

Duquesne University
Program Student Competencies by Level

General ESL Course Cluster: Grammar, Reading, Writing, Note-taking/Discussion, and Speaking/Listening at Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Levels: In addition to using independent learning strategies, resources and technology, students completing the advanced level should be able to:

Grammar: use the English verb tenses system as well as such grammatical structures as modals, gerunds, infinitives, causatives, conditionals, noun and adverbial clauses, and discourse connectors with adequate fluency and accuracy in oral and written communication;

Note-taking & Discussion: identify main ideas and supporting details in advanced academic lectures, presentations and discussions; organize, synthesize and use information from notes to access main points and supporting data, recreate a talk, answer questions, and effectively participate in discussions;

Reading: effectively read and comprehend college-level content (including general and specialized vocabulary) from textbooks, journal articles and short abstracts; identify main idea and rhetorical approach, citing supporting points from text; take organized notes on readings; paraphrase and summarize content;

Speaking-Listening: effectively use English stress, intonation and rhythm patterns; demonstrate adequate communicative competence (audience awareness, coherence, accuracy, and task accomplishment) in presentations and discussions; respond to main ideas and supporting points;

Writing: produce a two to three page expository composition, with a clearly stated thesis, supported by examples from readings developed into paragraphs, reinforced by a conclusion; use documentation in MLA format without plagiarizing; write fluently with limited errors not interfering with comprehension with a minimal score of 4 on the Test of Written English (TWE).

Intermediate Level: In addition to using independent learning strategies, resources, and technology, students completing the intermediate level should be able to:

Grammar: use present, past, future, present perfect and present continuous tenses in positive/negative and statement/question structures; gerunds and infinitives, passive verbs, adjective clauses, expressions of comparison, basic unreal conditions, and irregular verbs – in written, spoken and selected reading contexts;

Note-taking & Discussion: identify main ideas and supporting details in intermediate-level short lectures and talks; use signal words, symbols, abbreviations; format notes to show levels of importance; use effective oral communication strategies in presentations and discussions of lecture topics;

Reading: effectively read and comprehend multi-paragraph content (including general and selected specialized vocabulary) from text and outside readings; identify rhetorical nature of content, main and supporting points; use schemata, grammatical and word clues to decode meaning; take and use notes on content;

Speaking-Listening: effectively use English intonation, stress, and rhythm in statements, imperatives, questions (yes/no and information); use appropriate organization, expressions, rhetorical structures, and non-verbal language to make presentations, handle questions, discuss issues, communicate in varied situations; use listening strategies to identify to map speech of moderate complexity;

Writing: write a 400 to 500 word composition, state a thesis, and use specific examples to support it; produce a working outline for the composition, containing a thesis statement, main points, and conclusion; use a limited set of documentation/citations with such phrases as “Spack says” and earn a minimum score of 3 on the Test of Written English (TWE).

Basic Level: In addition to using independent learning strategies, resources, and technology, students completing the basic level should be able to:

Grammar: identify and use present, past, future, and present perfect tenses in written, spoken, limited reading contexts, in affirmative and negative statements, and in questions; use comparative and superlative forms, adjectives and adverbs, selected modals, irregular verbs, conditionals, clauses & phrases, parts of speech;

Note-taking & Discussion: identify main ideas and key details in short spoken presentations; take basic notes using short notations; use information from notes to respond to questions; accurately write sentences and information from dictation; use effective communicative skills in speaking tasks and discussions;

Reading: read and comprehend passages of five to ten short paragraphs, including general and limited specialized vocabulary; locate topic sentences, supporting points, and text-based clues to key information; use prior knowledge to predict and guess content; take basic notes on main points; prepare brief book reports;

Speaking-Listening: identify and use stress, intonation, and rhythm patterns in words and short sentences; accurately produce major vowel and consonant sounds; use task-appropriate, accurate and comprehensible communication in a range of speaking situations; effectively use listening strategies to comprehend main ideas and supporting points in short spoken passages;

Writing: write a 200 to 300 word composition describing or defining aspects of a single topic; write simple grammatical sentence using present, past and future tenses with no or very few errors in grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and capitalization; make a simple outline for the composition containing main points to be covered; earn a minimum score of 2 on the Test of Written English (TWE).

ESL Undergraduate Bridge Course Cluster: CORE 102-Imaginative Literature & Critical Writing; CORE 101-Thinking and Writing; Advanced Reading B; Term Paper

Students completing this level should be able to read, analyze, and interpret poems and short-stories at or near the level necessary for general Freshman Composition; be familiar with key literary terms; effectively present and discuss the analysis; take accurate and well-organized notes on readings, presentations and discussions; synthesize information from several sources; draft, edit and revise a minimum of 500 to 600 word papers, as well as shorter written assignments; formulate a clearly stated thesis, supporting material and conclusions; use appropriate conventions of text citations, quotations and paraphrasing in the MLA format; and use editing, library, and current technology as learning tools.

ESL Graduate Course Cluster: ITA Seminar, Graduate Research Paper, Academic Discourse

Students completing this level should be able to synthesize information from lectures, reading and class discussions; write the synthesis or present it orally to a class in clear and mostly error-free language appropriate to a graduate course; deliver, review and revise oral presentations with acceptable coherence, audience awareness, linguistic accuracy and use language functions appropriate to tasks; ask and respond to questions; use appropriate non-verbal communication cues; speak with adequate intelligibility; score a minimum of 45 on the SPEAK Test.

ESL Special Purposes Course Cluster: Computer Skills; TOEFL Preparation

Students completing Computer Skills should be able to use basic functions in *Windows 2007*, *Microsoft Word 2007*, *Power Point 2007*, Duquesne University computer-based information systems such as *DORI* and *Blackboard*, and computerized research tools such as *Duca* and *Google Scholar*. Students completing TOEFL Skills will be able to use a range of test-taking strategies for the TOEFL, including practice of understanding and following instructions, identifying what is expected on different types of questions, and listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills.