Proposal: UBC Conditional Undergraduate Admission

A Program For Highly Qualified Applicants To Undergraduate Programs Who Do Not Quite Meet the UBC English Language Admission and Language Proficiency Index Standards

Currently, UBC admits to undergraduate degree programs only students who have met the English Language Admission Standard or who have had this requirement waived through Dean's discretion as part of the admission process. The current admissions process looks at compliance with the English Language Admission Standard ("ELAS"), and then, if qualified at academic qualifications. As such, many superior applicants are denied admission solely because they do not meet the required ELAS.

Even among students who are admitted to the University, English language proficiency often continues to be a challenge. In order to gain admission to the English department's course required to fulfill the University's English degree requirement, many students must first prove that they meet or surpass the Language Proficiency Index ("LPI") standard. This has resulted in students struggling for years to pass the LPI exam.

A Conditional Admission Program ("CAP") would encourage applications from academically-superior students without the English proficiency level required for admission to the University of British Columbia. Students who otherwise fully meet admission requirements admitted to CAP would begin their studies in the University of British Columbia Continuing Studies ("UBCCS") or an equivalent English language instruction provider (that includes ELAS and LPI testing to prove that its program graduates meet or surpass UBC ELAS and LPI standards) approved by the Vice-President Academic and Provost and, upon successful completion of prescribed terms of study in UBCCS's Intensive Academic English Program ("IAEP") and Writing Centre ("WC") or academically-equivalent pre-approved programs, would then proceed directly into degree programs without further proof of English proficiency. In 1999, Senate recognised successful completion of IAEP as equivalent to UBC's other English Language Admission Standards for undergraduate study.

A CAP at UBC would directly address Trek 2010 goals to ensure UBC attracts the best students from around the world, and enhance support services for international students at UBC.

Twenty-two Canadian universities currently offer conditional admission programs including five of the eleven English speaking G13 universities (see Appendices # 1 & #2). Benefits include:

- Increase Number of Outstanding International Students - Conditional Admission would help UBC achieve targets for international student recruitment. Many highly qualified applicants each year are not accepted at UBC because their English language proficiency scores fall marginally-short of current admission standards. The International Student Initiative ("ISI") could expand their activity beyond schools and colleges that use English as the language of instruction.

- Improve Likelihood of Academic Success - Completing the IAEP would help students acquire specific language, research, and study skills needed for UBC undergraduate programs and provide them with first hand knowledge of academic and cultural norms.

- Reduce International Student Support Workload - Requiring completion of the IAEP would reduce the need for faculty members to provide ESL support to individual students. ELI would not replace services provided by, for example, the Writing Centre and Faculty specific support services, but would complement them by reducing demand on faculty members, teaching assistants, and support services.

- Improve English Language Proficiency Admission Requirements – The CAP will increase the number and yield of academically-qualified applicants to UBC. Consequently, UBC may be able to raise its English language proficiency admission requirements. This would be attempted after increased student enrolment rates are verified.

This program will be reviewed by the ISI Steering Committee 5 years after adoption.

Who would be eligible?

1. Any student who is planning to pursue an undergraduate degree program at the University of British Columbia, and

2. Any student whose academic qualifications, other than English language proficiency, would have ranked them in the top 50% of students admitted to the undergraduate degree program they are applying to for the year prior to the date of their application, and

3. Any student whose English proficiency can reasonably be expected to be brought up to UBC's ELAS and LPI requirements in no more than one year (Appendix # 3).

Advantages of Guaranteed Offers

1. Students and parents would have the peace of mind of knowing that a place is waiting in the undergraduate degree program before the student arrives in Canada.

2. UBC would be eligible to receive many foreign government scholarships, which require conditional admission programs.

3. A single letter offering conditional admission to both UBCCS and a degree program would facilitate the process of securing a Study Permit.

Duration and Timing of UBCCS Study

Based on English language proficiency test results, students will be required to complete one, two, or three terms of the UBCCS program. Such students will be required to complete the prescribed terms of English language and orientation classes before being able to begin degree program study. Students accepted into the CAP may not use TOEFL/IELTS/CAEL or other English proficiency examinations to gain direct admission to degree programs. Even if a student presents an adequate score on one of these tests, they are still required to complete UBCCS program. Applicants accepted under the terms of the CAP would begin their UBCCS studies in January, May, or September. Entry into specific degree programs would depend on the starting dates of those programs following completion of the prescribed UBCCS program of study. Many UBC degree programs only begin in September, and graduates of UBCCS would have to wait until the following September to begin their degree studies. Students who fail to meet the English proficiency standard set for them within the prescribed time period will be denied admission to a degree program at UBC.

Fees

CAP Students would pay the following fees (2008):

Degree Program Application Fee + UBCCS Application Fee
IAEP + WC Tuition for Fall, Winter, or Spring Terms - $4,204
IAEP + WC Tuition for Summer Term - $3,817

Degree program tuition and UBC student fees would be charged beginning with the term the student starts the degree program.

Application and Offer Process

Step 1	Prospective student self-identifies eligibility for CAP based on published criteria
Step 2	Prospective student applies to CAP
Step 3	UBCCS forwards eligible applications to the undergraduate admissions office
Step 4	Outstanding applicants receive UBC Conditional Offer; the Offer letter explains the conditions of the offer
Step 5	UBC IAEP + WC Enrolment
Step 6	ELI confirms that student has passed the IAEP + LPI
Step 7	UBC Undergraduate Degree Program Enrolment

Appendix 1:
Canadian Universities Offering Conditional Admission (July 2006)

G13 Universities

The University of Alberta
The University of Calgary
Dalhousie University
The University of Toronto
The University of Waterloo

BC Universities

Simon Fraser University
Thompson Rivers University
Trinity Western University
The University of Victoria

Other Canadian Universities

Athabasca University
The University of Manitoba
The University of Winnipeg
Atlantic Baptist University
Mount Allison University
Acadia University
Saint Mary's University
Carleton University
Lakehead University
Laurentian University
Trent University
Bishop's University
The University of Saskatchewan

Appendix 2:
Admission Requirements of Selected Canadian Conditional Admission Programs (July 2006)

The University of Alberta
http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Admission/UndergradPrograms/13.3.html

Applicants with superior academic standing who do not meet the English language requirements but who have a TOEFL score between 530 and 577 (paper-based) or 197 and 233 (computer-based) and who meet all other Faculty-specific program requirements may be considered for admission to the Bridging Program.

The University of Waterloo
http://www.renison.uwaterloo.ca/english-language/conditional-admission/index.shtml

In conjunction with the Faculty of Arts at the University of Waterloo, Renison College offers a limited entry program to qualified international students. These are students who have successfully completed at least one term of intensive English (English for Academic Success) at Renison and whose performance in class shows promise.

Such students are admitted to the Faculty of Arts with the following conditions:

- They must complete ESL 101R, ESL 102R, and ENGL 129R in their first two terms of enrolment.
- They must complete a minimum of two courses in their proposed major.
- They must maintain a minimum average of 65% in their courses.
- They will have a maximum of three terms in which to complete these conditions

To qualify for conditional admission, students must have completed at least one year of study at a recognized university and have a minimum GPA of 75% at that university.

It is expected that students will begin their full-time intensive English classes at Renison's English Language Institute in either fall or winter term so that they can begin taking their UW courses in May.

The University of Toronto
http://www.adm.utoronto.ca/adm/adm_other_req/adm_english_facility.htm

The University of Toronto is now in the second phase of a conditional admission pilot program. This was initiated by the Registrar of UTSC. During the pilot, conditional admission applies only to academically outstanding Chinese students. These students are first screened by the Principal (in Beijing), then referred to the Registrar. The Registrar runs them through a battery of language tests (aiming for the equivalent of an "old TOEFL" score over 550), and completes 30 minute interviews with each candidate. In 2005, UTSC conditionally admitted fifteen students most of whom finished Year 1 with an 'A". In 2006, seventy-seven students were conditionally admitted. In 2007, the objective is 100. The University of Toronto also has the following system of discretionary scores:

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Test of Written English (TWE)

Internet-based Test:

Minimum Requirement	Discretionary Range
Total score of 100 + 22 on Writing section	Total score 89-99 +19 on Writing section

Computer-based Test:

Minimum Requirement	Discretionary Range
Total score of 250 + 5.0 on Essay	Total score 230-247 + 4.5 on Essay

Paper-based Test:

Minimum Requirement	Discretionary Range
Total score of 600 + 5.0 on TWE;	Total score 573-597 + 4.5 on TWE

If students score in the discretionary range indicated above, and are otherwise well qualified for admission, other academic evidence of English proficiency is automatically considered (for example, results in English courses) and students are advised whether English facility requirements have been satisfied. It is not necessary to request this special consideration. Letters of reference will NOT be used for this purpose.

Appendix 3: Minimum Entry Scores for CAP

Students would enter CAP at slightly lower language scores than those currently required. The following chart shows international tests, minimum scores UBC currently accepts and proposed CAP entry scores.[1]

International Test (Acronym)	International Test (Full Name)	Minimum Entry Scores	Proposed CAP Entry Scores
CAE	Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English	B	C
CAEL	Canadian Academic English Language assessment	Overall 70	Overall 60 no sub-test below 50
	With Speaking Sub-Test	60	50
UBC CEL	UBC Certificate in English Language	600 level, 75%	500 level
CELPIP	Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program CELPIT-A (Academic Reading and Writing) CELPIT-A (Academic Reading and Writing) CELL (Listening) CELTOP (Speaking)	4L	3H (High)
CPE	Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English	C	CAE A
IELTS	International English Language Testing System (Academic)	6.5 with no part less than 6.0	6 with no part less than 5.5
MELAB	Michigan English Language Assessment Battery	85	80
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language	55	52
	Either Paper-Based Test		
	With the TWE (Test of Written English)	4	3
	Or Computer-Based Test	22	20
	With Essay	4	3
	Or Internet-Based Test	Overall Score: 86 Reading: 21 Listening: 21 Writing: 20 Speaking: 20	Overall Score: 82 Reading: 20 Listening: 20 Writing: 19 Speaking: 19

CAP students would have assured entry to UBC undergraduate and graduate programs on successful completion of the IAEP + LPI. The definition of successful completion is a minimum of 75% coursework plus a score of 70 on the standardized CAEL test.

[1] Subject to periodic review and modification to accord with any University-approved changes in ELAS or LPI.