

GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF GRADUATE EMPLOYEES FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS NOT THEIR NATIVE/PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Adopted by the University of Oregon Graduate Council, January 1991

Revised Fall 1996, Winter 1998, Spring 2010, and Winter 2022.

References to the Test of Spoken English (TSE) were removed Fall 2014 as that test is no longer available. The terms “Graduate Teaching Fellow” and “GTF” were replaced with “Graduate Employee” and “GE” in 2016.

These guidelines are designed to ensure that Graduate Employees (GEs) are assigned duties that are consistent with their ability to communicate effectively in spoken English. There are no restrictions on the work assignments of GEs who score 50 or above on the SPEAK test. The work assignments of GEs scoring below 50 on the SPEAK, however, are subject to the limitations outlined below. It is the responsibility of the department head, graduate advisor, and/or supervising faculty member to make sure that GEs who have scored below 50 on the SPEAK are assigned responsibilities appropriate to their level of English language proficiency and that they take the required language course(s).

There are also no restrictions on GEs who score 26 or above on the speaking section of the internet-based (iBT) TOEFL exam or who score 7 or above on the speaking band of the IELTS (academic module). However, students who score below 26 on the TOEFL or 7 on the IELTS will be required to take the SPEAK test and follow the guidelines below based on their score on the test.

Departments wishing to assign GE duties that deviate from these guidelines must obtain prior written approval from the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. Requests for waiver of these guidelines should describe in detail the proposed duties and responsibilities of the GE and provide evidence that the quality of instruction they will provide is not impaired by the GE’s ability to communicate effectively in English.

A student who believes their score does not accurately reflect their true oral English skills may contact the SPEAK Test Coordinator, who will either schedule an interview with the student or require the student to attend the first meeting of the required GE training course and participate in a diagnostic oral English test to discern appropriate placement.

SPEAK Score 50-60 (and/or iBT TOEFL Speaking Score of 26+ or IELTS Speaking Score of 7+)

Assignment Guidelines: No restrictions on GE assignment duties. Supervising faculty should supervise/meet with the GE on a regular basis.

Language Training: No further language training is required. GEs desiring language training assistance should contact the American English Institute.

SPEAK Score 45

Assignment Guidelines:

- The GE shall not serve as the primary instructor of a course, except for a language course taught in the GE's native/primary language.
- GEs leading laboratory and discussion sections shall be closely supervised by a faculty member.
- Supervising faculty shall observe on a regular basis the teaching of GEs in order to ensure that they have the speaking proficiency necessary for the satisfactory completion of duties.

Language Training:

- The GE is required to complete GRST 610 (US Teaching Culture & Communication) through the American English Institute and pass the course exit exam demonstrating skills sufficient to achieve a SPEAK score of 50.

- GEs who do not pass the course or do not achieve a SPEAK score of 50 will be required to enroll in additional English language support coursework.

SPEAK Score 40

Assignment Guidelines:

- The GE shall not serve as the primary instructor of a course, except for a language course taught in the GE's native/primary language.
- GEs leading laboratory and discussion sections shall be closely supervised by a faculty member.
- Supervising faculty shall observe on a regular basis the teaching of GEs in order to ensure that they have the speaking proficiency necessary for the satisfactory completion of duties.

Language Training:

- The GE is required to complete GRST 610 (US Teaching Culture & Communication) through the American English Institute and pass the course exit exam demonstrating skills sufficient to achieve a SPEAK score of 50.
- GEs who do not pass the course or do not achieve a SPEAK score of 50 will be required to enroll in additional English language support coursework.

SPEAK Score 35

Assignment Guidelines:

- The GE shall not serve as the primary instructor of a course.
- The department shall minimize any duties that require the GE to interact in English with undergraduates.
- Supervising faculty should mentor and assist the GE on a regular basis.
- Language department faculty should ascertain whether GEs teaching in their native/primary language are able to communicate in English (if English is to be used) for classroom instruction or during office hours.

Language Training:

- The GE is required to complete GRST 610 (US Teaching Culture & Communication) through the American English Institute and pass the course exit exam demonstrating skills sufficient to achieve a SPEAK score of 50.
- GEs who do not pass the course or do not achieve a SPEAK score of 50 will be required to enroll in additional English language support coursework.

SPEAK Score 20-30

Assignment Guidelines:

- The GE shall not conduct lectures, laboratory or discussion sections, office hour meetings, or be involved in the direct instruction of students unless the professor or a GE with English language proficiency is present.
- If the GE is assigned as a grader, they may grade multiple-choice assignments/examinations only.

Language Training:

- The GE is required to complete GRST 610 (US Teaching Culture & Communication) through the American English Institute and pass the course exit exam demonstrating skills sufficient to achieve a SPEAK score of 50.
- GEs who do not pass the course or do not achieve a SPEAK score of 50 will be required to enroll in additional English language support coursework.