

English as a Second Language Accommodations & English Placement for International Students

English as Second Language Accommodations

The Department of English & Communications, in coordination with the Academic Achievement Center (AAC) and the International Center, is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy for students with functional difficulty with the English language.

Eligibility Requirements

Students must place into EN 105 or EN 106* AND

- Be an international student OR
- Be a US citizen for whom English is not the primary language spoken in the home OR
- US lawful permanent resident for whom English is not the primary language spoken in the home

**Students who are not placed into EN 105 or EN 106 may still be eligible for academic accommodations as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Chair of the Department of English & Communications, in consultation with the AAC.*

Eligibility will expire at the end of the first semester of accommodation, but may be continued on a semester-to-semester basis as determined by the Chair of the Department of English & Communications, in consultation with the AAC.

Allowable Academic Accommodations

- Reasonable extensions of time on assignments if appropriate tutorial assistance is in process.
- Reasonable extensions of time for examinations, with or without a reader, that is administered by the AAC.
- Reduction of credit penalty for misspellings; errors in word usage, sentence structure, and punctuation; errors characteristic of EFL/ESL students, except in coursework where those skills are being assessed directly.
- Alternative assignments to gain credit for credit for class participation when spoken language productivity is a problem, except where those skills are being assessed directly.
- Use of a recording device for course lectures and/or discussions, if a student is deficit in receptive language.

Professors and instructors are encouraged to customize any approved academic accommodations to align with class requirements and expectations, with the goal to maximize student learning.

Student Responsibilities

- Eligible students must process an accommodations letter at the AAC to gain final approval.
- Eligible students must complete a release form each semester to authorize the AAC to send the eligibility letter to all course professors to notify them of the approved academic accommodations.

English Placement for International Undergraduate Students

All international students are required to take NU's English placement exam, administered on campus by the Academic Achievement Center (AAC), prior to the start of their first semester. The exam tests students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities. Based on the results of the placement exam, combined with a review of other relevant test scores and documentation (e.g. TOEFL, or IELTS scores, SAT or ACT scores, academic transcripts), the Chair of the Department of English and Communications, in consultation with the AAC, will:

- Place students in EN 105, which is a sheltered course that is credit-bearing, but does not meet a General Education requirement and does not otherwise count towards graduation; or
- Place the student in EN 101, which is a traditional credit-bearing course that does meet a General Education requirement and counts toward graduation.

If a student's performance on NU's English placement exam is inconsistent with the test scores or other proof of English proficiency that was initially reviewed for admissions purposes, NU reserves the right to defer enrollment of the student.

Exceptions

Exceptions may occur in special circumstances involving international inter-institutional agreements with partner universities, new pathway programs and/or other international agreements that would warrant exceptions. All such exceptions must be codified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among participating parties and have appropriate approvals in accordance with the agreement. Any MOU must be executed through the International Center, after consultation with the AAC and the Department of English and Communications regarding exceptions set forth in any MOU.