

# TESL

# REPORTER

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## A Comparison Between TOEFL and Michigan Test Scores and Student Success in (1) Freshman English and (2) Completing a College Program

Original data consisted of a list of 598 non-native English speaking students who entered the Church College of Hawaii during the years from September 1960 through February 1972 whose records included entering TOEFL and/or Michigan Test Scores. Students were dropped from the list who did not have scores for both tests or who did not have available Freshman English grades or a graduation record. This left 402 students for the study.

Charts No. 1 and 2 show the distribution of these students and the total entering students during this time.

This article was delivered at the national NAFSA Convention held in Atlanta, Georgia, May 2-5, 1972.

The total number of students in the study with admissible data who entered during the years 1959 through 1966 was 69. This group would normally have completed the four years required for graduation. There were 23 graduates, 10 transfers to other institutions, 15 were academically dismissed from the College, 16 dropped out (some with academic warning) and 5 are still in school.

Chart No. 3 shows a comparison of years in school from entrance until graduation with the entrance tests.

Of the 23 graduates one graduated in three years, three in four years, nine in five years, nine in six years, and two took seven years to complete their college work. One student was given an honorable dismissal with completed work but not a diploma because she failed to pass the required English Proficiency exam.

(Beginning Fall 1969 the English requirement was changed. Instead of two semesters of required Freshman English and a Junior Proficiency Exam, four semesters of English with a grade of C or better [with no

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## Chart No. 1

NUMBER OF ENTERING STUDENTS USED IN STUDY

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Ent. Students	1	3	3	14	45	4	1	10	34	144	143	123	13

exam] became part of the general graduation requirements.)

Most foreign students at the Church College of Hawaii come on advanced loans and earn all their college expenses by working at the college (all gardening and janitorial service is done by students with supervisory help), the Polynesian Cultural Center (opened in 1963), or in the pineapple fields and canneries. This additional work load might account for many who took additional time to complete their college work. However, all carried at least the twelve hours required by immigration while they were in school.

Figures for the students in the study who entered CCH from 1967 through Spring 1972

with their current status are shown on *Charts No. 4A & 4B* See *Chart No. 5*

A comparison of TOEFL total scores and Michigan equated scores shows the following:

The highest TOEFL score was 688 with a matching Michigan equated 86 and Michigan aural 87. The next highest TOEFL was 646 with a Michigan score of 98 equated and an aural of 95. (This was the highest Michigan score.) The lowest TOEFL score was 308 with a matching 43 Michigan equated and an aural of 50 while the lowest Michigan score was an equated 35, aural 47, with a TOEFL of 330. There was a wide discrepancy between the two scores on all levels as can be seen by *Charts 6 & 7*

## Chart No. 2

TOTAL ENROLLMENT BY COUNTRY AND NATIONALITY

YEAR	Western Samoa	American Samoa	Tonga	Tahiti	Fiji	New Zealand	Australia	China	Japan	Other Polynesian	Other Asian	Hawaii	Mainland	Total Enrollment
1956-57		1	4		1						1	175	41	223
1957-58														323
1958-59		7	7			2		1	2			208	39	266
1959-60		12	19		3	14		5	3		7	337	138	538
1960-61		10	28	3	3	27		16	4		3	371	98	563
1961-62		17	33	4	1	32		24	4		1	621	125	862
1962-63		32	57	7	9	21	4	16	7		1	659	119	932
1963-64		32	63	11	5	13	4	10	8		6	596	117	865
1964-65		51	78	15	7	12	3	12	4			718	109	1009
1965-66		41	70	8	13	17	2	14	5		13	558	140	889
1966-67		40	62	18	6	27	13	21	8		3	664	174	1036
1967-68		44	48	19	7	35	16	19	9		8	671	220	
1968-69		50	50	28	9	31	14	14	6		13	706	192	
1969-70	43	25	71	29	17	57	20	16	10	3	15	674	231	1211
1970-71	83	22	110	21	33	52	24	18	32	3	51	611	247	1307

**Chart No. 3**

TOEFL Test Scores for graduates range from a low of 372 to a high of 624.

Michigan Test Scores are from 57 equated to a high of 67 equated.

A comparison of years in school from entrance until graduation with entrance tests follows:

TOEFL test score 111  
 Mich. test scores \*(11)

Years in School	No. of Students	Low							High
3	1	530							530 (same)
4	2	426 (58)							546
5	9	374	390	400	442	466 (44)	468	488	518 (69)
6	9	372 (60)	384	392	470	482	520	524	624
7	2	400							542 (61)

\*When directly underneath TOEFL Scores are for the same student.

**Chart No. 4A**

		Total	In School	Transfer	Dropped	Academic Dismissal	Non Academic Dismissal
1967	No of Students	8	3	2	2	2	
	High TOEFL		530 (80)	438 (43)	530	552 (88)	
	Low TOEFL		482 (71)	336	450 (70)		
	High Mich		80 (530)	43 (438)	70 (450)	88 (552)	
	Low Mich		69			80 (552)	
1968	No of Students	21	6	4	10		1
	High TOEFL		548 (85)	336 (58)	566 (90)		384 (60)
	Low TOEFL		452 (72)		384 (60)		
	High Mich		86 (518)	68	90 (566)		60 (384)
	Low Mich		56	49	60 (384)		
1969	No of Students	103	65	6	21	10	1
	High TOEFL		528 (86)	532 (73)	446	542 (82)	
	Low TOEFL		312 (44)	366	362 (52)		
	High Mich		93	84	77	95	76
	Low Mich		66 (504)	73 (532)	40 (406)	66	



## Chart No. 4B

	Total	In School	Transfer	Dropped	Academic Dismissal	Non Academic Dismissal
1970	No of Students	103	85	4	13	1
	High TOEFL		646 (98)	380 (51)	460	544
	Low TOEFL		312 (62)		314 (43)	
	High Mich		98	74	66 (416)	85
	Low Mich		56	50	43 (314)	
1971	No of Students	79	77		2	
	High TOEFL		688 (86)		498 (74)	
	Low TOEFL		312 (39)		348 (55)	
	High Mich		98		74 (498)	
	Low Mich		39 (312)		55 (348)	
1972	No of Students	18	18			
	(Spring Semester)					
						(used for TOEFL - MICH comparisons only)

Correlation on computer runs of TOEFL and Michigan test scores are shown on *Chart 8*. Runs were made on the totals and then individually on the structure, grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension and aural comprehension. The Michigan test does not have a writing score and its aural test is not included in the equated total. Both writing and listening comprehension are included in the total TOEFL score.

## Chart No. 5

The moderate positive correlation in the total scores would have more significance if the individual tests showed more positive correlation.

Evidently the measurement of writing ability -- which is not based on a writing sample but on choices of written passages -- has some weight on the total TOEFL score because the listening comprehension is lower (.499) and so probably does not influence the total for positive higher correlation. Reading

## CCH ENTERING STUDENTS 1967 - 1971

Year	South Pacific	Orient	Hawaii	Mainland & Other	Total
1967	53	12	268	62	495
1968	81	13	301	48	442
1969	51	13	240	144	448
1970	16	67	197	183	611
1971	41	53	150	190	440

comprehension shows but .49 with vocabulary with .662 the highest of the individual scores although it too does not come up to the total score correlation of .662.

336 and 542 TOEFL scores (a 206 point difference). A 68 Michigan has 364 and 510 (a 146 difference).

Note the wide differences in some of these scores:

In using a 450 TOEFL cut off score a student with 412, but an 88 Michigan Test score, could not be accepted. On the other hand, 466 reveals a 44 Michigan score--far too low to succeed in Freshman English.

Beginning levels show a 39 and 40 Michigan with 312-406 in the corresponding TOEFL scores (a differences of 94 points).

A cut off at 500 yields a 510 with a 68 and a 500 at 89--again a vast difference.

A 44 Michigan equated score has both a 312 and 466 TOEFL score (a 154 point difference). A 54 Michigan has a 316 and a 464 (a 148 point difference). A 58 has a 355 and 538 (a 183 point difference).

Correlation coefficients on the two entrance tests by countries reveal some interesting statistics. Note that Japan (.2129) does not even show any significant correlation.

The widest difference is found at 61 Michigan--the crucial intermediate stage--with

In our English Language Institute at the Church College of Hawaii we have found that the Michigan Test scores except for Test D are very reliable for student placement.

Chart No. 6

EQUATED MICHIGAN TEST SCORES WITH COMPARATIVE TOEFL TOTALS

35	330	56	316	62	312	67	416	73	464	83	476
35	330	56	394	62	398	67	466	73	440	84	488
39	350	56	316	62	370	68	428	73	464	84	488
39	312	56	394	63	420	68	408	74	498	85	548
40	406	57	366	63	432	68	498	74	502	85	544
41	360	57	452	63	410	68	408	74	502	85	544
42	332	57	368	63	432	68	498	75	472	86	528
42	332	57	388	63	434	68	408	75	510	86	518
43	308	57	368	63	408	68	408	75	510	86	528
43	314	57	388	63	388	68	382	76	548	86	590
43	314	58	538	63	442	68	510	76	468	86	688
44	312	58	355	63	432	68	364	76	456	86	518
44	466	58	355	63	434	68	510	76	450	86	528
44	466	59	364	63	408	68	364	76	452	86	590
45	354	59	380	63	388	69	366	76	452	86	688
45	446	59	364	63	442	69	368	77	508	87	532
45	446	59	366	64	382	69	416	78	490	88	530
48	314	59	364	64	460	69	446	78	424	88	494
48	342	59	380	64	370	69	368	78	440	88	552
48	342	59	364	64	446	69	446	78	482	88	528
49	334	59	366	64	382	69	368	78	494	88	540
49	330	60	384	64	460	69	446	78	424	88	526
50	348	60	384	64	370	70	420	78	440	88	478
50	366	60	358	64	446	70	450	78	482	88	562
50	348	60	358	65	446	70	406	78	494	88	526
50	366	61	458	65	386	70	406	79	374	88	478
50	348	61	394	65	430	70	388	79	488	88	562
51	380	61	400	65	436	70	388	79	374	89	500
52	362	61	442	65	436	70	450	79	374	98	500
52	362	61	370	66	426	70	440	80	476	90	532
52	390	61	410	66	406	70	406	80	512	90	566
52	452	61	374	66	460	70	406	80	530	90	566
52	390	61	336	66	398	71	460	81	534	91	538
52	452	61	372	66	398	71	442	81	502	91	568
53	364	61	376	66	388	71	478	81	538	91	568
53	392	61	416	66	416	71	492	81	502	93	558
53	374	61	542	66	376	71	406	81	538	93	566
53	360	61	376	66	388	71	406	82	502	93	558
54	464	61	416	66	416	72	456	82	522	93	566
54	316	61	542	66	376	72	430	82	542	94	600
54	312	62	398	67	430	72	430	82	522	94	600
54	312	62	312	67	430	72	444	83	472	95	614
55	348	62	398	67	416	72	452	83	542	95	614
55	348	62	370	67	466	72	460	83	476	98	646

## Chart No. 7

## COMPARATIVE TOEFL TOTALS WITH EQUATED MICHIGAN TEST SCORES

308 43	366 69	390 52	432 63	464 54	526 88
312 39	366 57	392 53	432 63	464 73	528 88
312 44	366 50	394 61	432 63	466 67	528 86
312 62	366 59	394 56	434 63	466 44	528 86
312 54	366 50	394 56	434 63	466 67	528 86
312 62	366 59	398 62	436 65	466 44	530 88
312 54	368 69	398 66	436 65	468 76	530 80
314 48	368 69	398 66	440 73	472 75	532 87
314 43	368 57	398 62	440 70	472 83	532 90
314 43	368 69	398 62	440 78	476 80	534 81
316 54	368 57	400 61	440 78	476 83	538 91
316 56	370 61	406 70	442 61	476 83	538 58
316 56	370 64	406 70	442 71	478 71	538 81
330 49	370 62	406 66	442 63	478 88	538 81
330 35	370 64	406 40	442 63	478 88	540 88
330 35	370 62	406 71	444 72	482 78	542 82
332 42	372 61	406 70	446 65	482 78	542 83
332 42	374 79	406 71	446 69	488 79	542 83
334 49	374 53	406 70	446 45	488 84	542 61
342 48	374 79	408 68	446 69	490 78	544 85
342 48	374 79	408 68	446 45	492 71	544 85
348 50	376 61	408 63	446 64	494 88	548 76
348 50	376 66	408 63	446 69	494 78	548 85
348 55	376 61	410 61	450 70	494 78	552 88
348 50	376 66	410 63	450 70	498 68	558 93
348 55	380 51	416 69	450 76	498 74	558 93
350 39	380 59	416 67	452 57	500 89	562 88
354 45	380 59	416 66	452 72	500 89	562 88
355 58	382 68	416 61	452 76	502 82	566 90
355 58	382 64	416 67	452 52	502 81	566 93
358 60	382 64	416 66	452 72	502 74	566 90
358 60	384 60	416 61	452 76	502 81	566 93
360 41	384 60	420 70	452 52	502 74	568 91
360 53	386 65	420 63	456 72	508 77	568 91
362 52	388 70	424 78	456 76	510 75	590 86
362 52	388 70	424 78	458 61	510 75	590 86
364 53	388 66	426 66	460 71	510 68	600 94
364 59	388 57	428 68	460 66	510 68	600 94
364 59	388 63	430 67	460 64	512 80	614 95
364 68	388 66	430 67	460 72	518 86	614 95
364 59	388 57	430 72	460 64	518 86	646 98
364 59	388 63	430 72	460 72	522 82	646 98
364 68	390 52	430 65	464 73	522 82	688 86
				526 88	688 86

Only once in 5 years of testing have we had a difference when students were retested on alternate tests that was significant enough for replacement in classes. This student we later found had been traveling without sleep for two nights before testing and had also been very ill the previous night.

We have not found individual scores of TOEFL helpful in placement in classes although students with over 550 have never had to take ELI courses. Although there is a moderate correlation between the totals of the two tests (.06) this would not be helpful in substituting TOEFL for Michigan in placement. Correlations show that the individual TOEFL test scored in vocabulary would be the only one that is helpful for

diagnostic purposes.

TOEFL and Michigan test scores show little influence on success in Freshman English.

*Chart 10* shows the highest and lowest TOEFL and Michigan equated scores for each grade category: A, B, C, D, X, F, Withdraw. A student may be given an X the first time he takes a course if he has put forth an effort to succeed and does not warrant a passing grade, while an F is given to a student who fails because of lack of effort or to a student who retakes the class and again cannot make a passing grade. There has been no distinction made between withdraw passing and withdraw failing on the chart.

All available grades in Freshman English



Chart No. 8

Chart No. 9A

TOEFL - MICHIGAN TEST CORRELATIONS

	<u>Means</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
<u>TOTAL SCORES</u>		
TOEFL	435.065	91.6058
Michigan	67.0326	15.6533
Correlation Coefficient - .66246		
<u>LISTENING COMPREHENSION</u>		
TOEFL	47.6778	10.5135
Michigan	70.2778	16.9353
Correlation Coefficient - .449569		
<u>STRUCTURE - GRAMMAR</u>		
TOEFL	44.5065	8.41973
Michigan	28.4351	10.1787
Correlation Coefficient - .524011		
<u>VOCABULARY</u>		
TOEFL	41.3766	9.26663
Michigan	24.5844	7.00672
Correlation Coefficient - .615167		
<u>READING COMPREHENSION</u>		
TOEFL	43.6645	8.23733
Michigan	10.9671	7.96966
Correlation Coefficient - .493629		

were correlated with both TOEFL and equated Michigan Scores. First by total scores in all classes and then for each class separately. These were 111, 112 (the original Freshman English requirement) then 100A, 100B, 201, and 202 (the new general requirement). Withdraws and X grades were considered with the Fs for this part of the study. Only in the beginning classes (111 until Fall 1969 and 100A after that time) was there a significant positive correlation. These were significant on the .001 level with both the TOEFL and the Michigan tests. 112, 100B, and 201 showed no significance, but surprisingly 202 showed a significant negative correlation of .05. This would indicate that the further a student progresses in his college English the less his original

TOEFL - MICHIGAN TEST CORRELATIONS BY COUNTRIES

	<u>Means</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
<u>SAMOA</u>		
TOEFL	463.914	67.034
Michigan	72.0286	14.7558
Correlation Coefficient - .549883		
<u>TONGA</u>		
TOEFL	417.135	65.6051
Michigan	64.2432	14.6688
Correlation Coefficient - .690618		
<u>JAPAN</u>		
TOEFL	379.654	127.22
Michigan	57.4615	12.4619
Correlation Coefficient - .212947		
<u>CHINA</u>		
TOEFL	501.471	63.7708
Michigan	77.5	11.309
Correlation Coefficient - .664603		
<u>FIJI</u>		
TOEFL	453.2	57.2991
Michigan	71.4	4.21898
Correlation Coefficient - .80002		

Chart No. 9B

TOEFL - MICHIGAN TEST CORRELATIONS BY COUNTRIES

	<u>Means</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
<u>KOREA</u>		
TOEFL	396	67.0224
Michigan	54.6667	6.02769
Correlation Coefficient - .391099		
<u>TAHITI</u>		
TOEFL	408.5	91.6715
Michigan	62.25	19.6023
Correlation Coefficient - .972655		

English ability would influence his grades. Total grades for all classes and test scores had no significance. In this study no attempt was made to correlate figures on students who had had English Language Institute classes or other special English classes for non-native speakers. I have these figures and will probably make a report on them at a

**Continued on Page 9.**



## TOEFL and Michigan Test Scores

Continued from Page 7

later date.

From this study I would conclude that:

1. While both TOEFL and Michigan Tests measure a student's English ability, their correlation is only moderate for total scores, with considerable variation in individual categories, and could not be used interchangeably for student evaluation or placement.

2. Neither TOEFL nor Michigan Test Scores have significance on a non-native English speaking student's success in college work. Although the grades in the first English class taken reflect English ability as shown by these tests neither further English classes nor graduation, which are the real goals of a college student, show any correlation.

### Chart No. 10

GRADES IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH

	A	B	C	D	X	F	W
TOEFL HIGH	510 (75)	660 (98)	624	542 (61)	566 (81)	624	500
TOEFL LOW	366 (59)	408 (68)	312 (62)	374 (61)	382 (64)	254	376
MICH HIGH	98	98 (660)	98	71 (478)	93	90 (566)	72
MICH LOW	53 (440)	54	38	61 (374)	47	57 (452)	50

Figures in ( ) denote enter TOEFL or Mich Test Score for same student.