



Photo Courtesy of Photographic Services

# English Placement Test (EPT)

## Information and Registration Guide



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EPT at a Glance .....	2
2. Test Components .....	3
3. Registration Information .....	4
4. Test Preparation.....	5
A. Writing Section.....	5
B. Oral Section .....	8
C. Study and Test-taking Tips .....	8
D. Additional Resources.....	9
5. On the Test Day.....	10
6. Scores and Score Reports .....	11
7. Sample Essay.....	16
8. Statement about Plagiarism.....	17
9. Candidates with Special Needs .....	18
10. Frequently Asked Questions .....	18
11. Contact Information .....	24
12. Appendix I.....	25

# 1. EPT AT A GLANCE

**The English Placement Test (EPT)** is the primary vehicle to determine accurate placement in the English as a Second Language (ESL) courses administered by the Department of Linguistics (formerly DEIL). It is given to new international students whose TOEFL scores are 610 (paper-and-pencil TOEFL), 253 (computer-based TOEFL), 102 (TOEFL iBT) or below, inclusive. This requirement is established by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Senate. However, individual departments may set higher standards. Further details about TOEFL and IELTS requirements are given at the following websites:

- For graduate students/applicants:  
<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/admissions/instructions/04c.cfm>
- For undergraduate, transfer, and non-degree students/applicants:  
[http://admissions.illinois.edu/apply/requirements\\_freshman.html#english](http://admissions.illinois.edu/apply/requirements_freshman.html#english)  
(see “English Proficiency Requirements”)

Each semester, this test is usually given during the week before registration. New international students should register for this test via the website on

<http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/placement/> .

Students are asked to report to the designated testing place by **8:10 A.M.** on the day of the test. The information on the test location is available on the EPT registration page.

Students will be placed into or exempted from ESL courses based on the results of the test. The results of the English Placement Test will be available by or before two business days after both parts of the test have been completed. All students will be able to check their EPT results online. More information about score viewing will be available on the day of the test.

The current EPT format is designed to elicit a comprehensive range of examinees’ writing abilities in a more time efficient manner. It consists of an oral interview and a workshop-based essay test. The essay portion of the EPT is no more than 4 hours in length. A teacher proctor will deliver a mini-lecture and then lead a group discussion among examinees. The purpose of the lecture and group discussion is to assure that examinees will fully understand the given topic and obtain necessary input and feedback in their writing process.

To find out more about the previous versions of the EPT, see Appendix I.

## 2. TEST COMPONENTS

**A. WRITING SECTION (ABOUT 4 HOURS IN LENGTH).** This integrated writing test requires students to produce an academic essay based on the information obtained from a reading passage and a short lecture.

- *Specific Procedures*

1)	8:10 AM	<b>Check In</b>	
2)	8:20 AM	<b>Explanation of EPT Procedure and Topic Introduction</b> The teacher explains the test process.	<b>(5-10min)</b>
3)	8:30 AM	<b>Oral Interview Phase I</b> Test-takers are asked some general questions (This phase is removed for very small test administrations.)	<b>(40-60min)</b>
4)	9:30 AM	<b>Article Reading</b> Note taking allowed	<b>(20 min)</b>
5)	9:50 AM	<b>Mini Lecture and Group Discussion</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>
6)	10:20 AM	<b>Explanation of Scoring Rubric</b> The teacher explains the scoring criteria to help students' essay writing	<b>(5 min)</b>
7)	10:25 AM	<b>First Writing Task</b> A guideline is provided. Students will outline their essays based on the guideline.	<b>(20 min)</b>
8)	10:45 AM	<b>Peer Review and Q/A with Teacher</b> Discussion questions are provided. The teacher forms groups. Students will read each other's first drafts and make suggestions for improvement based on discussion questions given by the teacher. Students can also ask questions to the teacher.	<b>(20 min)</b>
9)	11:05 AM	<b>Break</b>	<b>(5 min)</b>
10)	11:10 AM	<b>Write the Essay</b>	<b>(60 min)</b>
11)	12:10 AM	<b>Finish Written Exam</b>	

## B. ORAL INTERVIEW

- *Specific Procedures (Tentative)*

---

1)	1:00PM	<b>Oral Interview Phase II</b>	<b>(30min)</b>
		Students are interviewed individually for assessment of their pronunciation skill.	

---

## 3. REGISTRATION INFORMATION

New international students must register for this test via the main EPT website <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/placement/>

The link to the EPT registration website is available at the bottom of the above website.

After you register for the EPT, you will receive a confirmation email at the email address you provided when you registered. The email will include your EPT registration information and an automatically generated User ID and Password. Please save the confirmation email as the User ID and Password will be used to view your EPT score results.

## 4. TEST PREPARATION

### A. WRITING SECTION

- *Sample Questions and Directions*

#### Directions

In this test, you will write an argumentative essay based on a lecture and a reading on a topic assigned by the supervisor.

To gather ideas on the topic, you will first read an article and listen to a lecture, and then discuss in small groups about the given topic. You may take notes on both the article and the lecture. After the group discussion, you will write an outlined draft of your essay for approximately 20 minutes. Your outlined draft will be reviewed by another examinee. Then, you will have 60 minutes to write a finalized draft of your essay. At the end of the test, you will submit all the test materials and your work to the supervisor.

Please make sure that your essay has the following features:

- a) Your essay should have a clear introduction, body and conclusion.
- b) The ideas within your essay should be explicitly connected.
- c) Your ideas should be supported with the evidence from both the lecture and the article.
- d) Your essay should be written in your own words. Do not reproduce directly the lecture and the article in your essay.
- e) Your essay should demonstrate the use of standard grammatical conventions.

## A Sample Article

### **Texas Campus Attracts Fewer Minorities**

By Sue Anne Pressley

Washington Post Staff Writer

Thursday, August 28 1997; Page A01

As classes begin today at the University of Texas, this flagship school in a highly diverse state has become distinctively whiter. Among the freshman class of 6,500, there are only 150 African American students, half last year's number. And the law school, for years one of the nation's major educators of minority lawyers, is welcoming only four African Americans and 26 Hispanics to its first-year class.

University officials agree that the scarcity of minority students—both African American and Hispanic—is a direct fallout of new prohibitions on racial preferences that could affect the university's makeup—and its public image—for years to come.

The experience of Texas is being watched closely around the country because its universities are the first under court order to dismantle affirmative action policies. That court ruling, the so-called Hopwood case, named for the white student who brought a discrimination suit after being denied admission to the university's law school, says that race cannot be used as a factor in admissions. Texas Attorney General Dan Morales ruled that this basic ban on affirmative action also must include financial aid, recruiting and undergraduate programs.

The result, many educators and students here believe, is that the top-tanking minority students feel unwelcome at the University of Texas, and are automatically accepting better offers at out-of-state schools, which still operate under affirmative action policies.

“We are deeply concerned,” said Michael Sharlot, dean of the law school. “We’re a school that over the past decades has produced more African American and Hispanic lawyers than any other law school in the United States. We’ve played a major role in diversifying the legal profession. It’s tragic because we’re not going to be able to continue.”

“This is the school that produced Secretary [of Energy Federico] Pena,” he said. “This is the school that produced Mayor Ron Kirk of Dallas [who is black]. We’re not talking about East Muleshoe University.”

This is the first academic year in which the impact of Hopwood has been felt clearly in Texas. Before the ruling, the university, like others around the country, could use race as one factor in deciding which students to admit, a policy that led to acceptance of minorities with slightly lower test scores than those of white students.

And for decades, the first-year law school class would include about 40 African Americans and about 60 Hispanics, graduating a total of 650 African American lawyers and 1,300 Hispanic lawyers over the years. This semester, the first-year class of 488 includes only the four African Americans and 26 Hispanics. The school received applications from 225 blacks, 306 Mexican Americans and 2,515 whites, all of which are down from last year.

In the undergraduate school, among entering freshmen this fall, the number of African Americans was halved, from about 300 in 1996; a university spokesman said the final racial breakdown of the freshman class is not yet available.

California is the only other state with an admissions policy that bans the use of race, with affirmative action banned in the law schools this year and the undergraduate school in 1998. At the University of California at Berkeley School of Law, only one African American is entering the first-year class, and university officials are equally dismayed over the lack of diversity.

“Certainly there is a very serious concern about the fact that we have only one African American in the current class,” said University of California spokesman Jesus Mena. Last year, there were 20 African Americans in Berkeley’s first-year law class.

In Texas, student leaders have been vocal in their concern that administrators are simply accepting the situation, saying they are bound by a court order and there is little they can do. No one denies that the campus does not reflect the state’s population; about a third of the population is either Hispanic or African American and half of its public school students are minorities.

“I really don’t think they are doing enough,” said Marlen Whitley, president of the Student Government Association. Whitley, 21, who is African American and plans to attend law school next year, finds himself representing a student body that is overwhelmingly white. “I wish the administrators could put themselves in our shoes.”

*Retrieved from*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/affirm/stories/aa082897.htm>

## **B. ORAL SECTION**

Apart from the writing test, the oral interview does not consist of set questions. Instead, the topic for each interview session is chosen in an impromptu manner by the interviewer. The following is a list of sample topics for the oral interview. Please bear in mind that this list is only meant to serve as a guide.

- Illinois weather
- US visiting experience
- Leisure (Favorite sports, hobbies, and so on)
- The best/worst memory of your life
- The most difficult/easiest subject in high school
- My favorite/least favorite American food
- How to keep healthy
- My best friend
- How you rented your apartment in Illinois
- The recipe of a dish that you can cook
- My favorite movie

## **C. STUDY AND TEST-TAKING TIPS**

To diagnose your writing ability and to improve your weak points before taking EPT, we encourage you to use the resources provided by UIUC Writers Workshop (<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/>).

Here are some additional tips:

- Take notes during the lecture and the article reading
- Make sure you cite your sources within your essay
- Try to have a clear introduction, body and conclusion
- Build your own points based upon the reading and lecture. Do not write a summary
- Elaborate on your points; support your major point with examples from the sources provided
- Write as fast as possible
- Start from outlining
- Practice writing essays under a time limit
- Make sure your handwriting is legible
- Read editorials or opinions in magazines and newspapers to see how authors use outside sources to support their arguments

## D. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- How to write good paragraphs  
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/paragraphs.htm>  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_pgrph2.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_pgrph2.html)  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/>
- How to write an effective introduction  
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm>  
<http://valenciacc.edu/wp/cssc/documents/WritingEffectiveIntroductions.pdf>  
<http://www.writing.ucsb.edu/faculty/donelan/intro.html>
- How to write an effective conclusion  
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/endings.htm>  
<http://www.writing.ucsb.edu/faculty/donelan/concl.html>
- How to organize and essay  
[http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/five\\_par.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/five_par.htm)  
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/organization.htm>  
<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/process.html>
- How to incorporate sources and avoid plagiarism  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_plagiar.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html)  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_quotprsum.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_quotprsum.html)  
<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>
- Grammar resources for ESL learners  
<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/GramPunct.html>  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/678/01/>

## 5. ON THE TEST DAY

### A. WHAT TO BRING

- Identification: To be admitted to the testing site, test-takers must present their student ID card; please see: <http://www.icard.uillinois.edu/>
- Pencil and eraser: Test-takers are required to be prepared to write an essay. The test proctors will not provide pencils, pens or erasers.
- Watch: Although the proctors will inform test-takers of the time remaining during the test at regular intervals, test-takers are advised to bring a watch to monitor their time. However, watch alarms, including those with flashing lights or alarm sounds are not permitted.

### B. WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Unauthorized aids in connection with the test: pagers, books, pamphlets, notes, stereos, radios, recording devices, watch alarms, dictionaries, translators, and any hand-held electronic or photographic device
- Cell phones must be turned off and put away.

### C. TESTING IRREGULARITIES

VIOLATION OF THESE POINTS MAY RESULT IN A REPORT TO THE OFFICE OF STUDENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND VIOLATION OF THE UIUC CAMPUS CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT -- [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/FullCode\\_web.pdf](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/FullCode_web.pdf) (PART 4).

- Attempting to take the test for someone else or having someone else take the test for you
- Obtaining improper access to the test, a part of the test, or information about the test
- Using a cell phone during the test session
- Using any unauthorized aids in connection with the test
- Creating a disturbance with disruptive behavior
- Attempting to give or receive assistance about the content of the test
- Removing or attempting to remove the test content from the testing site

### D. TEST PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

- Although the test starts at 8:20 a.m., test takers are required to arrive at

8:10a.m. for check-in procedures.

- Dress appropriately so that you can adapt to any room temperature.

## **6. SCORES AND SCORE REPORTS**

### **A. TEST REPORT**

Test takers can view their results online within two business days after taking the test. More information about score viewing will be explained on the day of the test.

### **B. TEST SCORES**

Test results for the lecture/reading based written test and the oral interview are categorized into 4 and 5 proficiency levels, respectively. For the written test, the report form indicates the test taker's obtained level of writing skills based on academic lecture and reading text, compared to the highest level possible, level 4. The oral interview results show the test taker's oral skill level based on interaction tasks on a scale from 1 to 5: the highest level obtainable being level 5.

### **C. SCORE INTERPRETATION**

As EPT is a placement test, test takers can interpret their scores in relation to the ESL course sequence. Required and recommended ESL courses are indicated in the test report form according to each test taker's obtained level. This report consists of two components: a course number and a letter (C/Q). The course number indicates the ESL course number within the ESL course sequence, and the letter "C" after the ESL course number indicates that it is a "recommended" course, while the letter "Q" indicates it is "required". The test report form provides a table showing each level of essay ratings in relation to the appropriate ESL course in order to assist the test takers in interpreting their test scores. However, final course placement is based on all two results: essay and pronunciation. For more information about interpreting the EPT score, please visit the following website:

<http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/placement/EPTinterpretation.html>

**D. SCORE REPORT DATE**

Score report dates differ according to each test takers’ test date. Score report dates will be announced on the actual test day.

**E. GRADING RUBRIC (WRITTEN TEST)**

The lecture/reading based written test is graded against the following rubrics.

TABLE 1 BENCHMARK FOR EPT COMPOSITION SCORING: GRADUATE ESSAYS  
(REVISED 01/05)

Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Length insufficient to evaluate</li><li>• No organization of ideas; no cohesion; like a free writing</li><li>• Content marked by inaccuracies of source information, OR content is completely off-topic, OR majority of essay is copied</li><li>• Grammatical and lexical errors are severe; no complexity; even simple sentences are flawed</li></ul>
---------	--

Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length may be insufficient to evaluate; may be off-topic</li> <li>• Elements of essay organization (Intro, Body and Conclusion) may be attempted, but are simplistic and ineffective</li> <li>• Essay may lack a central controlling idea (no thesis statement, OR thesis statement is flawed)</li> <li>• Essay does not flow smoothly; ideas are difficult to follow</li> <li>• Development of ideas is insufficient; examples may be inappropriate; logical sequencing may be flawed or incomplete</li> <li>• Paragraph structure not mastered; lack of main idea (topic sentence), focus, and cohesion</li> <li>• Summarizes/restates sources rather than uses them to support ideas</li> <li>• May lack synthesis of ideas (of the two sources or of sources and student's own ideas)</li> <li>• May indicate misunderstanding of source material</li> <li>• Attempts to paraphrase are generally unskillful and inaccurate</li> <li>• Some overt plagiarism</li> <li>• Grammatical and lexical errors impede understanding; awkwardness of expression; general inaccuracy of word forms</li> <li>• Little sophistication in vocabulary and linguistic expression; little sentence variety; sentence complexity not mastered</li> </ul>
---------	--

Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Length is sufficient for full expression of ideas</li><li>• Writes on topic</li><li>• Elements of essay organization are clearly present, though they may be flawed</li><li>• Attempt to advance a main idea; presence of thesis statement</li><li>• Flows somewhat smoothly</li><li>• Some development and elaboration of ideas; evidence of logical sequencing; transitions may show some inaccuracies</li><li>• Paragraph structure <i>generally</i> mastered, <i>generally</i> cohesive</li><li>• Attempts to use sources to advance the thesis; evidence of some synthesis of ideas</li><li>• Use of oral and written sources demonstrates basic understanding</li><li>• Covert plagiarism; attempted summary and paraphrase; may contain <i>isolated</i> instances of direct copying; may not cite sources, OR may cite them incorrectly</li><li>• Moderately successful paraphrase in terms of smoothness</li><li>• Some grammatical/lexical errors; meaning may be occasionally obscured, but essay is still comprehensible</li><li>• Inconsistent evidence of some sophistication in sentence variety and complexity</li></ul>
---------	---

Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contains an Introduction, Body and Conclusion</li><li>• Clear thesis statement, appropriately placed</li><li>• Good development of thesis; logical sequencing; reasonable use of transitions</li><li>• Paragraphs are fairly cohesive</li><li>• Good synthesis of ideas</li><li>• Summary of source content may contain minor inaccuracies, but good understanding is indicated; effective, skillful paraphrase</li><li>• Sources are cited, though possibly inaccurately</li><li>• May contain minor grammatical/lexical errors, but meaning is clear</li><li>• Strong linguistic expression exhibiting academic vocabulary, sentence variety and complexity</li></ul>
---------	---

## 7. SAMPLE ESSAY

The following sample essay corresponds to Level 2 based on the EPT grading rubric.

*In my mind, universities should enroll students based on their academic performance instead of race, even though it gives rise to bad results as mentioned in the paper. Why can united states become more powerful with time going on? One main factor is that it supply equal chances for everyone. We can be successful with effort. This kind of policies attract excellent people from different countries, which make huge contribution to the development of U.S.A.*

*On the other hand, the acceptance of minorities with lower test scores would create the unequal environment in the campus. The minority students are look down in the universities, just as what happened in Hopwood case.*

*Except the results mentioned in the paper, we can observe the acceptance based on the academic performance also generate some other interesting results. When you observe carefully, you observe carefully, you can fine there are more and more international students coming from Asia these years. However, the increasing tendency is not so obvious in other fields such as law and literatural fields. There are many factors for it, such as language ability and cultural background. The rule that fittest survive works.*

*However, the field of law is little bit different, which plays an important role on the development of society. In other word, lacking of minorities in the field may cause the law ignores minorities's right in the future. That will destroy the equal environment step by step. How to solve the above problems? In my mind, the enrollment should take into account the advantages of different kinds of people. That means the judgement for academic performance should be more comprehensive.*

## 8. STATEMENT ABOUT PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas(s) and/or words (including key words or phrases, as well as longer units like sentences and paragraphs) without acknowledging the source. Please notice that plagiarism extends from submitting a paper actually written by someone else to deliberately using (copying or paraphrasing) an idea or fact or phrase without giving appropriate credit to its source.

Plagiarism is considered serious academic dishonesty. The Office of the Attorney General of Illinois has announced that buying, selling and using other people's research papers is contrary to state law and may be prosecuted. As stated above, the University of Illinois' rules about academic irregularities (which include plagiarism) are set forth in the Code on Campus Affairs and Regulations Applying to all Students. (Please see the Code: [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/FullCode\\_web.pdf](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/FullCode_web.pdf) , Part 4.)

The Department of Linguistics fully affirms the definition of plagiarism given above and will hold all students responsible for adhering to the University's rules and regulations regarding plagiarism.

Finally, bear in mind that the code clearly stipulates that: “**Ignorance of a rule is never a defense.**” Thus, any form of plagiarism, accidental or intentional, is not acceptable.

Adapted from:

[http://www.ao.uiuc.edu/support/source/course\\_policies/integrity.html](http://www.ao.uiuc.edu/support/source/course_policies/integrity.html)

## 9. CANDIDATES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The University of Illinois has an established reputation for its commitment to students with special needs. Our university counts with a [Division of Disabilities Resources and Educational Services](#), which was established to afford qualified individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all opportunities available on this campus. EPT examinees with disabilities will be provided with services and reasonable accommodation given the purpose of the test.

For assistance, contact the [English Placement Test advisor](#).

## 10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### A. EPT TEST

Q: Do I have to take the test?

A: The requirement to take the EPT is made by the Office of Admissions and Records, based on the student's pre-matriculation TOEFL or IELTS score.

Q: What happens if I don't pass the EPT?

A: The EPT is a placement test. As a result, there is no passing grade. Based on your performance in the test, you will be either placed in one or more ESL classes or (if you are a graduate student) possibly exempted from any such classes.

Q: Up to how many ESL courses can I be required to take?

A: It depends on how you perform in the writing test and the oral interview. There is a maximum requirement of two ESL writing classes as well as one pronunciation class for graduate students. There is a maximum requirement of three ESL writing classes and one pronunciation class for undergraduate students.

Q: If I get a very low score, does that mean I won't be accepted into my program?

A: The answer is no. You have already been admitted to UIUC. You take courses in your program as usual, in addition to the ESL courses as is required.

Q: Are the ESL courses a prerequisite for my major?

A: The answer is a qualified no. The required ESL courses are not a prerequisite to pursue your major. However, if any ESL courses are required of you as specified on your EPT score report, you must finish them with a satisfactory grade in order to get your degree.

Q: Can I reschedule the EPT?

A: You need to contact the test administrator (see contact information below) or your department with the specifics of your case.

Q: Can I take an ESL course as an elective even if I don't have to, based on EPT results?

A: Yes, you may still enroll in ESL courses as an elective, without penalty, if you were exempted from the EPT. However, in order to take an ESL class as an elective, you must take the EPT. In this case, your admission exemption from the EPT will be unaffected by any ESL course taken as an elective.

Q: Do elective ESL students have to take the EPT?

A: If at all possible, we prefer that elective ESL students go through the EPT, to allow us to properly advise them into ESL coursework. Elective students will be rated to enroll in courses based on their EPT results. Unlike students who are required to take ESL courses, however, they may elect to take or not take a recommended class.

Q: If I'm not planning to graduate from UIUC, do I have to take the courses marked "required"?

A: No, you do not have to take the 'required' classes if you don't graduate from UIUC. However, if your situation changes and you do graduate from UIUC, you must fulfill the

ESL requirement.

Q: Why is it that I received a “4” of “4” rating on my writing exam, but I’m still required to take ESL 114 and ESL 115?

A: Because there are no exemptions for undergraduates from the UIUC composition requirement, and ESL 114 and 115 fulfill that requirement.

Q: Can visiting scholars or post-docs take ESL courses?

A: Visiting scholars or post-docs are accepted in the general ESL classes provided that these persons can enroll in the class and appear on the class roster. Visiting scholars and post-docs should first consult with their home departments to learn if this is feasible. Appearing on the roster may trigger tuition charges.

Q: How much time do I have to take the test?

A: The written EPT will take approximately 4 hours to complete. The oral test may require an additional hour at another time.

Q: What time do I have to arrive for the test?

A: Students must arrive to the scheduled test location by 8:10 a.m. for written tests.

Q: What time does the test start?

A: The test begins at 8:10 a.m.

Q: I took the SAT and scored well on the Verbal. My admission letter didn’t say anything about me taking the EPT, and I’m already enrolled in Rhetoric 105. Do I have to take the EPT?

A: No. If your admission letter did not mention having to take the EPT, then you do not have to take it. However, your advisor may want you to take the EPT.

## **B. EPT RESULTS AND ESL SERVICE COURSES**

Q: What do the letters “q” and “c” mean?

A: “q” means “required” and “c” means “recommended.”

Q: When can I start the “q” course?

A: You should begin your required ESL course(s) within the first year at UIUC, and preferably within the first semester, if you can schedule it.

Q: Can I defer my required course to the next semester?

A: Officially, you can postpone your required course up to a semester. However, the design of ESL courses is to help you with your writing or pronunciation as soon as possible. You are advised to take required courses in the semester assigned. However, under extraordinary circumstances, such as complications with your schedule, you can wait up to a semester to start.

Q: What is the consequence of incompleting of the “q” course?

A: Failure to complete the ESL course requirements can result in not receiving a UIUC degree. However, if you are not pursuing a degree from UIUC (that is, if you are an exchange student or a visiting scholar), there is no enforcement.

Q: How can I register for the ESL courses?

A: You should go to <http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/esl/> to find out about the registration procedures.

Q: In registering for courses on-line, how many credits do the ESL courses carry?

A: If the timetable shows that an ESL course is ‘zero credit’, that means that there is no supplemental tuition charge to you for the ESL courses above the overall base tuition fees. However, for the purpose of satisfying student visa as a full-time student with more than three units, the ESL courses are still counted the same as non-ESL courses.

Q: Can I take two different levels of writing courses during the same semester?

A: No. The writing courses are designed to be taken in sequence. However, the oral pronunciation course (ESL 110 for undergraduates/510 for graduates) can be taken with the writing course.

Q: Is ESL 505 for business students only?

A: Yes. Business students (MS in Accountancy and MS in Technology Management) should take ESL 505 (not ESL 501/502) which is specifically designed to suit the needs of business students.

Q: How to I enroll in pronunciation courses?

A: Check the UIUC Timetable for a class time you would want to attend. You cannot sign up for the course on-line, but you should report to the class. You must report to either the first or second class meeting to be eligible to take a class; otherwise, you must wait until the next semester. Students will be given a diagnostic test, which will consist of reading a passage for approximately 15 minutes; this reading will be recorded and evaluated. Pronunciation classes are currently restricted to a maximum of 13 students; students are placed according to a priority system.

Q: I tried to sign up for an ESL writing class, but the computer says registration is closed. What do I do?

A: Please refer to the following website:

<http://www.linguistics.illinois.edu/students/esl/ESLWriting.html>

### **C. EPT GRADING**

Q: I would like to know how my essay was graded. I would appreciate if you could review my essay and inform me of your opinion. (Am I misplaced?)

A: The EPT consists of two parts: a fixed-length written essay test which is administered prior to the beginning of instruction, AND a second essay test, commonly referred to as the "diagnostic" test, which is administered on the first day of class. Both of these two test essays are graded based on the same criteria and in the same procedure. Each test is

read by two experienced graders, each of whom would respectively make a recommendation on which class the student should be placed in. If the two recommendations don't agree on which class the student should go to, the test paper is the passed on to the ESL Writing Courses Coordinator who makes the final decision. In your case, you're finished with the first part of our EPT test and graders have reached an agreement.

Due to our department policy, the content of your test paper remains confidential after the test so it may not be possible to review your essay. It is encouraged that you to take the in-class diagnostic on the first day of instruction and talk to the instructor to figure out if you are placed in the appropriate class.

## **11. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For general inquiries about the test, please contact the following UIUC personnel.

### **English Placement Test**

Email: [eptillinois@illinois.edu](mailto:eptillinois@illinois.edu)

3036 Foreign Languages Building

707 S. Matthews Ave.

Urbana, IL 61801

## 12. APPENDIX I

There are three historical versions of the EPT writing test: the regular EPT, Enhanced EPT and Semi-Enhanced EPT. **The current test format is the Semi-Enhanced EPT.**

### A. THE REGULAR EPT

#### *I. Introduction*

a) The Regular EPT consists of two parts: a written test and an oral interview. The written test is a 50-minute video-and-reading-based essay which requires the test-takers to incorporate into their own essay relevant information from a videotaped lecture and a reading passage. Examinees are asked to write an essay based on the information they have gathered from these two sources. The oral interview is administered individually and usually lasts about 30 minutes. At the oral interview, students are given a topic on which to speak for three minutes. If students speak intelligibly, they are exempted from further oral testing. Otherwise, students are required to take another exam in which they will read sentences from material given to them.

b) The Enhanced EPT is a writing test format that combines an oral interview, as described in the regular EPT, with the workshop-based EPT essay test. A major difference between the Enhanced EPT and traditional or ‘regular’ EPT is found in the essay test component. When compared with the regular EPT, the essay component of the Enhanced EPT provides examinees with a variety of facilitative activities. The purpose of these activities is to counterbalance some of constraints imposed on the writer that are aggravated by the method of a severely-timed single-draft essay test (e.g. lack of time and context, topic familiarity, etc; Cho, 2001). By having examinees fully engage in the writing process, the test is expected to elicit a comprehensive range of writing abilities and to obtain writing performance samples that are a more accurate reflection of examinees' writing instruction needs.

Please refer to the GD in the current UIUC EPT specification for the Video-Reading Based Academic Essays (see <https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/fgd/www/vressay.htm>). As previously stated, the Enhanced EPT also includes the EPT Oral Interview as an integral component of the workshop.

## ***II. Test Components***

### ***'Regular' EPT***

#### **a. Writing Section** (*about 2 hours in length*).

In order to demonstrate the ability in comprehending and producing academic English essays accepted in most U.S. universities, examinees need to successfully complete the task of integrating information from different sources (i.e. the academic / non-technical lecture in a videotape and the reading text of the same theme) and presenting it in a general writing format (i.e. introduction, body and conclusion).

- *Specific Procedures:*

1. Check in at 8:30 am (10 minutes)

2. General directions. (5 minutes)

When they get to the testing site, test-takers receive their test booklets and are given directions on how to fill out the form.

3. Watch a video of an academic lecture (7-11 minutes).

Test-takers take down notes as they watch the lecture.

4. Proctors hand out the reading text

5. **Reading the text AND writing the essay (50 minutes)**

Test-takers are asked to read the reading text provided and they start the writing task whenever they are ready. (\*Time for reading the text depends on individual test-takers).

#### **b. Oral Interview.**

The oral interview is designed to determine if students are required to take, are recommended to take, or are exempt from taking an ESL pronunciation course. The interview is administered individually and requires at most about 20 minutes.

The oral interview consists of two parts. One part involves free speaking, including talking for three minutes on an everyday topic supplied by the interviewer. If students speak intelligibly enough during the free-speaking part, the interviewer may dismiss the students at the end of part one. Otherwise, the interviewer continues to the second part in which students read phrases, sentences and dialogs from material the interviewer provides.

Results of both the writing test and the oral interview are usually available on the

following day as the place noted on students' information pages.

### **B. 'ENHANCED' EPT (ABOUT 7 HOURS IN LENGTH).**

The essay test is divided into two sessions, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Examinees must attend both sessions to complete the test. The essay test is arranged in the tripartite structure of writing: planning, writing and reviewing. The planning and writing phases take place in the (approximately) two and a half hour first session in the morning, while the reviewing phase occurs in the second session in the afternoon – it lasts approximately two hours.

- *Specific Procedures*

#### Part One

- 1) Check-in (10 minutes)
- 2) **Oral interview phase 1** (30 minutes)  
Test-takers are asked some general questions.
- 3) Explanation about the enhanced EPT procedures (5 minutes)  
Test-takers are given booklets explaining the tasks for the day.
- 4) Topic introduction, followed by group brainstorming (10 minutes)  
Test-takers will be assigned a topic question and asked to brainstorm answers.
- 5) **Whole class discussion** (10 minutes).
- 6) Break (5 minutes)
- 7) **Video watching** (10 minutes):  
Test-takers watch a lecture.
- 8) **Article reading** (20 minutes)  
Test-takers read an article relevant to the topic introduced in the video.
- 9) **Group discussion** (20 minutes)  
Test-takers answer questions based on the contents of both the video and the reading.
- 10) Break (5 minutes)
- 11) Explanation on the scoring criteria (10 minutes)
- 12) **Rough draft writing** (10 minutes)

Test-takers organize their essay and write a first, rough draft.

13) Break (2 hours) / Intensive Oral interview.

Test-takers required to take the intensive oral interview are asked to stay for an individual interview (20 minutes)

Part Two:

1) Explanation of self-evaluation process (5 minutes)

Test-takers get their draft essays back and provided with a self-evaluation sheet.

2) **Self-evaluation** (15 minutes)

Test-takers read their own essays and evaluate them by responding to the self-evaluation form.

3) **Peer review** (45 minutes)

Test-takers get guidelines about how to review other test takers' writings and asked to make suggestions for improvement.

4) Break (5 minutes)

5) **Essay revision** (50 minutes).

Test-takers write their final essays.

6) End of the test. Test-takers are asked to submit both final version and the draft.