

Motion to exempt graduate students scoring over 100 on the TOEFL from the GSTEP

Approved by Admissions & Standards 8/31/16

Approved by University Senate 10/6/16

Effective Spring 2017

Motion: International graduate students scoring above 100 on the TOEFL or 7.5 on the IELTS will not be required to take the Georgia State Test of English Proficiency (GSTEP) upon matriculation.

Rationale: The GSTEP, administered by the Department of Applied Linguistics, evaluates the English language proficiency of students whose native language is not English. Many, but not all, departments and colleges currently require that international graduate students take the GSTEP during International Student Orientation. Based on GSTEP scores, students receive recommendations to take between 0 and 2 graduate ESL courses (or, in rare cases, courses in the Intensive English Program).

Five years of data on GSTEP/TOEFL scores and ESL course recommendations indicate that students scoring at or above 100 rarely receive referral to an ESL course. Between 2011 and 2015, 533 students completed the GSTEP and reported TOEFL scores. Of these 533, 331 (62%) were referred to at least one ESL course. However, only 8% of students scoring at or above 100 on the TOEFL received a course recommendation. Administration and scoring of the GSTEP requires significant personnel resources. GSTEP and student resources are best allocated to those students scoring below 100 on the TOEFL.