Gateway to the University Experience: TOEFL Preparation

California State University, Stanislaus—Spring 2012

**Days:** January 26-May 4  **Time:** M-TH 9-3, F 9-2  
**Location:** Extended Education Classroom

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*You are expected to interact in the classroom, to discuss ideas and express opinions. In other words, you need to speak and understand English well to succeed. ~ TOEFL iBT*

**Mission Statement**

The purpose of this course is to help foreign language learners improve academic and cultural background knowledge, develop vocabulary, improve reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills, and prepare for specific tasks on the TOEFL Institutional Testing Program (ITP) as well as the iBT. The ITP, however, will be administered upon completion of the course. The major portion of the class is aimed towards addressing specific tasks on these tests while assisting foreign language learners in acquiring the skills that will integrate them into the discourse community of the academe. Upon completion of the course, students will be better equipped to become productive and interactive stakeholders in their educational journeys, while contributing to the increased cultural diversity of California State University, Stanislaus.

**Course Goals**

1. Prepare for specific tasks on the institutional TOEFL and the iBT  
2. Prepare students for university matriculation and university life  
3. Improve reading, listening, speaking, writing, and test taking skills  
4. Improve background knowledge about multiple subjects  
5. Develop vocabulary  
6. To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to communicate and work in groups  
7. Cater to individual student needs at their own level and pace  
8. Assist students in improving their ability to find, understand, examine critically, and use information from various sources  
9. To create a multicultural educational experience that will enhance the ability to look at issues from multiple perspectives  
10. To encourage understanding of the complexity of ethical judgment and social responsibility
Student Responsibilities and Classroom Policies

Student Expectations
1. Attend all class sessions and tutoring sessions on time and with all necessary materials.
2. Complete all homework on time.
3. Participate in class and work with others on a regular basis.
4. Give your full attention to the instructor, tutor, group, and the lesson.
5. Notify instructors or tutors immediately if you are having trouble on an academic OR personal level.
6. Notify instructors of absences and be responsible for any make up work.
7. Follow all test taking instructions exactly as instructed to ensure that your TOEFL test can be scored.

Required Materials
Textbooks:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

A looseleaf notebook (not spiral) and/or an adequate supply of 8.5”x11” lined paper
A three-ring binder
Pens and/or pencils in different colors
Microsoft Word
An active email address

Attendance
Absences will not be excused except in extenuating circumstances. More than five absences to class or to your tutoring session may result in a no credit grade. In addition, tardiness is disruptive to class and unacceptable. Class begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. More than five late-shows will be considered excessive and may result in a grade of no credit.
Roll will be taken each day twice (in the morning and in the afternoon).

Tutoring
Since this course strives to serve the individual needs of each student according to their own pace, being available for one-on-one tutoring is a requirement of this course. Tutoring is officially reserved for Fridays, but based on individual need and performance, instructors may require you to commit to up to three hours a week to insure that you maintain satisfactory progress during the course of the semester.

Testing
The TOEFL exam, our university version and the iBT, have strict testing protocols that must be followed in order for your test to be graded. Failure to not follow specific testing instructions will result in an automatic failure of the exam, and in most cases, failure of the course—no exceptions.
Grading

You will be graded according to the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Presentations</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays and Presentations</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes/Tests</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A CR for the course will be equal to a C or better whether or not you pass (or are here to take) the TOEFL.
- Earning a C or better but not passing the TOEFL will result in a grade of SP to indicate that you are making progress in the course and should be allowed to continue another semester if you choose to.
- Students who do not maintain a C or better on the coursework may not be allowed to take the ITP.
- The English Language Program is also looking into whether or not an actual letter grade option instead of CR/SP/NP is available.

Plagiarism

Deliberate plagiarism will result in a no credit for the class, and it will be reported to Student Discipline. If you have questions about whether or not you are employing a source correctly, please ask. For additional information, please visit the following link:

http://www.csustan.edu/english/dept/plagiarism.html

Other Concerns

Cell phones are not to be on during class time at all. These are a distraction to not only you, but to the entire class. Instructors may choose to mark you as absent for the day for you if you are caught using a cell phone in a non-academic capacity during class time.

Computers and translators are not welcome in class unless the instructor of the hour specifically allows them. Most of the work we do will not be done on computers, and if we do need them, we have computer labs available for your use. Translators often prove to be inaccurate and interfere with the language immersion environment we are trying to create for you. Remember: the TOEFL exam does not allow electronic devices of any kind. Therefore, they are not encouraged for use in class as well.

Communication: Despite the intensive and strict nature of this course, we do want you to succeed here at CSU Stanislaus. Instructors and tutors are extremely aware that you are in a different country, and that you may have some difficult periods of adjustment at times. For this reason, we encourage and invite you to communicate with us or with your tutors as soon as
possible if you are having problems keeping up with this course, with adjusting to American or university life, or if you just need to know of a good place to eat. We are not just here to help you improve your English skills, but to make sure you enjoy your time here in the U.S.

**Class Schedule**

This is a general overview of what we will do in a typical week. Instructors reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as needed to serve the objectives of the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-11:00</td>
<td>Listening/Speaking</td>
<td>Listening/Speaking</td>
<td>Presentation preparation and research</td>
<td>TOEFL practice</td>
<td>Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Group work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-3:00</td>
<td>Reading/Writing</td>
<td>Reading/Writing</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>TOEFL practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overview of Course Content**

1. **Listening and Comprehension**
   - **Objectives**
     - Understand the main point or purpose and supporting points and details of a conversation, discussion, or lecture
     - Recognize a speaker’s attitude, tone, degree of certainty, meaning, and motivation
     - Make connections between pieces of information
     - Make inferences and draw conclusions based on information given

   **Classroom Activities to Develop Listening and Comprehension Skills**
   - Lectures
   - Class/group discussions
   - Group activities, assignments, and projects
   - Cooperative learning groups
   - Activities that involve listening to music and watching television
   - Writer’s Workshop assignments
   - One-on-one / group tutoring sessions
   - TOEFL Practice Tests and assessment
2. **Structure and Written Expression**

Objectives
- Recognize language that is appropriate for standard written English
- Identify and correct errors in written English

Classroom Activities to Develop Understanding of Structure and Written Expression
- Journal writing
- Essay assignments
- Writer’s Workshop lessons and assignments
- Computer Lab/internet research activities
- Group/individual presentations
- Activities that address a variety of writing topics that range in scope from essay/paragraph development to grammar issues
- TOEFL Practice Tests and assessments

3. **Reading and Vocabulary**

Objectives
- Understand the main idea, purpose, key points, and important details of a reading passage
- Recognize a speaker's/author’s intent, style, and tone
- Synthesize and paraphrase information

Classroom Activities to Develop Reading and Vocabulary Skills
- In-class and outside reading assignments
- Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)
- Vocabulary and grammar activities
- Internet / research activities
- Writer’s Workshop assignments
- TOEFL Practice Tests and assessments

This class will concentrate on content-based activities that help students develop and improve their skills in the four areas of listening, speaking, reading, reading, and writing. These content-based activities will cover important ESL topics and subtopics such as essay development and grammar. At the same time, everything in this course is also designed to help prepare students for matriculation into the university so they are familiar with the culture, expectations, and protocols of American college courses.