English Connections Program

The English Connections Program is an ESOL program for the employees of the University of Maryland, College Park. Participants learn and practice skills and strategies to improve their ability to read, write, listen, and speak for practical purposes - life and work.

All UMD employees are eligible to apply, regardless of employment status.

The ESOL program consists of:

- FUTURE assessment to determine placement and progress.
- 4 levels of English (Intro, 1, 2, and 3)
- A sequential semester program with 36 hours of instruction per semester.
- A non-sequential summer program to reinforce language retention.
- Content that approaches language learning as a tool for improved work functionality, and worker inclusion, satisfaction, equitable treatment, recognition and empowerment.
- A learning environment that fosters a positive work culture of community, inclusion, support and celebration of diversity.
- Classes are FREE and offered during the mornings and afternoons.

**ESOL Placement Test**
The placement test is required for everyone interested in taking ESOL classes through our program. It consists of a General Test (60 questions), and a Speaking/Listening Test.

**Registration**
For more information, please call (301) 405-1248 or email: acofresi@umd.edu

**Frequently Asked Questions**

- **How are participants selected?**
  University Human Resources (UHR) accepts participants on a first-come/first-served basis. Our determination of who is placed in a class is based on the following:
    1. Placement score
    2. Schedule availability/time preference
    3. Space available in a class that matches the test level of a student.
  In the case that there are more than 12 people with the same assessment score and the same time availability, UHR will prioritize those who have worked at the University for the longest time.

- **Who is eligible to apply for classes?**
  All UMD employees, regardless of employment status, are eligible to apply: Exempt, Non-Exempt, and Contingent employees.

- **Do I have to pay for these classes?**
  No. Classes are currently free to the students.

- **What are the guidelines regarding Work Release Time and Zone Limitations?**
  Each department has its own practices about how work release time is managed.
  Each unit has procedures to determine which employees are able to participate in programs without having an impact on operational procedures.
  Details regarding work release time and zone limitations are to be determined by employees and their supervisors.
Program Description

The goal of the English Connections Program (ESOL) is to provide English language learning opportunities to employees so that they are better able to:

- Communicate with supervisors and coworkers.
- Understand and follow general work-related tasks, guidelines and procedures.
- Express ideas and opinions, provide feedback and make requests.
- Communicate and connect with the larger campus community and access campus resources.
- Engage with faculty, staff and students.
- Participate in campus activities, events and decisions.

Courses Offered

The course levels offered each year are determined by applicants’ placement scores, which correspond with the standard Future ESOL levels:

- Intro
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Due to the number of instructional hours needed to complete a proficiency level, each level has been split into two (2) sections, one per semester.

Each class meets twice a week (1.5 hours per day, for a total of 3 hours per week), on Mondays and Wednesdays - or- Tuesdays and Thursdays.

In order to accommodate work schedules, classes are offered during mornings and afternoons. The timings for the classes (at different levels) are:

- 9:00am - 10:30am
- 11:00am - 12:30pm
- 1:30pm - 3:00pm

Commitment

Participants MUST devote their time twice each week for the entire semester. To remain in good standing in the program, they must:

- attend each ESOL class.
- arrive on time.
- remain for the entire class and semester.

In the event that participants are scheduled to be off or are on leave on the day of class, notice must be provided in advance (except in cases of emergency).

Summer Courses

ESOL summer classes are available but do not follow the sequence. They last 10 weeks (June-August) and focus on English language retention as well as reinforcement of skills taught during the academic year.

Course Materials

Future is an engaging four (4) level adult English language course. It serves students’ real-life needs by addressing what is most critical to the students’ success in their personal and family lives, in the workplace, their academic pursuits, and as members of the community.

Future: English for Results provides outstanding coverage of life skills competencies. It bases language teaching on actual situations students are likely to encounter and equips them with the skills they need to achieve their goals.

The student books are provided to participants with an interactive Practice Plus CD-ROM that enables them to persist by providing multiple pathways to learning.

Assessment

Participants’ progress is determined by Future test scores and assessment tools/quizzes, their ability to perform classroom tasks, and teacher assignments. At the end of the semester, teachers submit a written assessment of their students’ progress to University Human Resources (UHR).