

December 1, 1999: New Testing Policy for the Oral English Competence of Graduate Student Instructors

Berkeley: Office of the Dean of the Graduate Division

December 1, 1999

To: Deans, Directors, Department Chairs
Head Graduate Advisers
Professional Developers of GSIs
Faculty Advisers for GSI Affairs

From: Joseph J. Duggan, Associate Dean

Re: New Testing Policy for the Oral English Competence of Graduate Student Instructors

Pursuant to a decision of the Graduate Council, the policy under which potential Graduate Student Instructors are tested for competence in oral English has been changed.

Beginning with fall semester 2000, all those who are not native speakers of English must pass a test of their proficiency in spoken English before they can hold GSI positions. This policy applies to all prospective GSIs, whatever their citizenship and residency status, and whatever subject they will be teaching.

For this purpose, proficiency in spoken English must be demonstrated by passing with a minimum score: (1) the Test of Spoken English (TSE) before coming to Berkeley, or (2) the SPEAK test or the Oral Proficiency Test which are administered by the GSI Teaching and Resource Center. Departments are urged to encourage potential GSIs who are not native speakers of English to take the TSE before they arrive in Berkeley.

Graduate students who have been accepted to UC Berkeley for admission in fall 2000 must respond to the question on the Statement of Intention to Register form:

Do you speak English as a native language?

The Graduate Division will register the responses in its database where the GSI Teaching and Resource Center will have access to them. Reports will be sent to campus units periodically so that you will be aware of the names of students who need to pass a test of oral English proficiency before being permitted to teach.

The new policy is reflected in the Graduate Division publications Graduate Study at Berkeley, Where To Begin, Addendum to the Graduate Adviser's Handbook 1999–2000, General Catalog 1999–2000, and in the Graduate Application for Admission and Fellowships, 2000–2001. Information on the new policy can also be found on the Graduate Division Web Site under Admissions in the section on Student Employment and under Academic Appointments.

For further information contact the Graduate Student Instructor Teaching and Resource Center at 642-4456 or gsi@uclink4.berkeley.edu.

cc: Graduate Assistants