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# New NKU course helps non-native English speakers

## Program combines classes, experiences

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

**HIGHLAND HEIGHTS** - Northern Kentucky University is widening its doors to students from around the globe by introducing a new intensive English program. The eight-week program will be held five times a year to help foreign students develop skills and confidence on campus.

"We have mainly two target markets," said Maureen Woods, coordinator for international admissions. "People from the community who would like to improve their English speaking and listening skills and have no interest in pursuing a degree; then a second market of mostly undergraduate students who need to improve their English speaking, listening, writing and reading skills."

Woods said the new course should help expand the pool of foreign students coming to NKU.

**ADVERTISEMENT** "Until now NKU required a minimum of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) 500 score for admission, which means all students admitted can sit in a classroom and theoretically understand what's being said, can take notes and can participate in discussion," said Woods.

"About half of our new non-native speakers have some problems, so we have some English as a second language classes to help them their first one or two semesters. They learn quickly being around Americans."

Dr. Margo Jang, one of the professors who developed the program, said the increased presence of students from abroad will benefit the entire NKU student body.

"International students are a resource for the education of their American classmates," Jang said. "Participating together in campus activities, they cannot help but share their cultures."

"My friendships with international students during my undergraduate days are what attracted me to the field of international education."

"Perhaps Kentucky students can be inspired to study abroad and gain a new perspective on the world."

Jang said program participants will take 15 hours of core courses and five hours of electives aimed at developing speaking, listening fluency, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and intelligibility.

"We plan field trips which will stimulate student interest and provide lively topics for communications," said Jang. "Real-life experience will complement readings and other sources of information."

"For example, we might take students to Sharon Woods Historical Village as part of a unit related to history."

The class will begin this fall.

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