(FAQ)

Language Proficiency Requirements for Teaching Assistants

Related Policy:

- *Language Proficiency Requirements for Teaching Assistants*

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **I'm interested in offering a teaching assistantship to a graduate or undergraduate student who is a nonnative speaker of English. What policies pertain to this situation?**
   University policy requires that all prospective nonnative English speaking TAs take the TOEFL iBT. As an alternative, they may take the SETTA test upon arriving at the University. Responsible administrators are to make sure that that prospective TAs meet the proficiency requirements. Results from these exams will determine a student's initial eligibility for a TA assignment. Refer to Appendix: *English Language Proficiency Requirements* for additional information.
2. **How do you define "nonnative" speaker?**

3. ~~University policy considers a nonnative speaker to be a person who grew up in a home where the primary language was not English. This applies to US citizens and to those who have degrees from institutions in the United States or countries where English is the medium of instruction.~~

"A nonnative speaker of English is a multilingual person for whom the primary language in the home during childhood was not English, and who received all or most of their elementary, secondary, and undergraduate education outside the United States."

3.4. **How can both graduate and undergraduate students increase their eligibility for TA duties?**

By successfully completing coursework (Foundations, GRAD 5102, GRAD 5105) with the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI) or by improving their score on the SETTA test, students may increase their eligibility for TA duties. At such time a new ELP rating will be assigned.

4.5. **Do departments/colleges have access to the speaking portion of the TOEFL iBT?**

Only a one one-minute sample of the speaking portion is available to departments/colleges. To gain access to a sample, contact CEI at 612-625-3041.

5.6. **What do classroom communication courses entail?**

CEI provides three different courses to meet the various language needs of prospective TAs. In general, courses meet several times a week and include seminar, tutoring, and practice teaching components. There is no charge to the department for these courses.

6.7. **How do I find out the English Language Proficiency rating of students in my department?**

The ELP rating for individual graduate or undergraduate students is available on a password protected web report. To access this information go to UM Reports (*http://www.umreports.umn.edu/umreports/*) log in, click on "Graduate School Reports", then click on "English Language Proficiency / Eligibility for TAs" and select either "by Emplid" and enter students ID number and submit or select " by Academic Plan" click on University of Minnesota – Twin Cities and select one or more ratings and submit. Next select "Desired Academic Plan" and submit.