

C-1-2

***Curriculum for the IEP***  
***(as described in CEA Curriculum Standards)***

**I. General Curriculum Philosophy**

- a. **Communicative Nature:** The approach to language learning and teaching in the IEP is communicative in nature with a strong skills base. The basis for Communicative Language Teaching is the focus on Communicative Competence with its incorporation of grammatical, discourse, and sociolinguistic competencies. Implications of this model are found both in what is taught in the classroom and how it is taught. What to teach encompasses language functions as used in communication, and how to teach involves students learning through activities in real or realistic communication. Within this communicative framework, IEP students study English structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Topics and themes of interest and relevance to students' lives and their learning are brought in through the materials, which are found either in textbooks or are teacher created. Students need a place and a purpose for communication, so many of the activities incorporate involvement in the campus community and the local community. Through selected content, students learn about American culture, general and academic topics, and global issues.
- b. **Skills Development:** The IEP curriculum offers courses that provide skills development and practice along with courses that involve students in task-based interactive activities. Helping students to develop strong aural and oral skills is a major goal throughout. Reading and writing are important in all levels of the curriculum, and extensive reading and reading response journals are used to encourage development of reading skills and strategies. To support improvement of language skills use, vocabulary development is promoted in all courses throughout the curriculum.
- c. **Out-of-class Support:** The IEP curriculum includes out-of-class support for development of English language skills. At all levels of the curriculum, English language students have the opportunity to have native speaker conversation partners and tutors. The SMC Writing Center has a trained ESL tutor for additional out-of-class writing support. Students from the MATESL program are encouraged to provide both conversation partnering as well as tutoring in reading and writing. Additional support for skills practice is provided in the Language Learning Resource Center (LLRC), where students can use computer software and text materials in an individualized program of study directed by their Core and Oral Skills teachers. Students use computers as part of their coursework, and they are taught to use the Internet to support their English language study out of class. IEP students have access to all SMC computer labs unless there is a class scheduled.

- d. **Interaction with Native Speakers:** The IEP Curriculum encourages opportunities for international students to interact with native speakers in many different social and academic settings. IEP students have a scheduled coffee hour weekly, which often includes cultural presentations by a student group, highlighting food, music, and dance from their countries. Coffee hour is open to the whole campus community and is a time for meeting and mingling with the American undergraduates. In addition, class activities such as interview and survey projects, participation in cross-cultural projects with undergraduate classes, and cultural presentations in local schools offer the ELP students some opportunities to interact with native speakers.

## **II. Curriculum for the IEP**

- a. **Overview:** IEP classes are structured to recognize that language learning is an interrelated, interdependent, sequential process in which all language skills are addressed. Language learning involves the “whole” person and includes affective, cognitive and social dimensions of human behavior. The IEP curriculum includes a morning Core and an afternoon module. The Core meets ten hours per week and follows an integrated skills approach, with a focus on conversation, grammar and reading in the lower levels and reading, writing and grammar in the upper levels. Core classes are supplemented by teacher supported skills labs aimed at individualized work on grammar, reading, computer skills, and writing conferences. Note: Summer labs associated with the Core currently include a class from 11:00 to 11:45 a.m. focused on conversation activities taught by students in the Diploma Program.<sup>1</sup>
- b. The afternoon module offers classes in listening and speaking skills to all levels (five hours a week); topics of the classes vary according to the proficiency level. Other classes are skills or content oriented (five hours a week), and students choose the class according to their interest in the topic as well as their proficiency level. Some of the class titles are *TOEFL Preparation Classes; Current Events and Vocabulary Building; U.S. - American Culture through Films; Pronunciation Class; Grammar Hospital; Topics in the Environment* (video sessions). Afternoon Oral Skills classes are accompanied by a twice-weekly, half-hour Language Learning Resource Center (LLRC) assignments related to the course content, (e.g., listening, video, pronunciation, and computer work). All labs are teacher supported and supervised.
- c. **Theoretical Approaches and Curriculum Planning:** The approach to language learning in the ELP is communicative in nature with a strong “skills development” base. Core classes deal with integrated skills in order to take advantage of developing language awareness and proficiency in a rich context of situations and topics. Further skills building is individualized in lab work under teacher supervision. More informal and conversational topics are addressed in afternoon classes. Both morning and afternoon classes are

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<sup>1</sup> An ESL teacher-training program offered by Saint Michael's College during summers.

developed to meet the learners' academic, social, and cultural needs and expectations.

- d. In the lower levels comprehension precedes production, and oral skills are supplemented early on with literacy work. Upper level classes use content-based instruction procedures, with topics ranging from academic to professional to informal/conversational within the same program. Elective modules allow students at the upper levels to choose courses with an academic skills orientation, courses with practical outcomes, and courses that encourage learning through content. In all courses a multi-media format is used when it is appropriate and feasible.
- e. Students are initially placed in the IEP Core and Oral Skills classes based on their performance on the *Accuplacer*, a web-based placement test. Students are given a writing test on the first day of Core class, and an oral evaluation is done in the first Oral Skills class. Teachers can then suggest re-placement to a lower or higher class, if necessary, based on this further diagnostic testing. Students in the IEP study for 25 hours per week, including individualized language laboratory or skills development class assignments.

### **III. Core Classes:**

Core IEP classes address reading, vocabulary, writing and grammar for ten hours per week. The approach used in Core is integrated skills, using theme-based content and interactive tasks and activities to encourage use of conversational skills. Upper level classes use content-based instruction procedures covering a variety of themes: academic, professional, and culturally based topics. Recognizing that students in one class may have differing language needs, further skills building is individualized through language laboratory work and skills development classes under the supervision of a teacher for 30 minutes daily. (C-1-2)

### **IV. Oral Skills and Special Topics Classes:**

More informal and conversational topics are addressed in IEP afternoon classes. In the lower IEP levels, the curriculum reflects the belief that comprehension precedes production, and language is presented orally, supplemented early on with work in reading and writing. The Oral Skills class meets five hours a week with one hour of lab work. The focus in Oral Skills is on improving pronunciation and listening and speaking skills. Dialogues, role-plays, simulations, and language games are used to encourage and guide conversation. A variety of text materials and classroom activities present students a range of language registers and sociolinguistic settings in which to learn and practice English. Special topics courses meet five hours weekly. Students choose a Special Topics course according to their needs or interests. Special Topics courses offer a wide range of topics and learning activities, ranging from topics in US-American culture to test preparation courses, to hands-on experiential service-learning courses. In all IEP courses, a multimedia format utilizing SMC technological resources is used when it is appropriate and feasible.

### **V. Assessment and Academic Performance:**

Assessment of academic performance in the IEP classes is on-going and is carried out by informal and formal procedures, such as class journals, directed class assignments, quizzes and tests, oral reports and class participation in interactive oral activities, outcomes of course projects, and more comprehensive examinations at the end of a session. Course grades are handed in to the Administrative Assistant every eight weeks, and students receive a transcript of their grades for each eight-week session. Students also meet with their instructors to review the objectives for their current level and discuss what areas need improvement before they can advance to a higher level. At this time self-assessment forms are also given to students to help them establish goals for their learning. Students who are not performing satisfactorily during the session are referred to the ELP Director for advice and necessary action. This may result in tutoring or placement in a more appropriate level class. If the student is not working up to his/her ability or is not attending class, a “warning letter” may be issued. Only in rare cases is the student asked to leave the program.

**VI. Schedule:**

The following schema of a typical IEP day illustrates the IEP curriculum. See the legend for an explanation of the language skills and systems that receive major focus in each level.

<i>Level</i>	<i>1 &amp; 2 Beginning*</i>	<i>3 Intermediate</i>	<i>4 High Intermediate</i>	<i>5 Advanced</i>
Core: 9-11:30 M-F	Aural/oral G and V focus RWV to supplement oral work	Integrated Skills	Integrated Skills	Integrated Skills
Language lab or skill development classes ½ hour daily				
Lunch				
Oral Skills: 1-3:05 MWF	Listening focus	PLS	PLS	PLS
Lang. Lab: 1 hour/week				
Special Topics 1 – 3:30 TTH	Conversational focus	e.g: Film, Current Events, Grammar Hospital, Academic Skills, TOEFL Prep,		
Coffee Hour is held after classes Wednesday afternoon				

Legend: RWV = Reading, Writing, and Vocabulary  
PLS = Pronunciation, Listening and Speaking

\* We have very few beginning students. Beginning level students often follow an individualized tutorial until they can be integrated fully into an IEP class.

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## Curriculum Summary

### Course Descriptions

The following general course descriptions are overviews of the courses offered. More specific details can be found on the performance objectives in the Curriculum Guidelines. We offer five levels of instructions (High Beginner, Low Intermediate, Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced).

#### High Beginner (100 level courses)

Core: (Reading/Writing/Grammar): This integrated skills class meets daily from 9-11:30 a.m. In this class students work at level on skills in these areas. In reading, students work on vocabulary development, identifying main ideas and details, beginning identification of suffixes, prefixes, and root words, parts of speech, basic transitional expressions including connectors, and fluency practice. In writing students work on sentence level expression, paragraph discourse (especially description and narration), including topic sentence identification and writing. In grammar students cover a range of structures including simple present, present progressive, simple past, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, possessives, prepositions of space and time, and the future with be going to. Students work in pairs, groups, or as a whole group. Homework is given daily. A lab accompanies this class and provides individual practice in grammar and/or reading.

Oral Skills: This class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1-3:05. Students work at level on listening and speaking skills. In listening, students respond to teacher-guided activities designed to improve skill in this area, including both bottom-up and top-down activities such as minimal pair discrimination and identifying the main idea respectively. In speaking students will use appropriate classroom language for asking for information, giving brief narratives on topics studied in class, use appropriate structures, use correct social formulae. In lab and class students will work on pronunciation, including both accuracy of sounds and practice in stress and intonation.

Special Topics: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30. In these classes students practice all language skills in a content area. At the high beginner level, depending upon enrollment, students may have a Conversation/Vocabulary class, take field trips to local destinations of interest, or work in a skill area prepared by the teacher. Courses are designed for student interest and vary through the semester.

**Low Intermediate (200 level courses)**

Core: (Reading/Writing/Grammar): This integrated skills class meets daily from 9-11:30 a.m. In this class students work at level on skills in these areas. In reading, students continue to work on vocabulary development, identifying main ideas and details, word attack skills, and recognizing cohesion in texts. In writing students continue to work on sentence level, with increased accuracy, and learn to expand sentences through phrases and clauses. Students continue to work on paragraph development, including writing topic sentences and with guidance write paragraphs of process and opinion.. In grammar students cover a range of structures including tense review, modals of advice and possibility, and use of discourse markers for addition and contrast. Students work in pairs, groups, or as a whole group and activities are planned to include both oral and written practice. Homework is given daily. A lab accompanies this class and provides individual practice in grammar and/or reading.

Oral Skills: This class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1-3:05. Students work at level on listening and speaking skills. In listening, students continue to practice identifying and discriminating sounds, stress and intonation patterns. Students listen for main ideas and identify main ideas in a conversation. In speaking students will continue to learn and practice appropriate classroom language, and will initiate, maintain, and close a conversation of a general nature. Students will produce spontaneous language in response to such prompts as travel, health, geography, and holidays, and provide descriptions of objects/functions, or simple processes. In lab and class students will continue work on pronunciation, including both accuracy of sounds and practice in stress and intonation. In class short presentations begin.

Special Topics: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30. In these classes students practice all language skills in a content area. At the low-intermediate level depending upon enrollment, students may choose such topics as film, conversation, oral presentation, or Vermont topics. Courses are designed for student interest and vary through the semester.

**Intermediate (300 level courses)**

Core: (Reading/Writing/Grammar) This integrated skills class meets daily from 9-11:30 a.m. In this class students work at level on skills in these areas. In reading, students continue to work on vocabulary development, identifying main ideas and details, word attack skills, and recognize cohesion in texts. Students also work with graphs and charts to discover meaning. Students continue to work on dictionary skills. In writing students continue to work at sentence level, now producing complex sentences using a wider range of subordinating conjunctions including condition and concession. Students continue to work on paragraph development, and are now expected to write both topic and concluding sentences. Writing is marked by a wider range of discourse markers. Text types include compare/contrast, cause and effect, and writing to describe a graph. Paraphrasing begins. In grammar at this level students continue with verb tense review and comparison, practice an increased range of modals, work on phrasal verbs, and begin work on gerunds and infinitives. Students work in pairs, groups, or as a whole group and activities are planned to include both oral and written practice. Homework is given daily. A lab accompanies this class and provides individual practice in grammar and/or reading.

Oral Skills: This class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1-3:05. Students work at level on listening and speaking skills. In listening, students continue to practice identifying and discriminating sounds, stress and intonation patterns. Students listen for main ideas and identify main ideas in a short conversation. In speaking students will continue to learn and practice appropriate classroom language, and will initiate, maintain, and close a conversation of a general nature. Students will produce spontaneous language in response to such prompts as travel, health, geography, and holidays, and provide descriptions of objects/functions, or simple processes. Students listen to academic texts for main idea and detail. In lab and class students will continue work on pronunciation, including both accuracy of sounds and practice in stress and intonation.

Special Topics: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30. In these classes students practice all language skills in a content area. At the intermediate level depending upon enrollment, students may choose such topics as film, current events, oral presentation skills, drama. Skills area topics such as TOEFL prep are offered beginning at this level. All courses are designed for student interest and vary through the semester.

**High-Intermediate (400 level courses)**

Core: (Reading/Writing/Grammar) This integrated skills class meets daily from 9-11:30 a.m. In this class, students work at level on skills in these areas. In reading, students continue to work on skimming and scanning skills. Students continue to practice inferring meanings of words from the text at this higher level. Students continue work on a wider range of discourse markers and look at cohesive ties within texts. In writing students produce complex sentences with a wide range of subordinating conjunctions, and use discourse markers to express comparison/contrast, cause/effect/ opinion. Students write texts or reports of 150-200 words using text or graphical prompts. Essay writing begins. In grammar students review and expand on verb tense knowledge and gerunds and infinitives, learn and practice passive voice, study conditional sentences and indirect speech. As at the lower levels, pair, small group and whole group activities are planned to include both oral and written practice. Homework is given daily. A lab accompanies this class and provides individual practice in grammar and/or reading.

Oral Skills: This class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1-3:05. Students work at level on listening and speaking skills. In listening, students identify topics and themes in formal lectures and identify elements that contribute to the communicative effects of a spoken text. Students practice listening for phrases which signal sequence, process, definition, cause and effect, compare/contrast. In speaking students will continue to learn and practice appropriate classroom language and will be able to express agreement or disagreement in academic contexts. Students will present a talk of an academic nature of 5 minutes, using notes and aids.. In lab and class students will continue work on pronunciation, including both accuracy of sounds and practice in stress and intonation.

Special Topics: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30. In these classes students practice all language skills in a content area. At the high-intermediate level depending upon enrollment, students may choose such topics as film, debate, literature discussion, oral presentation and current events. Skill area topics such as Academic Skills, TOEFL prep, and pronunciation are also available. Courses are designed for student interest and vary through the semester.

**Advanced (500 level courses)**

Core: (Reading/Writing/Grammar): This integrated skills class meets daily from 9-11:30 a.m. In this class, students work at level on skills in these areas. In reading, students at the advanced level continue to work on skimming and scanning skills, using authentic texts from newspapers, literature, and other native-speaker texts. Students continue to practice inferring meanings of words from the text at this higher level, and practice bottom-up skills in identifying a wider range of discourse markers and cohesive ties. In writing students produce complex sentences with a wide range of subordinating conjunctions, and use discourse markers to express comparison/contrast, cause/effect, opinion. Students write texts or reports of more than 500 words using text or graphical prompts. Expository essay writing continues, including addressing thesis statement and support. In grammar, students review and expand on verb tense knowledge, passive voice, phrasal verbs, conditionals, and adjective and adverb clauses. Students learn to edit their writing for grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary through peer review as well as multiple drafts and conferences with the teacher. Persuasive writing may be included. Paraphrasing and summarizing are included at this level. As at the lower levels, pair, small group and whole group activities are planned to include both oral and written practice. Homework is given daily. A lab accompanies this class and provides individual practice in grammar and/or reading.

Oral Skills: This class meets Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1-3:05. Students work at level on listening and speaking skills. In listening, students identify topics and themes in formal/academic lectures lasting up to 30 minutes, and continue to identify elements that contribute to the communicative effects of a spoken text. Video lecture and guest speakers are included in the input. Students practice listening for phrases which signal sequence, process, definition, cause and effect, compare/contrast. Students take notes and recall information which can be used for class discussion. In speaking students will continue to learn and practice appropriate classroom language and will be able to express agreement or disagreement in academic contexts. Students will present a talk of an academic nature of 15-30 minutes, using notes and aids. In lab and class students will continue work on pronunciation, including both accuracy of sounds and practice in stress and intonation.

Special Topics: This class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3:30. In these classes students practice all language skills in a content area. At the high-intermediate level depending upon enrollment, students may choose such topics as film, debate, literature discussion, oral presentation and current events. Skill area topics such as Academic Skills and TOEFL prep are also available. Courses are designed for student interest and vary through the semester.