

Oral/Written Proficiency Testing for Fulbright Applications
School of Languages and Cultures
Purdue University

Oral/Written Proficiency Testing

As the demand for proficiency testing expands in both the academic and professional communities, the School of Languages and Cultures at Purdue University, offers oral/written proficiency testing for the Fulbright foreign language evaluation service, which is an important part of the Fulbright scholarship application, as well as other scholarship evaluation testing.

About the Oral/Written Proficiency Test

The Oral/Written Proficiency Test is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability. It is a face-to-face oral interview and a written exam administered by a faculty member of the required language, who determines how well a person speaks, writes, reads, and comprehends a language, by comparing his or her performance of specific communication tasks with criteria levels of the test. The criteria levels are scored 1-5. The exam does not require a linguist.

Since the proficiency test is an assessment of functional speaking ability, independent of any specific curriculum, it is irrelevant when, where, why and under what conditions the candidate acquired his/her speaking ability in the language.

The test takes the form of a conversation between a faculty and the person whose speaking proficiency is being assessed as well as a written portion. The test is interactive and continuously adapts to the speaking abilities of the individual being tested. The test takes less than one hour.

Through a series of personalized questions, the interviewer elicits from the test candidate examples of his or her ability to handle the communication tasks specified for each level of proficiency in order to establish a clear 'floor' and 'ceiling' of consistent functional ability. Testing is currently available in the following languages:

Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish

Test candidates who need assessment in another language may contact the School of Languages and Cultures for assistance.

For more information the Oral/Written Proficiency Test, or to schedule a personal Oral/Written Proficiency Test for a scholarship application or the Fulbright language evaluation, contact:

School of Languages and Cultures
Purdue University
Stanley Coulter Hall 128
765-494-3828
jlhipshe@purdue.edu

Oral/Written Proficiency Test Guidelines:

- Contact the School of Languages and Cultures at the following address:
School of Languages and Cultures
Purdue University
Stanley Coulter Hall 128
765-494-3828
jlhipshe@purdue.edu
- Please specify the scholarship you are applying for and the language test needed as well as the names of professors with whom you've taken courses in the School of Languages and Cultures.
- Contact the School of Languages and Cultures at least three weeks before the scholarship application deadline. Allow a minimum of one week after contacting the department for the test to be scheduled. Tests are administered by appointment only.
- Tests will be administered by a professor of the language to be tested. Tests are administered face-to-face. In exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the department, the test may be administered by phone and electronically.
- The test will determine the skill level of speaking, writing, comprehension, and reading.
- The test is free of charge.

Additional Guidelines for US Student Fulbright Program Applicants and Evaluators:

Applicants

- Follow steps above to schedule a language evaluation.
- Once the evaluation has been scheduled and you have been given the name and email address of the professor conducting the evaluation, *enter that individual's information into the Online Application System.*
- Research/study applicants must provide the professor conducting the evaluation with a draft of their *Statement of Grant Purpose* prior to the evaluation. ETA applicants must give the evaluator the description of the [ETA Program for the country](#) to which they are applying and their *Statement of Grant Purpose*.
- Give evaluators a copy of the completed *Form 7: Language Self Evaluation*.
- Read and follow the instructions for completing foreign language evaluation forms available on the US Student Fulbright Program website: http://us.fulbrightonline.org/preparing_completinglanguage.html. These instructions are also included in this packet.
- Evaluations should be completed on or before the campus application deadline of **4 September 2012**.
- Contact Purdue's Fulbright Program Advisor (FPA), Cristy Gosney at crgosney@purdue.edu or 4-1727 with questions.

Evaluators

- Please ensure your name and email address is provided to the applicant. He or she will enter this information into the Online Application System, triggering an automated email to be sent to the address you provided. That email will contain [instructions](#) for accessing the Online Application System and completing [Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation](#).
- Prior to meeting with you, the applicant should provide you with a draft of the *Statement of Grant Purpose*, and those applying to teach English will also provide you with the description of the [ETA Program for the host country](#). All applicants should provide you with a copy of *Form 7: Language Self Evaluation*.
- Evaluations should be completed on or before the campus application deadline of **4 September 2012**. Language evaluations completed after that date may not be available for the campus committee's review resulting in an incomplete evaluation of the applicant.
- If the evaluator determines that the student's skills do not suffice for the project, s/he should recommend specific coursework that would help the student to address the proficiency deficit.
- IIE will only accept evaluations via the Online Application System. Evaluations may not be submitted by email, fax or post.
- *Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation* is a confidential document. However, please consider discussing with the applicant his or her strengths and weaknesses in relation to the proposed project so that the applicant may take the necessary steps to improve.
- Contact Purdue's Fulbright Program Advisor (FPA), Cristy Gosney at crgosney@purdue.edu or 4-1727 with questions.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE FORMS

A **Foreign Language Evaluation (FLE)** and **Language Self Evaluation** are required for many countries where English is not the official language and/or English is not commonly spoken.

Language proficiency is generally determined by the nature of the Fulbright project, but some countries require proficiency even if language proficiency is not required to complete the project.

Applicants to these countries are expected to have proficiency in the host country language. These forms help assess the candidate's background and training in the language. See the [Country Summary](#) for specific information on language requirements.

Keep in mind the following to determine if you are required, or if it is desirable for you, to have language skills for the country to which you are applying. Language skills:

- Must be commensurate with the requirements of your project
- Are an element of the feasibility of your project
- Contribute to the mission of the Fulbright Program to increase mutual understanding, by allowing communication with the people of your host community

We recommend that all students have at least a hospitality level knowledge of the host country language. If you have begun study or plan to study the language in the coming months, you may discuss this in your Statement of Grant Purpose.

The **Foreign Language Evaluation (FLE)** should be completed by a qualified language instructor or, for less commonly taught languages, a faculty member with knowledge of the language.

The FLE must be completed and submitted electronically by the language evaluator in the Online Application System.

The Foreign Language Evaluation (FLE) must be electronically submitted in the separate Online Reference system by the person completing the form (i.e., the person you register). This submission can take place before or after the applicant submits the Online Application, but no later than the application deadline.

Instructions for the Foreign Language Evaluator

Applicants should provide their Language Evaluators with written instructions on completing the Foreign Language Evaluation. [Click here](#) for instructions for evaluators on completing [Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation](#)

Instructions for Applicants

There are four **steps** in validating your language skills in the Fulbright Application. Be sure to review all four steps before proceeding.

STEP 1: Determine what forms you need to submit

You are required to complete **Form 7: Language Self-Evaluation**, in the Online Application and to have a **Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation (FLE)**, see Step 2, if any of the following apply:

1. The Country Summary indicates that proficiency in the host country language is required.
2. Language proficiency in a language is needed for the successful completion of your proposed project.
3. You have proficiency beyond the basic level of the host country language.

If you are not able to access the following forms in the online application, you may need to "Update Your Answers" to Preliminary Questions #3 or #4 at the beginning of the application and to answer "Yes".

STEP 2: Complete Language Forms in the Online Application

If required, you will complete Form 7 and/or Form7A (CLEA Language Form) in the Online Application.

Form 7: Language Self Evaluation As stated above, applicants must complete **Form 7: Language Self Evaluation** when applying to a country where English is not commonly spoken **and** knowledge of the host country language is required. Additionally, if your project requires knowledge of another language, you must complete **Form 7** and have an **FLE (Form 8)** completed for that language, **whether or not the Country Summary indicates the language is required for application.**

- The Online Application System will allow you to complete up to two Language Self Evaluations *
- Even if the language required by the host country is your mother tongue or your first language, you must submit both Language Forms **7** and **8**.

For applicants who do not have knowledge of and/or training in the host country language: Complete the online **Form 7: Language Self Evaluation** and indicate your plans for obtaining a hospitality/survival level of the language to accomplish the program's goal of increasing mutual understanding. Since you have no knowledge of the language,

Form 8 from a language evaluator is not necessary.

For applicants who have knowledge of the language: If you are applying to a country where English is not commonly spoken and/or if you are required to have knowledge of the host country or another language, *complete Form 7: Language Self Evaluation* in the online application. Your language evaluator must complete and submit **Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation** electronically.

*** For applicants who need an evaluation in more than one language:** If you require evaluation in a second foreign language, be sure to indicate this in Preliminary Question #3. You will complete a second Form 7(2): Language Self-Evaluation and have a second Foreign Language Evaluation (Form 8) completed.

[Form 7A: Critical Language Enhancement Award Supplementary Statement](#) Applicants who are requesting consideration for the Critical Language Enhancement Award **must** complete this form in addition to Forms 7 and 8. [Click here](#) for a list of eligible languages and other requirements for this award.

[Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation \(FLE\)](#) must be completed electronically in the Online Application System by the person you have asked to be your language evaluator. See Step 4 for instructions on registering the Language Evaluator

STEP 3: Guidelines for Choosing and Preparing a Language Evaluator

As required, you will identify and ask a person to complete **Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation**

- The Fulbright Program prefers that the **Foreign Language Evaluation** be completed by a college or university faculty member.
- Language evaluations may be conducted by someone who has taught you and knows your language ability.
- If you do not have access to a former language instructor, you may ask any college-level instructor in the language to conduct an evaluation of your language skills and to complete Form 8.
- If the language is not commonly taught in the U.S. and a professional teacher of the language is not available within a reasonable distance, the evaluation may be completed by a native-speaker, who is not a family member, or a faculty member with knowledge of the language.

Materials to provide your Language Evaluator:

- **Research/Study applicants** should provide the evaluator with a summary of their **Statement of Grant Purpose**.
- **ETA applicants** should give the evaluator the description of the [ETA Program for the country](#) to which they are applying and a summary of their **Statement of Grant Purpose**.

STEP 4: Instructions for Registering Language Evaluators

In the Embark Fulbright Online Application System, you can register your referees and language evaluators so that they can submit the reference or FLE electronically. Foreign Language Evaluations must be completed and submitted electronically. Be sure to let the evaluator know this process and ask them to check their email for an email from “Embark Online

Recommendations.”

Here are the steps for registering your Language Evaluator in the Online Application:

1. In Preliminary Questions, be sure to indicate if you need a **Form 7: Language Self-Evaluation and Foreign Language Evaluation**. If you need a second language evaluator when a second language is required for your project, be sure to indicate this in the Preliminary Question 3. However, we will only accept one FLE for the same language. If you do not see Form 7 in your online application, click on the link in the upper right-hand box **update my answers** and click the correct button in question 3.
2. **Register your Evaluator in Step F: Reference/Evaluation:** Click the “Register Referee/ Evaluator” button and complete contact information for the evaluator.
3. **Make sure that your evaluator knows** that you have registered them for electronic submission of the FLE.
4. If the evaluation is based on an in-person interview, make arrangements to meet with the evaluator, allowing them to complete and submit the **Foreign Language Evaluation** electronically prior to the application submission deadline.
5. **Check the online status of your References/Evaluation(s) frequently.** You may view the status of the references/evaluation for registered evaluators at any time by logging into the online application and going to *Step F: Reference/Evaluation*. You will be informed by email when a registered evaluator submits an online reference on your behalf.
6. If the **evaluator did not receive the registration email** or loses their login information, you can contact Technical Support via email from the Online Application and give Tech Support the person’s name and email address.

Note that you have the option to register either Referees or a Language Evaluator. ***It is important that you take care to register the Evaluator for the FLE so that they receive the correct form.***

If your Language Evaluator is also a Referee: The online system only allows you to register a person with the same email address once (whether for a reference or FLE.) You have two options.

- If the evaluator/referee has another email address, you may use the second address to register them for the second form.
- If the evaluator/referee does not have a second email address, decide whether you want the person to complete the FLE or reference. Then, ask another person to provide you with the Language Evaluation or reference.