GPA) varies by program. Graduate degree programs typically require a minimum GPA of 2.75 (on a 4.00 scale) in all undergraduate coursework. Some programs may require a higher undergraduate GPA. Graduate licensure (non-degree, certification only) programs typically require a GPA of 2.5 or higher in all undergraduate coursework. Exceptions may be made when undergraduate coursework is judged to have been especially rigorous, and when other application credentials are very strong. Individual programs may set their own GPA requirements. Meeting the minimum GPA requirement does not guarantee admission.
- Most master's and specialist programs require applicants to have a minimum GPA of 3.30 in any graduate coursework taken prior to application. Doctoral programs usually require a minimum GPA of 3.50 in any prior graduate coursework. Licensure programs typically require a minimum GPA of 3.00 in any previous graduate coursework. Individual judgments are made about the rigor of grading in the graduate work presented.
- GRE scores are required for all Ed.S., Ed.D., and Ph.D. applicants. Most M.S.Ed. programs and the Secondary Transition to Teaching program (with some exceptions) also require GRE scores. The GRE is required for all international applicants. Applicants to doctoral programs in the School of Education typically must have a total GRE (combined verbal and quantitative) score of 302 or higher and an analytical writing score of 4.0 or higher. Applicants to specialist programs and most master's programs typically must have a total GRE (combined verbal and quantitative) score of 291 or higher and an analytical writing score of 3.5 or higher. GRE scores must be from a test date no more than five years prior to the date an application is submitted. Some exceptions to the GRE requirement exist. For details, please refer to current program-specific application instructions on the "How to Apply" page of the School of Education website.
- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or Duolingo English Test scores are required for all international applicants whose first language is not English. TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores must be from a test date no more than two years prior to the date an application is submitted. The School of Education typically requires a score of 79 on the TOEFL internet-based test, 6.5 on the IELTS, or 115 on the Duolingo English Test for admission to its graduate programs. Prospective students whose TOEFL, IELTS,

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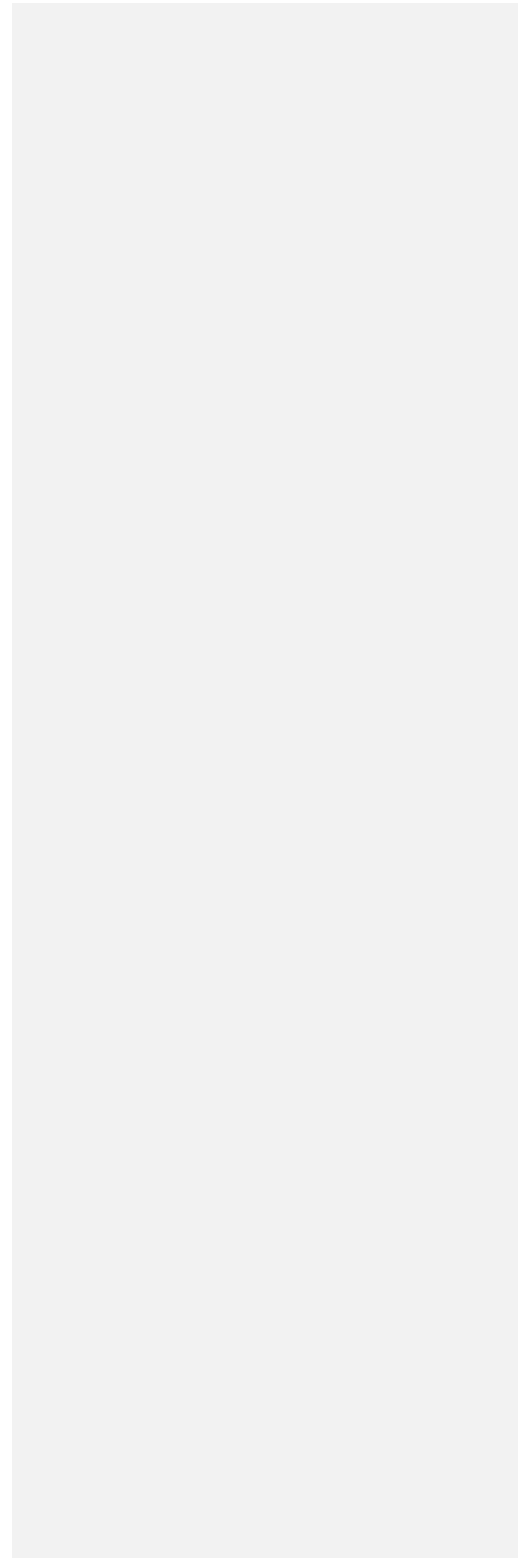
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| or Duolingo scores do not meet the standard listed above may still apply. Exceptions may occasionally be made when other application credentials are strong.

- Admission to all graduate programs is subject to availability of space. Program faculty size, the number of students already in a program, and the number and strength of new applicants all affect selection ratios in a given year.

<https://bulletins.iu.edu/iu/educ-grad/2022-2023/admissions/admission-criteria/index.shtml>



Excerpt from GSC 2.16.23 Minutes for PC

D. Duolingo English Test as an alternative to TOEFL/IELTS (Sarah Lubienski)

Sarah informed the committee that students are increasingly asking whether they can submit their Duolingo scores rather than TOEFL or IELTS, and other units in the campus, such as Luddy, have already started accepting Duolingo for graduate admissions. IU accepts Duolingo for undergraduate admissions. She pointed out that one potential concern could be that Duolingo focuses more on conversational rather than academic language. She consulted Sun-Young Shin, Assoc. Prof in the Department of Second Language Studies, asking if he had concerns about students being admitted with Duolingo being successful on the TEPAIC. He stated that he does not oppose accepting the Duolingo scores as an alternative to TOEFL and IELTS. Sarah explained that the primary motivation is financial: While TOEFL and IELTS cost about \$250, Duolingo costs \$49 and sends to schools for free. She pointed out that the difference is especially important for students from countries with lower-valued currencies.

Dubravka noted that the assessment chief of DuoLingo is a well-established scholar, and she is not concerned about the integrity and rigor of the test. She further commented that Duolingo might not be capturing less academic language than TOEFL, as students are still not required to have a minimum score at more academic subsections of TOEFL. She suggested experimenting with Duolingo and having a five-year plan to test it. Another committee member commented that conversational focus might even be more beneficial in terms of alignment with TEPAIC.

Kyungbin pointed out that the exam can be taken at home, and wondered about the exam's credibility in this case. Another committee member noted that other standardized tests have offered an at-home option since the pandemic. Another committee member responded that TOEFL can be taken at home. Sarah noted that with Duolingo, the exam taker's monitor is recorded, their browser is locked, and the exam is proctored with a camera, which might alleviate concerns.

- ➔ Lucinda motioned.
- ➔ Marjorie seconded.
- ➔ All 9 approved.