

“Proficiency in English” and Conditional Admission

Many international students study at the English Language Program (ELP) as a step toward applying to graduate programs at CSULA or another American university. They need to achieve an acceptable score on the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam or otherwise demonstrate their “proficiency in English” in order to gain admission to the graduate department of their choice.

On the other hand, some international students apply directly to university graduate schools hoping that their gpa, undergraduate background, and experience are sufficient for them to be provisionally admitted to the program – pending their satisfaction of the department’s English language requirement.

In either of these cases, many of the graduate departments of CSULA recognize successful completion of our ELP as a way of demonstrating the required “proficiency in English.” These departments do not waive the TOEFL exam altogether, but will often find international applicants “conditionally admissible” if they have a TOEFL score of at least 500 (this is the minimum score required for undergraduate admission), and have completed at least Level 6 (the advanced level) of ELP with satisfactory recommendations from the applicant’s instructors.

Need more information? Consult the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding “conditional admission” at CSULA:

1. What is meant by “conditional admission?” This phrase should be used to mean the basis on which **graduate departments** will accept international students for admission; that is, the student may receive an outright admission, an outright denial, or an “admission with condition” that the student satisfy certain requirements, such as the general catalogue requirement of “proficiency in English.”

2. Can the ELP grant me "conditional admission?" No. The ELP can help you improve your language skills so that you can demonstrate "proficiency in English," but "conditional admission" is granted by the graduate department, that is, the "degree granting program," to which you are applying. Each graduate department makes the ultimate decision on which applicants will be accepted, and each can impose its own requirements, say, for an acceptable TOEFL score, or the equivalent. Certain graduate departments may even require their own application, as well as the university application. Consult the Notes section of www.csumentor.edu for the admissions requirements of the major of your choice.

For undergraduate admissions, there is no "conditional admission." Undergraduate applicants are accepted or denied acceptance by the university's office of admissions based on general criteria provided in the university catalogue.

3. How Can I Know What a Graduate Department May Require to Prove English Proficiency? Presently a list exists of graduate degree programs that have customarily accepted TOEFL scores between 500 and 550 (paper-based) with the further condition that the applicant successfully complete at least Level 6 (the advanced level) of the English Language Program. (See copy attached.)

This list, however, is simply a guideline, and has no binding effect on the admissions decisions of any department. You should not rely on the past practices of a department, as situations change; but it is always best to consult the program directly, through its departmental office, to determine its current policy on demonstrating "English proficiency." Note especially, however, departments on the list that traditionally require minimum TOEFL score of 550, or a similar benchmark score on another graduate exam, such as GMAT or GRE. These departments will likely not relax these requirements even for students completing the ELP.

Students interested in graduate study at CSULA should always consult: www.calstatela.edu/international.

Graduate Departments Recognizing "Conditional Admission"

Major/Program	Degree	Conditional Admission TOEFL 500	Additional Test Required
Accountancy	MS	No	GMAT 550
Accounting Information System	MS	No	
Anthropology	MA	Yes	
Art	MA/MFA	Yes	
Art History	MA/MFA	Yes	
Biology	MS	Yes *	
Business Administration	MBA	No	GMAT 550
Chemistry	MA/MS	Yes	
Chicano Studies	MA	Yes	
Child Development	MA	Yes	
Civil Engineering	MS	Yes	
Communicative Disorders	MA	No	
Communication Studies (Communications or Broadcasting)	MA	No	
Computer Education	MS	No	
Computer Information Systems	MS	No *	
Counseling	MS	No	
Criminalistics	MS	Yes	GRE
Criminal Justice	MS	Yes	
Design - Computer & Graphics	MA	Yes	
Economics	MA	No	GRE
Education	MA	No	
Educational Administration	MA	No	
Electrical Engineering / Comp. Sc	MS	Yes *	
English	MA	No	GRE - if low gpa
Fashion Design	MA	Yes	
French	MA	Yes	
Geography	MA	Yes	
Geology	MS	Yes	
Health Care Management	MS	No	
Health Science	MA	Yes	
History	MA	Yes	
Industrial & Technical Studies	MA	Yes	
Information	MS	No *	
Major/Program	Degree	Conditional Admission TOEFL 500	Additional Test Required
Interdisciplinary Studies	MA/MS	Yes	
Kinesiology	MA		
Latin American Studies	MA	No	
Mathematics	MS	Yes	
Mechanical Engineering	MS	Yes	
Music	MA/MM	Yes	
Nursing	MS	No	
Nutritional Science	MS	No	GRE
Philosophy	MA	Yes	
Physical Education	MA	Yes	
Physics	MS	Yes	
Political Science	MA	Yes	
Psychology	MA/MS	No	
Public Administration	MS	No	

*check current
dept. require-
ments

Social Work	MSW	Yes	
Sociology	MA	Yes	
Spanish	MA	Yes	
Special Education	Ph.D.	No	
Speech Communication	MA	No	
TESOL	MA	No	
Telecommunications/Film	MA		
Theatre Arts	MA	Yes	

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