

Communication Proficiency Grade Minimum

Motion: Change the Iowa State University Catalog undergraduate requirement for communication proficiency as follows:

Communication Proficiency Grade Requirement: At a minimum, students must demonstrate their communication proficiency by earning a grade of C or better in ENGL 250; some majors set higher requirements for communication proficiency.

Rationale: Communication proficiency is distinct from other general education requirements. While we may wish for passing familiarity (D- or better) with other areas of general education, all Iowa State University students should be able to express themselves clearly and convincingly upon graduation. Accordingly, a higher grade requirement is appropriate.

Attached are two documents supporting this grade standard:

- 1) Existing Communication Proficiency Requirements in each College
- 2) Graph from ISU's EAB (Educational Advisory Board) data set indicating the significant predictive power of the relationship between earning at least a C in ENGL 250 and graduation

This requirement already exists in many colleges (see attachment 1). The C or better policy is implicit in other policies. For example, students whose ACT scores allow them to be placed directly into ENGL 250 earn T credit for ENGL 150 only by passing ENGL 250 with a grade of C or better at ISU.

The Table from EAB (attachment 2) presents data from 9,609 LAS students. It indicates the high correlation between success in ENGL 250 and graduation. While the difference in graduation rates between LAS students who earned an A and those who earned a C is 16 percentage points, the gap between C students and D students in ENGL 250 is 23 percentage points; the drop off is precipitous.

Setting the grade minimum to C rather than C- removes a potential obstacle for students who wish to change colleges. By having all colleges require a C, we express to all ISU students the value of communication proficiency. The habits and skills acquired in ENGL 250 will serve students well throughout their careers at ISU.

This motion does not prevent colleges and programs from setting other, higher requirements for communication proficiency courses.

Attachment 1: Existing College Undergraduate Communication Proficiency Requirements

Four colleges have college-wide requirements:

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

6 credits English composition with grades of C or better and 3 credits Speech fundamentals with grades of C or better

College of Business

Students must achieve communication proficiency by earning a grade of C or better in two of the three required English courses.

College of Design

College Catalog Copy: (C- or better grade). Includes courses in the fields of English (composition) and speech communication (interpersonal and rhetorical)

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Beginning in Fall 2017: at a minimum, students must demonstrate their communication proficiency by earning a grade of C or better in ENGL 250; some majors set higher requirements for communication proficiency.

Two colleges have no college-wide requirement:

College of Engineering

There is no college requirement, but all of the programs in the college require a C or better in ENGL 150 and 250. (The catalog includes a requirement of a C average in all courses required for the basic program in Engineering.) Students meet the English proficiency requirement with a grade of C or better for ENGL 150 and 250 and most departments require that their advanced English proficiency requirement is met with a third English/communication course with a grade of C or better for this course also.

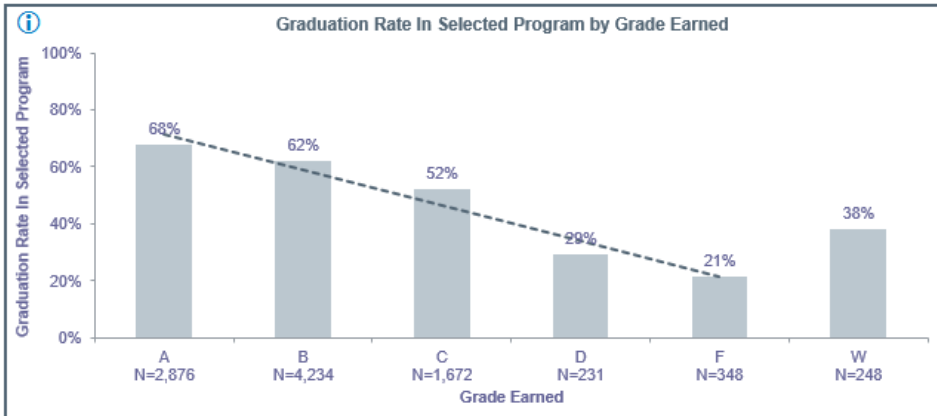
College of Human Sciences

No college-wide policy on English grades. However, each department can determine their own curricular requirements. Most have a C or higher (some say 2.0 average, no less than C-) required in ENGL 150 and 250.

Graduation Rates and ENGL 250 according to EAB

Select College or Specific Major: College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Select a Course to Analyze: ENGL_250



Based on a historical analysis of 9,609 students

	Course Statistics					
	A	B	C	D	F	W
Count	2,876	4,234	1,672	231	348	248
Pct of Total	30%	44%	17%	2%	4%	3%
Grad. Rate In Program	68%	62%	52%	29%	21%	38%

The table above provides a summary of students by grade achieved in a selected course. Please note that students who re-take a course will be counted twice. For example, a student who receives a D in their first attempt, who then achieves a B in their second attempt, before graduating in the major, will show up as a student who graduated after having achieved a D and as a student who graduated after having achieved a B.