

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE  
REQUEST FOR DECISION

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**PRESENTED BY:** Gordon Hill, chair, Academic Programs Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** January 22, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Revisions to criteria for admission

**DECISION REQUESTED:**

*It is recommended:*

That Council approve revisions to the criteria for meeting undergraduate admission requirements for students from American-curriculum high schools, such that a combination of high school grades and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT scores will be acceptable, effective for the May, 2009 applicants.

That Council approve revisions to the criteria for establishing English proficiency for undergraduate applicants for admission, effective for the May, 2009 applicants.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of these proposals is to apply University of Saskatchewan undergraduate admission standards to students from American-curriculum high schools and to students whose first language is not English.

**SUMMARY**

The *University of Saskatchewan Act (1995)* requires that Council approve qualifications for admission.

The attached policies will provide for a more efficient and accurate application of University of Saskatchewan undergraduate admission standards as they apply to applicants from American-curriculum high schools and to applicants whose first language is not English.

The proposal documents describe the implications of these revisions and the consultations which the admissions office has undertaken for each proposal.

At its meetings of December 2, 2008 and January 13, 2009, the academic programs committee discussed these changes with Admissions Director Claude Lang. In particular, the committee clarified how the admissions office intends to evaluate the language of instruction at other universities.

The committee agreed to recommend that Council approve the attached proposals. For the information of Council, the committee has also attached a summary of the university's current undergraduate admission requirements.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Summary of University of Saskatchewan undergraduate admission requirements

Admission standards for applicants from American-curriculum high schools

English proficiency requirement

# Summary of University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Admission Requirements

## General Information

1. The basic requirement is complete Grade 12 or equivalent secondary level standing. While a minimum overall average of 70% is required on subjects used for admission, a pass mark on individual subjects is acceptable.
2. Adult Basic Education subjects and the General Equivalency Diploma are not acceptable for admission.
3. There are no limitations on the number of secondary level subjects which may be repeated or taken to improve an admission average.
4. The University of Saskatchewan offers options for applicants who have elected to complete a home schooling program.

## English Proficiency

The language of instruction at the University of Saskatchewan is English. Applicants for admission whose first language is not English must present evidence of proficiency in English.

## Educational Requirements

The basic educational requirements for admission to degree programs include satisfactory previous training in the subjects required for admission.

### 2008-2009 Admission Requirements

1. Applicants must have complete Grade 12 or equivalent secondary level standing.
2. Applicants must have successfully completed the 30-level (or equivalent Grade 12) subject prerequisites determined by individual colleges.
  - Agriculture and Bioresources – B.S.A. – Biology 30, Chemistry 30, Mathematics B30 and Mathematics C30 or equivalents
  - Agriculture and Bioresources – B.Sc. (Agbus.) – Biology 30 or Chemistry 30 or Physics 30, Mathematics B30 and Mathematics C30 or equivalents
  - Commerce – Mathematics B30 and Mathematics C30 or equivalents
  - Education – Social Studies 30 or History 30 or Native Studies 30, a 30-level science, and an approved 30-level language other than English or 30-level fine arts or equivalents
  - Engineering – Mathematics B30, Mathematics C30, Calculus 30, Chemistry 30, Physics 30 (minimum grade of 70% required) or equivalents
  - Kinesiology – Mathematics B30 or Mathematics C30, Biology 30, and Chemistry 30 or Physics 30 or equivalents
3. A minimum overall average of 70% calculated using the following:
  - One of English A30, English B30, English Language Arts A30, or English Language Arts B30 or equivalents.
  - One of Mathematics A30, Mathematics B30, Mathematics C30, Calculus 30 or equivalents.
  - A combination of three 30 level (or Grade 12 equivalents) from the list of approved courses in the categories of Natural Sciences, Social Science/Humanities, and Fine/Performing Arts (See Calendar for list)

### Applicants with International Baccalaureate (IB)

The University of Saskatchewan recognizes the International Baccalaureate program for purposes of admission.

### Applicants with Advanced Placement (AP)

The University of Saskatchewan recognizes the Advanced Placement Program (College Board) for admission purposes.

### International Applicants

International applicants are encouraged to apply to the University of Saskatchewan.

**To: University Council, University of Saskatchewan**

**Re: Admission standards for applicants from American curriculum high schools**

The general admission requirement for applicants from American-based curriculum high schools is currently stated on our website as "Grade 12 from an accredited high school." This policy was further defined in the past for internal admission purposes (see pages 4-5), but has become outdated and difficult to apply to all applicants. As well, American high school curriculum is not standardized or controlled as it is in most countries. That is, curriculum varies greatly between schools and states, making it difficult to require specific high school subjects for admission evaluation. Applications from American schools usually require extensive investigation regarding accreditation, graduation requirements, grading scales, locally developed programs, and varying course names and definitions. This is very time consuming and not always effective. Furthermore, the U of S does not currently consider students from schools that are not accredited by an approved accreditation body, though it is not required of all US schools to be accredited. This has resulted in some very bright students being refused in the past.

The U of S is one of the few Universities in Canada that does not accept SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT\* scores for admission purposes. The Universities of Regina, Alberta, Toronto, Calgary, and many others all accept these credentials. We would like to propose that the U of S begin to accept SAT and ACT scores in combination with high school, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate courses for admission requirements. A student's score on the SAT would provide a consistent and standardized level of achievement for all students regardless of the school's accreditation status. This proposal also clarifies the specific prerequisite courses needed for admission to certain programs and colleges.

The attached document is our proposed admission policy that we would like to implement for May 2009 applicants (the beginning of the next admission cycle). The proposal is comparable to admission policies at several Canadian Universities.

We would like to emphasize that strict policy requirements are sometimes difficult to apply directly to an international application, given the broad range of credentials, grading scales, curriculum requirements, and accreditation standards. You might notice that some of the language in this policy allows for some discretionary authority of the admission officer. We feel that this is necessary and reasonable.

This proposal was prepared by Karen Gauthier and Faith Baron, International Admissions Officers.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these changes,

Claude Lang  
Director

Lisa Shepard  
Manager of Admissions

Student Enrolment Services Division  
University of Saskatchewan

\*Originally, "ACT" stood for American College Testing. In 1996, however, the official name of the organization was shortened to simply "ACT."

## **Proposed Admission Requirements: American-based High School Systems**

Students who have completed high school in the United States or at an international high school offering an American-based curriculum (and who have not completed more than 18 transferable credit units from an accredited post-secondary institution) will be considered for admission based on a combination of high school grades and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT scores.

Current high school students may be considered for early admission if a transcript of final grades to date is submitted as well as a list of planned future high school courses.

### **General Admission Requirements:**

Applications will be considered individually and guided by the admission standards for Canadian high school students. Criteria specific to American-based curriculum that will be considered in the admission process are proposed as follows:

1. SAT Reasoning or ACT scores: Normally, a minimum combined score of 1100 on the SAT Critical Reading and Mathematics sections OR a minimum ACT score of 24 is required.
2. GPA and class rank
3. Completion of at least 16 credit units of core curriculum classes, including:
  - a. 4 years of English Language Arts
  - b. 3 years of Math (acceptable subjects include Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus)
  - c. 3 years of Laboratory Sciences (including Grade 12 year)
  - d. 3 years of Social Sciences or Humanities (including Grade 12 year)

### **Prerequisites for Specific Colleges:**

The Colleges of Agriculture & Bioresources, Engineering, Kinesiology, and the Edwards School of Business require specific high school courses for admission. For example, Edwards School of Business requires completion of both Mathematics B30 and C30. The chart below lists the AP, IB, and SAT subject test requirements that are equivalent to Saskatchewan high school courses:

<b>Saskatchewan High School:</b>	<b>Calculus 30</b>	<b>Mathematics B30 and/or C30</b>	<b>Biology 30</b>	<b>Chemistry 30</b>	<b>Physics 30</b>
<b>AP (grade of 3 or higher):</b>	Calculus AB or BC	No specific equivalent	Biology	Chemistry	Physics B or C
<b>IB (grade of 4 or higher):</b>	Further Mathematics SL (not offered at HL)	Mathematics (SL or HL)	Biology	Chemistry	Physics

<b>SAT Subject Test (&gt; 50<sup>th</sup> %ile):</b>	No specific equivalent	Mathematics Level 2	Biology E/M	Chemistry	Physics
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In some cases, mathematics courses from accredited high schools may fulfill the Mathematics B30 & C30 and Calculus 30 prerequisites.

**Accreditation:**

Students who present a grade 12 diploma from an accredited high school are not necessarily required to present SAT or ACT scores. Transcripts from accredited high schools must be accompanied by information about accreditation and grading system, as well as a course catalogue which briefly describes course offerings. Schools must be accredited by one of the following accrediting bodies: the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Students who do not present a grade 12 diploma from an accredited high school will be considered for admission, provided they complete core curriculum requirements and submit SAT or ACT scores.

**December 8, 2008**

**To: University of Saskatchewan Council**

**RE: English proficiency requirement**

Undergraduate Applicants to the University of Saskatchewan whose first language is not English are required to provide proof of English proficiency. New trends in education have prompted the need for revision and additional criteria.

We would like to implement the attached proposed English proficiency policy for May 2009 applicants (the beginning of the next admission cycle). It is comparable to proficiency policies at several Canadian Universities. Below each item is an explanatory statement intended to help identify important changes easily. The current policy is published in the University Course Calendar and is also attached to this document for your review (see page 5).

This proposal was prepared by Karen Gauthier and Faith Baron, International Admissions Officers.

Thank you for your careful consideration,

Claude Lang  
Director

Lisa Shepard  
Manager of Admissions

Student Enrolment Services Division  
University of Saskatchewan

## Proposed English Proficiency Policy for Undergraduate Applicants

The language of instruction at the University of Saskatchewan is English. Applicants for undergraduate admission whose first language is not English must present evidence of proficiency in English. The following will be accepted as satisfactory evidence:

### 1. Countries where English is the official language:

Students who are from one of the following countries typically do not need to provide proof of English proficiency: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Botswana, British Virgin Islands, England, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Lesotho, Malawi, New Zealand, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Papua New Guinea, Scotland, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United States, US Virgin Islands, Wales, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

*This is a proposed new item. Although this has always been in practice, the list was never published by International Undergraduate Admissions (although it has been published by the College of Graduate Studies). It is common information for institutions to disclose.*

### 2. Canadian and U.S. high school:

More than two years of full-time attendance at a Canadian high school (or at an institution where English is the language of instruction and examination) that includes complete secondary level standing and successful consecutive completion of English Language Arts Courses in Grades 11 and 12. A final mark of at least 70 percent must be achieved in each Grade 12 English Language Arts (A30 & B30) courses. If completion of secondary standing occurred more than five years ago, additional proof of English proficiency may be required.

*This item deserves careful attention. The changes are proposed in response to many Saskatoon high schools that have a high number of ESL students, many of whom begin their studies in Saskatchewan in Grade 10. English Language Arts 10 (ELA 10) is replaced with a modified ESL Language Arts Class to support their transition into mainstream ELA 20 and 30 classes. Many promising students have been unduly required to complete an objective test of proficiency, simply because they did not complete ELA 10, as the current policy requires. It is our opinion that our policies are not in cooperation with the current efforts of the Saskatoon Schools to prepare these students for University study. We also recommend adding that, at the discretion of the admission officer, further proof of English proficiency may be required if graduation from high school occurred more than five years ago.*

### 3. English-Language Post-Secondary Institutions:

Successful completion of at least 18 credit units of transferable university-level courses where English is the official language of instruction and examination. The post-secondary institution must declare English to be the *primary* language of instruction and examination *throughout* the institution, not just in select departments. If post-secondary study occurred more than five years ago, additional proof of English proficiency may be required.

*Although this is not a new practice, the current statement requires clarification regarding what constitutes an English-speaking institution. The item also includes the recommendation that further proof of English proficiency may be required if study occurred more than five years ago.*

**4. English as a Second Language programs:**

Successful completion of Level UP2: High Advanced Academic English offered by the [University of Saskatchewan Language Centre](#). For more information about this program, contact the [University of Saskatchewan Language Centre](#), R.J.D. Williams Building, 232 - 221 Cumberland Ave N, Saskatoon SK Canada S7N 1M3; Tel: 306-966-4351, Fax: 306-966-4356, E-mail: [international.esl@usask.ca](mailto:international.esl@usask.ca); Website: [www.ccde.usask.ca](http://www.ccde.usask.ca).

or

Successful completion of the English as a Second Language (ESL 050) program offered by the University of Regina.

*This item remains unchanged, except that the highest level of academic English at the Language Centre is now called Level UP2 (formerly Level 50).*

**5. Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT):**

AP English (grade of 3 or better); IB English A1 or A2 (grade of 4 or better); IB English B (grade of 5 or better); SAT Subject Test in English (top 50<sup>th</sup> percentile).

**6. GCSE/IGCSE/GCE:**

GCSE/IGCSE/GCE O-Level English, English Language, or English as a Second Language with minimum grade of B; GCE A/AS/AICE Level English or English Language with minimum grade of C.

*Items #5 and #6 include proposed new ways to provide proof of English proficiency. These standards are accepted by almost all Canadian and American post-secondary institutions but have never been added to our published policy.*

**7. Other Tests:**

One of the following tests will also be accepted. Test scores must be forwarded by the testing centre directly to International Admissions no later than the deadline for receipt of documents.

Test	Minimum Score Required	Contact
<p><b>TOEFL</b> (Test of English as a Foreign Language)</p> <p><i>*Please note that institutional TOEFL is not accepted.</i></p>	<p>Internet Based: Overall 80 ***** Reading: 19 Listening: 19 Speaking: 18 Writing: 18</p>	<p>Test of English as a Foreign Language CN 6151 Princeton, New Jersey USA 08541-6151 Tel: 609.771.7100 <a href="http://www.toefl.org">www.toefl.org</a></p>
	<p>Computer Based: 213</p>	<p>U of S TOEFL Designated Institution Code: 0980</p>
	<p>Paper Based: 550</p>	

<b>IELTS</b> (International English Language Testing System)	Band score of 6.5	The British Council, IELTS Enquiries Medlock Street Manchester M15 4AA United Kingdom Tel: 0161 957 7755 <a href="http://www.ielts.org">www.ielts.org</a>
<b>CanTEST</b> (Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees)	Listening and Reading: 4.5 Average  Writing: 4.0	U of S Language Centre 232 R.J.D. Williams Building 221 Cumberland Ave. N. Saskatoon, SK S7N 1M3 Canada Tel: 306.966.4351 Fax: 306.966.4356 <a href="http://www.learnenglish.usask.ca/">http://www.learnenglish.usask.ca/</a>
<b>CAEL</b> (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment)	60	CAEL Assessment Office 228 Paterson Hall 1125 Colonel By Drive Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6 Canada Tel: 613.520.2600 ext.2271 Email: <a href="mailto:cael@carleton.ca">cael@carleton.ca</a> <a href="http://www.cael.ca">http://www.cael.ca</a>
<b>MELAB</b> (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery)	85	English Language Institute 3020 North University Building University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48109-1057 Tel: 313.764.2416 <a href="http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/">http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/</a>
<b>CPE</b> (Cambridge Proficiency in English)	Grade C	University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations 1 Hills Road Cambridge CB1 2EU United Kingdom <a href="http://www.cambridgeesol.org/">http://www.cambridgeesol.org/</a>

*This list of tests remains unchanged except that the requirements for the internet-based TOEFL score have been further defined. It is proposed that we now require a minimum score on each section of the test (reading, listening, speaking, and writing). These standards are comparable to other Canadian Universities.*