



Administrative Regulation 5:3

Responsible Office: Provost / Dean of Graduate School

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English Language Communication Assessment for Teaching Assistants

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I. Introduction

Teaching assistants from other regions of the world are valuable contributors to the University's educational mission. Teaching assistants for whom English is not their primary language must be able to deliver all lectures and oral presentations in English and communicate effectively with their students according to the requirements of their teaching assignments.

This *Administrative Regulation* establishes the University's policies and procedures for assessing the oral/aural English language skills of teaching assistants for whom English is not their primary language.

II. Entities Affected

This regulation applies to any individual employed as a teaching assistant (TA) for whom English is not their primary language.

III. Policy and Procedures

- A. The Graduate School will maintain a pool of faculty, English as a Second Language (ESL) professionals, and undergraduate students who will undergo training and be drawn upon to assess the English language skills of TAs for whom English is not their native language. Each TA will be assessed by a panel of three

members from the pool of assessors. The panel will be comprised of one faculty member from the TA's teaching unit, one ESL professional, and one undergraduate student.

- B. The student member of the panel will not have access to information in a TA's educational file.
- C. The Graduate School's Office of Graduate Student Professional Enhancement, in consultation with ESL professionals and undergraduate student representatives, will develop and maintain criteria to evaluate the oral/aural comprehensibility in English for the screening of TAs for whom English is not their primary language. These criteria are applicable only after approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. Assessments of the individual's competence in the subject matter will be left to the teaching unit.
- D. After the TA's participation in the language screening, the panel members will make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School on the oral/aural English language skills of each individual in relation to their anticipated teaching responsibilities. Upon the approval of the Dean, the results of the committee's recommendation will be sent to the appropriate teaching unit. The committee may recommend "approval," "conditional approval" (such as suitability for certain teaching assignments but not for others), or "non-approval." Two levels of the "approval" category are possible: one, the highest, allows for primary instructor roles; the other allows for instructional assistant roles only.
- E. Removal of the restrictions imposed by "conditional approval" or the "assistant-only" level of approval category will require rescreening by a different panel of three assessors. The TA's teaching unit may appeal these recommendations through the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean's designee.
- F. TAs not approved for teaching assignments will be assigned duties not requiring classroom or lab student contact. The teaching unit may appeal the committee's recommendations through the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean's designee.
- G. The screening panel will recommend a specific course of action for language development for TAs not approved for teaching or for TAs granted conditional approval.
- H. In accordance with state law, if a TA receives an unsatisfactory evaluation from the assessing panel, they will have one (1) semester to demonstrate their improved ability to an assessing panel. If a TA receives a second unsatisfactory evaluation, their employment as a TA will be terminated. (KRS 164.297)
- I. The Graduate School will keep records of language screening scores and descriptions of orientation and other training programs in which the TAs participate.

References and Related Materials

Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS): 164.297 English Language Proficiency Assessment for Instructors

Administrative Regulations (AR): 5:2 Policies Relevant to Teaching and Research Assistants

Revision History

1/30/1987, 7/30/1990

For questions, contact: [Office of Legal Counsel](#)