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Scoring Guidelines for the English Proficiency Interview

The English Proficiency Interview (EPI) uses a **global rating scale** of 2 through 6. The score is a measure of an examinee's overall communicative effectiveness for teaching.

Passing (global scores of 5 and 6): The examinee's communication is generally or always effective. The speaker has satisfactory to sophisticated language skills that are appropriate for a teaching context. Minor errors in pronunciation, grammar, or word choice are acceptable if overall meaning is clear. The examinee's performance must be satisfactory in each rating category.

Conditional Pass (4CP): The examinee's communication is generally effective for teaching. Student performance matches scores of 5 or 6 in most rating categories. However, due to an isolated weakness in one area, communication is occasionally difficult. The isolated weakness typically occurs in **one** of these categories: *fluency*, *pronunciation*, or *grammar*. Students who receive a 4CP receive satisfactory scores in Discourse Management and Question Handling & Listening. Examinees who receive a score of 4CP are required to complete ESL 508 **during or before** the first semester of teaching. ESL 508 helps students refine their language skills for the teaching context.

Failing (global scores of 2, 3, and 4): The examinee's communication is somewhat or marginally effective. Examinees have inconsistent or limited language skills in **one or more rating categories**. These weaknesses indicate that the speaker is not ready for classroom instruction. For example, an examinee may explain effectively, but have significant weaknesses in pronunciation that make it difficult for the listener to understand the examinee's meaning. Or, an examinee may use generally accurate pronunciation, but have weaknesses in fluency and discourse management.

The EPI assesses the examinee's speaking ability based on the features described on page 2. You may use the following chart to assess strengths and weaknesses in your own oral English skills.

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Feature	Passing range	Failing range
Overall communication effectiveness (How effectively I can communicate with others)	When I talk with people who are unaccustomed to interacting with second-language speakers of North American English, they always or almost always understand my meaning.	When I talk with people who are unaccustomed to interacting with second-language speakers of North American English, they sometimes or frequently cannot understand my meaning. They may often ask me to repeat what I have said.
Fluency (How automatically I can express my ideas)	When speaking in English, my delivery is generally or nearly always smooth and automatic. My pauses usually are the right length and occur in the right places.	My speaking is sometimes or frequently not smooth or automatic. I sometimes or frequently pause or restart as I plan what I want to say.
Accuracy	The EPI assesses three types of English-language accuracy: pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.	
Pronunciation (sounds, rhythm, word stress, intonation)	My speech may sound accented. However, my sounds, rhythm, word stress, and intonation are accurate enough for others to understand my meaning with little or no effort.	My use of English sounds, rhythm, word stress, and/or intonation are sometimes or frequently inaccurate. This often makes it hard for others to understand my meaning.
Grammar (verb tenses, word order, word forms)	I occasionally may make minor errors. However, my grammar is accurate enough to communicate successfully. I can use a range of forms and tenses to describe or explain in past, present, and future timeframes.	My use of English grammar is sometimes or frequently inaccurate. This often makes it hard for others to understand my meaning.
Vocabulary (precision of word choice and expressions)	I occasionally may forget a word. However, I generally or nearly always can use appropriate academic and everyday vocabulary to effectively explain content in my academic field and discuss topics of general interest.	I sometimes or frequently cannot fully express my ideas because I do not have the right vocabulary to do so.
Discourse management (How well I organize and connect my ideas; how well I explain)	I can speak easily about familiar and general interest topics and about some less familiar or abstract topics. My ideas are well supported, organized, and connected. I can provide sufficient detail to effectively explain, describe, respond to questions, and participate in discussions.	I sometimes or frequently cannot say as much as I want to about familiar or everyday topics. I sometimes or frequently have difficulty discussing unfamiliar or general interest topics. My ideas sometimes or frequently are not sufficiently supported, organized, or connected. This often makes it hard for others to understand my meaning.
Question handling and listening (My listening comprehension; how I handle communication difficulties)	When listening to someone speaking in English, I understand nearly everything. When I or the listener doesn't understand something, I ask questions or provide clarification to make sure we understand each other.	I sometimes or frequently do not understand other people. When there are communication difficulties, I am sometimes or frequently unsure what to do.