
PROCESSES FOR THE GTA WORKSHOP AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT

-GRADUATE EDUCATION (GE)-

The GTA workshop and SPEAK testing ensure that we meet the requirement by the Missouri Revised Statute 170.012 to provide a cultural orientation to all graduate students prior to filling a teaching assistant position at Missouri S&T as well as to provide oral English competency testing at no cost to the graduate student. Compliance with this statute is non-negotiable and critical for our operational integrity.

Workshop & SPEAK Test Schedule:

- The GTA workshop is offered three times per year: January, May, and August.
- SPEAK testing is available for approximately three weeks prior to each workshop date.

Communication & Notifications:

- The department contacts (list provided) are copied on all communications sent to the student.
- Department chairs, department contacts, deans, HR, and fiscal managers receive memos regarding the GTA workshop and waiver information.

Nomination of Prospective GTAs:

- Departments submit the names of prospective GTAs via a Google Form.
- GE checks students' accounts in Joe'SS to confirm they are matriculated in a graduate program.
 - If the student is not matriculated, the department is notified that the student cannot be sent GTA workshop information, and the student is placed on a pending list for periodic checks by GE. Departments may contact Enrollment Management to expedite the matriculation process.

Application Form & Evaluation:

- Once matriculation is confirmed, GE emails the student a link to an application form. The form collects information for the English oral competency evaluation and allows the student to select a preferred workshop date.
- GE reviews the responses from the application form, including any relevant test scores (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS, or Slate).
 - English proficiency is evaluated to determine if additional testing is needed. If proficiency is not met, options for meeting the requirement (minimum TOEFL, IELTS, or SPEAK score) are provided, including a link to sign up for the SPEAK test via Calendly.

- S&T's policy for evaluating English oral competency for graduate teaching assistants is attached for reference.

Workshop Date & English Proficiency Status:

- The student's name is added to the list for the workshop date they selected on their application form. For those that have not yet met the English proficiency requirement they are tentatively added until the requirement is met.

SPEAK Test Administration:

- GE administers all SPEAK tests.
 - The SPEAK test is pre-recorded and associated with a booklet (from the Educational Testing Service). The test is conducted via Zoom and recorded.
 - The audio recording is uploaded to Google Drive for grading by the SPEAK raters.
 - SPEAK raters are trained staff members who are paid overtime and have completed the required 10-hour training program.
 - There are currently three SPEAK raters, with a fourth rater in training.
 - Each test is graded by two raters using a standard rubric. If there is a 10-point or more spread between the scores, a third rater reviews the test.
 - The final score is the average of the two raters' scores (or three if a third rater is involved).
 - Raters send the results to GE, and the final scores are emailed to the student.

SPEAK Test Registration:

- There is no limit to the number of times a student may attempt the SPEAK test.
- Students may only sign up for a minimum of two SPEAK tests and cannot register for a subsequent test until they have received the results of the first test.

GTA Workshop Attendance:

- Only students who meet the English proficiency requirement may attend the GTA workshop.
- One and a half weeks before the GTA workshop date, all students must have completed the application form, SPEAK tests must be graded, and results sent to the students. This ensures that workshop numbers are finalized, and information is sent to catering and event reservations.
- Approximately one week before the workshop, students receive the agenda and event details.
- The GTA workshop is a one-day event (see attached draft agenda). Students are required to attend the entire workshop to receive credit for completion.

Completion Certification:

- The day after the workshop, a milestone will be placed on the student's account, indicating successful completion of the workshop.

Master List & Tracking:

- A master list of all students who have completed the GTA workshop is maintained by GE.
- Currently GE does not review the hiring paperwork for graduate students. Departments initiate the process which is then reviewed/approved by the staff in the dean's offices, and then Human Resources. GE has hired a graduate student funding specialist that will be able to assist in this area.

WAIVER INFORMATION

- **GTA Workshop Attendance**
 - Missouri Revised Statute 170.012 states the following: All graduate students prior to filling a teaching assistant position as a graduate student, who have not previously lived in the United States shall be given a cultural orientation to prepare them for such teaching appointment.

Missouri S&T provides cultural orientation through a GTA workshop. Completion of the GTA workshop requires attendance of the workshop in its entirety. Exceptions to allow a student to teach one semester before completing the workshop may be granted in special cases upon approval of the department chair and the Vice Provost of Graduate Education.
- **Waiver of Residency Requirement**
 - Missouri Revised Statute 170.012 states the following: Any graduate student who did not receive both his primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language shall not be given a teaching appointment during his or her first semester of enrollment at any public institution of higher education in the state of Missouri. Exceptions may be granted in special cases upon approval of the chief academic and executive officers of the institution.
- There is no waiver for the English proficiency requirement.
- Students that receive an approved GTA Workshop Attendance waiver are maintained on a list. If the department will be offering the student an assistantship for a future semester, they are required to submit the students' name again using the Google Form. An email is sent to the department from GE prior to the next GTA Workshop to remind them of the students that had a waiver approved but their name was not resubmitted.