

International and Academic English Program Proposal

Undergraduate Education requests permission to establish a Special Academic Program under our International and Academic English (IAE) unit. This program will assume responsibility for (a) the Summer Start program, which began serving international freshmen in summer 2013; (b) the Enhanced General Education Experience, approved by the Provost in May 2013 and; (c) a new program, the International Teaching Assistant Academy, which will serve international graduate students and provide a pathway for them to achieve the level of English proficiency and familiarity with U.S. academic protocol necessary to deliver high-quality undergraduate instruction as teaching assistants, as well as to thrive as full members of the academic community at UC Davis.

Phase I

Implementation Timeline: Immediately

Background: Until spring 2013, the Linguistics Department provided ESL testing for incoming international students, both graduate and undergraduate, and was the campus's sole provider of unit-bearing ESL courses. The Linguistics ESL courses were offered as a primary means of providing classroom experience for candidates in their thriving MATESOL (Masters in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) program. Over the years, the number of qualified MATESOL applicants dwindled and, in 2013, Linguistics no longer had sufficient students and funding to support ESL and agreed to transfer undergraduate ESL writing courses to the University Writing Program (UWP). Effective fall 2015, the Linguistics Department chair and the dean of Social Sciences have formally requested to stop offering all ESL courses, including the graduate ESL courses. While ESL writing courses have already found an appropriate new home base in UWP, the courses teaching oral and listening skills, both critically important for prospective TA graduate students, need a new home. Because these courses fundamentally concern improving undergraduate student success while serving graduate students, these courses are most appropriately housed in Undergraduate Education.

Request: With support from Graduate Studies, the Department of Linguistics, the Dean of Social Sciences, and the Provost, Undergraduate Education requests approval to administer the following courses, all currently approved by the Committee On Courses of Instruction: LIN 20, 24, 25, 28, 96, and 391. Within UE, oversight for these courses will reside with International and Academic English, which is led by Academic Coordinator Dawn Takaoglu, who has a graduate background in TESL, several years of experience coordinating these courses in Linguistics, and more than 20 years of experience coordinating and teaching ESL prior to being hired at UC Davis.

In addition to the transfer of these courses, we request that the prefix for the courses change from “LIN” to “IAE.” As part of the IAE Special Academic Program, these courses will continue to meet the needs of graduate students who must improve their listening and speaking skills in order to receive teaching appointments. Undergraduate courses will continue to be offered as part of our Enhanced General Education Experience and Summer Start Program.

To meet instructional needs for the graduate courses, we propose to offer to transfer the contracts of the two long-term and highly-skilled ESL lecturers Janet Lane and Jim Davis from Linguistics to IAE; each has previously taught these graduate courses.

IAE will ensure that the level of graduate student support offered for courses is equivalent to that offered under Linguistics’ leadership, by working not only with qualified students from Linguistics but also from other graduate departments on campus.

Phase II

Implementation Timeline: Beginning fall 2015 and continuing

Background on testing: Since the 1960’s, a graduate English exam has been administered to incoming graduate students as a means of verifying that they had sufficient English skills to do well in their programs. This exam, as currently administered at UC Davis, does not test for oral proficiency. Instead, it focuses on graduate students’ command of grammar and their ability to listen and write a summary on a general interest academic topic. Recently, the Office of Graduate Studies and International and Academic English discovered that this exam, and the course placements that it indicates, were enforced but were never approved by the Graduate Council or the Senate. Conversely, the Graduate Council Policy GS2011-01 (Appendix B) regarding International Teaching Assistant English proficiency, which directly concerns improving undergraduate and graduate student success, remains unenforced.

The Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education are intent on correcting this discrepancy. The first step is to change the testing policy. The traditional graduate English exam does not yield the information about oral proficiency necessary to enforce Graduate Council Policy GS2011-01 and, therefore, will not be given in this coming or future years. After reviewing testing options and practices at many other institutions, Ms. Takaoglu recommends that UC Davis adopt the Test of Oral Proficiency (TOP), also called the Test of Oral English Proficiency (TOEP), which was developed at UCLA and is now used for ITA testing nationally and across the UC system. The adoption of this test will be considered by the Graduate Council on May 22nd.

Background on courses: Currently, when international graduate students arrive at UCD with TOEFL iBT scores below 95, they are instructed to enroll in LIN 25. Those with TOEFL iBT scores between 95-104 take the graduate English exam (described above) to determine their ESL placement. Depending on their scores, they may either be placed in LIN 25 which improves their speaking, listening, writing, and grammar skills, or LIN 26 for intensive instruction with writing, while others will take LIN 391, where they work on speaking, presentation, and pronunciation skills in order to succeed as teaching assistants. There are two problems with this arrangement: 1) Despite increasing demand for these courses, they are frequently not available in sufficient numbers because of shortages of funding and faculty, and 2) taking intensive ESL coursework, for many graduate students, creates time demands and stress that adversely impacts their academic work. UC Davis needs a more flexible model for providing support wherein a combination of courses and less formal interventions can enable ESL graduate students to thrive as scholars as well as members of our campus teaching teams.

Request: To better serve international graduate students' ESL needs, UE proposes the establishment of an International Teaching Assistant Academy (ITAA), which will provide support for ESL that is scalable to students' schedules and workload, responsive to their needs, and aligned to campus goals (see Appendix A). With the increase in international graduate students (insert stats from Brian) and a renewed commitment to ensuring international teaching assistants have the oral proficiency skills needed for quality undergraduate education, it is imperative to establish a model that is intentional and flexible, as well as responsive to student needs and able to meet departmental and campus goals.

Through the establishment of the ITA, the Office of International and Academic English will:

1. Offer targeted workshops, seminars, and online modules year-round.
 - a. The workshop approach allows students to select options that best meet their learning style, language-learning objectives, and scheduling needs.
 - b. Administratively, workshops are more readily revised to address and meet changing student demographics and capacity.
2. Develop hybrid online versions of LIN 25 and LIN 391 to encourage students to complete the ESL coursework before departing their home countries and in the 3-4 weeks prior to fall quarter.
3. Create an intensive summer immersion program specifically for those international graduate students who are expected to be TAs in their first fall quarter and have been identified as having oral English skills in the marginal range.
 - a. Graduate students, like their undergraduate counterparts in the Summer Start Program, will be able to use the summer to focus on language skills and increase

their capacity to meet the language demands prior to the start of their graduate programs.

4. Provide language mentors who can offer small group and individual assistance specifically for international graduate students seeking to improve their presentation and pronunciation skills.
5. Collaborate with the Office of Graduate Studies to ensure that international graduate students have sufficient testing opportunities to determine oral proficiency required for International Teaching Assistant and Associate Instructor positions.
6. Develop a process of tracking and storing international graduate student proficiency data so that it is easily accessible to decision makers in the various departments.

Oversight:

Upon approval, UE will establish an advisory board of both Senate faculty and Federation lecturers to provide curriculum oversight for the International and IAE Special Academic Program. The board will be chaired by Associate Vice-Provost Matthew Traxler and will report to Vice Provost / Dean of Undergraduate Education Carolyn Thomas. Dawn Takaoglu will serve as a content expert and consultant to the advisory board. One of the first tasks of the advisory board will be to establish Program Learning Outcomes that align with campus goals for undergraduate and graduate student learning. Working with campus assessment experts and experienced ESL instructors, IAE staff will ensure that new and revised course materials include Course Learning Outcomes, and purposefully aligned learning activities and assessments. Data from the courses will be aggregated quarterly to inform on-going efforts to assess program effectiveness and student learning.

Future Considerations

UE and IAE recognize that international graduate students are more likely to reach proficient levels of fluency when they are well-positioned at admissions. UE and IAE will collaborate with the Academic Senate, the Office of Graduate Studies, and individual departments to discuss setting higher minimum total TOEFL scores and appropriate sub-set scores to best predict graduate student success.

Further Considerations:

Two of the ESL courses being cancelled are ESL writing courses. LIN 26 is the graduate writing course described earlier and LIN 27 is a writing course intended to serve transfer students. Because these courses have the potential to serve very real student needs, the University Writing Program has confirmed that they are willing to be the new home for the

courses. Their Curriculum Committee has been working to renumber courses in a way that is more intuitive for students. Therefore, they request that LIN 26 be given the designation UWP 221 while LIN 27 simply becomes UWP 25.

Budget

UE is working with BIA and the Provost's Office to ensure that appropriate funding for these courses is identified.

Summary

Undergraduate Education is willing, able, and enthusiastic to assume responsibility for the administration of core ESL courses for the greater benefit of both undergraduate and graduate education, and to build from the existing solid foundation to effectively and equitably meet the needs of our increasing international student population.

APPENDIX A: Proposed curriculum for the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Academy:

<p>Core Seminars for developing ITA's (14-15 hours in 5-7 weeks) :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking and Listening • Presentation Basics • Advanced Fluency • Advanced Grammar Monitoring: 	<p>ITA Workshops (Approximately 2 hours):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Fluency for Office Hours • Communicating Data Effectively • Communication Issues for Speakers of Other Varieties of English • Drama Techniques for Academic Presentations • The Multi-cultural Classroom • Participating in Classes • Preparing for Oral Qualifiers and Defenses • Pronunciation for Effective Presentations (Stress, Intonation, speed and rhythm) •
<p>Ongoing small-group sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation • Public Speaking 	<p>Non-Oral Skills Workshops (2-4 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Academic Summaries • Using Articles Accurately (2hours) • Paraphrasing Properly & Avoiding Plagiarism • Email for Academic Purposes • Revising for Clarity • Becoming a Better Language Learner
<p>Guided Independent Study Option utilizing online modules both in-house and readily available from open sources.</p>	<p>LIN 391 LIN 25</p>

Appendix B

UC DAVIS GRADUATE STUDIES POLICY

GS2011 – 01

Appointment Requirements for International Teaching Assistants and Associates In_

Endorsed by Graduate Council – September 15, 2011

The Office of Graduate Studies requires international graduate students to take a test of oral English proficiency before they begin duties as Teaching Assistants (TAs) or Associates In_ (AIs). *Students from English-speaking countries are exempt from this requirement and students from non-English speaking countries who have been educated extensively in English-speaking institutions may be granted a waiver. To apply for a waiver, the hiring unit chair should submit a short written request to Admissions & Academic Services in the Office of Graduate Studies (not to CETL) requesting a speaking test waiver, identifying the student and explaining the justification for the waiver.*

Otherwise, this testing requirement may be satisfied by a score on either of the following tests, as reported in the application for admission to UC Davis:

TOEFL iBT Speaking	(30 points maximum)
IELTS Speaking	(9 points maximum)

Table 1 below provides score conversions between the SPEAK test (described below), the TOEFL, and the IELTS. **Scores in boldface** represent levels which Graduate Studies suggests as acceptable for TA/AI appointments. Research by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) has shown that students scoring a minimum of 23 on the TOEFL speaking test (equivalent to 7 on the IELTS speaking tests) possess the necessary language skills to serve as effective teaching assistants. Therefore, students who score below 23 on the TOEFL speaking test or below 7 on the IELTS test may not be hired as TAs or AIs unless they have demonstrated subject-matter expertise or documented acceptable teaching experience. In no case may a student whose score is below 20 (6.5) be hired as a TA or AI.

If a student does not present an acceptable score for a TA/AI appointment from either of these tests in their admission application, the requirement can be satisfied by obtaining an acceptable score on the UC Davis version of the SPEAK test. It is recommended that the SPEAK test, if needed, be taken as early as possible because a low score on this test (or the other tests) may lead hiring units to require further screening, ESL coursework, or tutoring.

The SPEAK test requires no preparation, although it is recommended that students become familiar with the test format prior to taking the test. The exam itself requires approximately 30 minutes, and is administered by the campus Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). The testing procedure is explained and a sample test booklet is provided when the students pre-register. International students who complete the exam will be given a confirming voucher that must be submitted to their hiring unit.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has scheduled dates for the SPEAK exam

throughout the year to help international graduate students meet their speaking-test requirement. See <http://cetl.ucdavis.edu/egw/speak-tests/speak-test-dates>. Students must pre-register in person for the exam at the CETL (1350 Surge III). If students have questions regarding the SPEAK test, they should contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (<http://cetl.ucdavis.edu/>).

TABLE 1
Score Comparisons

SPEAK test	TOEFL iBT Speaking	IELTS Speaking
60	30	9
55	28	8.5
60	26	8
45	23-35	7-7.5
40	22	6.5
35	20	6.5
30	18	6
25	16	5.5
20	14	5



LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT

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May 6, 2015

To: Professor Andre Knoesen, Chair, Academic Senate
Gina Anderson, Executive Director, Academic Senate

From: Vai Ramanathan, Professor and Chair, Linguistics
George R. Mangun, Dean, Division of Social Sciences
Deborah Swenson, Associate Dean-Undergraduate Academic Programs, Division of Social Sciences
Steven Roth, Assistant Dean, Division of Social Sciences

Re: Transitioning graduate student ESL courses from Linguistics to Undergraduate Education

This memo addresses the proposed discontinuation of graduate student ESL courses offered in the Linguistics Department and their transition to the International & Academic English (IAE) program housed in Undergraduate Education. We are aware that ESL courses serve a very valuable need on campus and that they need to continue being offered. Our primary reasons for moving forward with this initiative include the following:

- The Linguistics Department does not have the faculty or support staff to deal with the increasing numbers of international undergraduate and graduate students on campus;
- The department has dissolved its MA-TESOL program (that trained teachers for this population and of which ESL was a part) because of seriously dwindling applications;
- The research focus of the department has shifted in the last few years.

The department voted unanimously on discontinuing MA-TESOL last year. The following are the courses we would transition to the IAE program:

Graduate ESL Courses:

1. **LIN 25: English for International/ESL Graduate Students:** (4) a multi-skills ESL course designed to help international/ESL students improve their English language skills for academic study. Emphasis on speaking, writing, reading and academic culture.
2. **LIN 26: Writing for International Graduate Students** (3) Focuses on writing needed for academic work, including summaries, critiques, research and grant proposals, memos, resumes, and research papers. Reviews grammar needed for writing with some focus on reading skills, vocabulary, and idioms.
3. **LIN 391: Oral English for ESL Students:** (3). Open only to non-native speakers of English with priority to international student teaching assistants. Course gives non-native English-speaking



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students, particularly international student teaching assistants, intensive work in oral English to increase fluency, accuracy, use of appropriate discourse strategies in academic settings (e.g. seminar, discussion, laboratory).

Summer Start and Undergraduate ESL Courses:

- 1. LIN 20 Oral English for Undergraduate ESL Students:** (3) Intensive practice in oral English for undergraduate ESL students. Students learn to identify and modify features of their pronunciation which limit their ability to communicate clearly. Students also learn and practice strategies for effective participation in academic tasks.
- 2. LIN 24 English structures and strategies** (4): offers practice in academic writing designed to prepare undergraduate students from language backgrounds other than English for successful academic work.
- 3. LIN 27 Academic Writing for ESL students** (4): Writing skills necessary for upper division courses, including skills crucial to writing lab and project reports, summaries, critiques, abstracts and responses to exam questions. Includes practice with syntax, grammar, and vocabulary characteristic of academic writing.
- 4. LIN 28 Reading in Scientific and Technical Subjects for ESL students** (4) Instruction and practice in reading scientific and technical texts. Includes techniques for comprehending and analyzing grammatical and organizational patterns as well as note-taking skills, summarizing, vocabulary enrichment.
- 5. LIN 96: Directed Group Study in English as a Second Language** (1-5, based on consent of instructor). May be repeated for credit by consent of instructor.

Of the above courses, LIN 26 and LIN 27 might be placed in the University Writing Program since they are writing courses that prepare students for upper division and graduate student writing. Undergraduate ESL writing courses have already moved to UWP.

With regard to timing, the Linguistics Department and its clustered support staff are prepared to assist with the logistics of courses offered in Summer Start 2015. Our goal is to have all relevant ESL courses be administered through IAE effective fall quarter 2015.

cc: Vice Provost & Dean Carolyn Thomas, Undergraduate Education
Associate Dean James McClain, L&S Undergraduate Education and Advising

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