**To: Undergraduate Council’s – Curriculum/Policies Subcommittee**

From: Brent White, Vice Provost for Global Affairs

**Re: Recommendation to accept CESL English Proficiency Test (CEPT) for undergraduate admission**

August 27, 2019

Based on the below information, I request that the CESL CEPT Full Academic Test be accepted for UA undergraduate admission as an option for verifying English language proficiency.

In 2018, the UA Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) developed the CESL English Proficiency Test (CEPT) – Full Academic test version. Since the fall of 2018, CESL has successfully used the CEPT Full Academic to test potential UA students in such places as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Jordan, as well as here in the United States. The longitudinal test development (including piloting) and administration refinement period prior to beginning to use the test in 2018 gives CESL confidence to assert that the CEPT Full Academic test is a valid, reliable, secure, and practical test of English competence that can be used for the purposes of UA undergraduate admissions. It is a fully functional alternative to the other commercial tests on the market with greater accessibility and less expense for the student candidate.

The CEPT Full Academic is scored out of 150 points, with 50 points available for each section (Reading/ Writing, Speaking). The table below shows the different test scores for the three main English proficiency tests align with the CEFR, as well as how CEPT scoring aligns with a B2 (Very Independent) English proficiency level, and above.

**CEPT Score Comparison Chart**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **CEPT Full Academic** | **\*CEFR**  **Proficiency Levels** | **TOEFL iBT** | **IELTS** | **Pearson**  **PTE Academic** |
|  | *145-150* | **C2** | 96-120 | 8.0-9.0 | 85-90 |
| UA Grad College | *135-144* | **C1** | 80-95 | 6.6-7.9 | 76-84 |
| *\*\*Proposed UA UG Level* | *105-134* | **B2** | 70-79 | 6.0-6.5 | 65-75 |

\*\*Comparable current UA Undergraduate English Proficiency Admission score levels

Please note, the CEPT has been accepted by the UA Graduate College for admission since 2018.

Below is a summary of the key features of the test. The attached test report provides expanded supporting details.

**Components and Administration**: The CEPT Full Academic is comprised of two sub-tests:

1. ***Academic Skills*** – focused on the key academic skills of **Reading and Writing**, with related components assessing **vocabulary knowledge**, and **grammatical competence**. The Academic Skills test is computer based and takes 90 minutes to complete. (Assessing academic skills is critical as we are predicting a student’s ability to successfully use academic English, rather than just general English like other commercial tests).

2. ***Communication Skills*** – focused on **Speaking**, this real-time online interview assesses the test-taker’s communicative competence, and ability to produce fluent, accurate English in a Q & A format. Listening comprehension is also assessed here, in considering the test-taker’s ability to understand the questions posed and respond appropriately. The Communication Skills test takes approximately 15 minutes and is conducted live online with experienced and trained CESL faculty.

**Additional benefits** to the test include ***test security*** (including verification of test taker identity in the online interview and the use of UA Examity), ***accessibility*** (the test can be taken online on any computer with a stable internet connection, eliminating costly travel needs), both ***availability of test slots and time for results*** is also dramatically reduced to just one week for CEPT (compared to weeks or months in some locations abroad), and ***cost*** *(at $120 this beats other commercial tests at $190 or $250).*

**\*CEFR**: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe):

