

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS	IDENTIFICATION AR II-1.0-9	PAGE 1
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POLICIES ON INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS*

It is vitally important that students at the University of Kentucky be exposed to many cultures and to many social systems. This educational diversity may be met only partially through formal courses; equally necessary is the opportunity to meet and associate with students and teachers with different backgrounds, different traditions, different standards of behavior, and different ways of speaking. In providing this richness of experience, it is essential that those with teaching responsibilities satisfy reasonable expectations of communication skills and possess appropriate understanding of the backgrounds of their students. Teaching assistants from other regions of the world are valuable components of this educational process. It is essential, however, to ensure that these teaching assistants be proficient in spoken English and that they be given adequate training and supervision.

The following policies shall apply to University of Kentucky employment as a teaching assistant of any individual for whom English is not the native language. Such individuals are referred to in the following sections as international teaching assistants (ITAs).

A. The Chancellor for the Lexington Campus shall appoint a committee of faculty, staff, and students each year to organize and coordinate an orientation program for all teaching assistants prior to the beginning of the fall semester and to direct the training, screening, evaluation, and monitoring of ITAs. The student members of the committee shall not, however, have access to information in a teaching assistant's confidential file, such as scores on Test of Spoken English (TSE) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The orientation committee shall be chaired by a faculty or staff member appointed by the Chancellor to serve as an orientation director. The director shall report to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

B. The orientation committee shall develop criteria each year for the screening of ITA candidates. These criteria shall be applicable only after approval by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Chancellor for the Lexington Campus. The criteria for evaluation shall include interviews and test scores (as described below), the particular nature of the proposed teaching assignment, the level of the course and the students, and the extent to which oral communication is essential. Judgments of the candidate's competence in the subject matter shall be left to the educational unit.

C. Each new ITA candidate shall be interviewed by the orientation committee for the purpose of assessing communication skills and potential performance as a teacher. The ITA's educational unit shall be invited to have a representative participate in the interview.

* Refer also to AR II-1.0-7: Policies Relative to Teaching and Research Assistants.

D. ITA candidates shall be expected to have earned scores of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination. If a candidate scores less than 550 on the TOEFL examination and there is evidence beyond the TOEFL examination that a potential teaching assistant has greater proficiency in English than indicated by the candidate's score, the orientation committee may recommend to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies that an assistantship be permitted; the Dean shall review the evidence presented and provide a recommendation to the Chancellor, whose decision shall be final.

E. Prior to approval as a teacher, an ITA candidate must score at least 250 on the Test of Spoken English (TSE) or on an equivalent examination. The TSE (or equivalent) may be taken before or after the individual's arrival at the University of Kentucky. The orientation director shall ensure that this examination is administered.

F. After consultation with the ITA's educational unit, the orientation committee shall recommend to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies on the qualifications of each ITA to teach. A copy of the committee's recommendation on each ITA shall be sent to the appropriate educational unit and dean. The committee may recommend unconditional approval, conditional approval (such as suitability for certain teaching assignments but not for others, pairing with another teaching assistant in a laboratory course, etc.), or disapproval. Removal of the restrictions imposed by conditional approval shall require re-examination by the committee. The recommendations of the orientation committee shall be followed unless reversed by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies; the educational unit may appeal these recommendations through the dean of the college and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to the Chancellor.

G. ITAs not approved for teaching assignments shall be assigned duties not requiring classroom student contact. The educational units responsible for these ITAs shall be responsible for funding the nonteaching duties.

H. The orientation committee and orientation director shall recommend a program of remediation for ITAs not approved for teaching or for ITAs granted conditional approval. These ITAs shall be re-examined by the committee, which shall notify the educational unit and the dean of the college by February 10 of the ITAs approved or disapproved for teaching assignments in the following academic year. Upon recommendation of the educational unit, a student not approved for teaching in August may be re-examined by the committee in time to be assigned teaching duties in the spring semester.

I. Students not approved for initial or renewed teaching assignments for the following year shall be informed by their educational units of such action by March 1. Students not

approved for teaching assignments by March 1 shall lose their appointments and remuneration for teaching assistantships at the end of the initial academic year, and shall be so notified by the educational unit. Re-employment of such students in nonteaching roles shall be at the discretion of the academic program and shall be funded by that program. Exceptions may be considered by the orientation committee to permit continuation of conditional approval or assignment to duties not requiring classroom student contact.

J. ITAs shall arrive on campus in time to participate in activities which may be scheduled as early as August 16. The Test of Spoken English or equivalent examination shall be administered to students who were unable to take it before coming to the University of Kentucky.

K. The orientation committee shall organize a special orientation program for ITAs. This special program shall consist of at least twelve hours of orientation and shall be coordinated with the orientation programs provided for all teaching assistants (refer to Section I of AR II-1.0-7). ITAs must participate in both the special ITA orientation program and the University-wide and departmental programs provided for all teaching assistants.

- L. The ITA orientation program shall include components of:
1. Cross-cultural understanding:
 - (a) Core values, patterns, and processes of American culture;
 - (b) Purposes and functions of American higher education; and
 - (c) Characteristics of University of Kentucky students.
 2. University policies, regulations, administrative procedures, and academic support units:
 - (a) Teaching, grading, testing, and advising policies;
 - (b) Rights of students;
 - (c) TA responsibilities;
 - (d) Academic Ombud's recommendations; and
 - (e) Sources of instructional and personal help.
 3. Communicating and interacting with students in the classroom:
 - (a) Speaking style appropriate to classroom;
 - (b) Interacting with students: use of humor, informality;
 - (c) Listening and responding skills;
 - (d) Nonverbal language: eye contact, gestures, physical movement; and
 - (e) Speech characteristics (fluency, intonation, accent, and pronunciation).

M. Each educational unit using ITAs shall:

1. Conduct a follow-up program of supervision and training of ITAs which is integrated with the overseeing of all teaching assistants;
2. Provide for the development of teaching skills appropriate to the discipline;
3. Evaluate the performance of ITAs; and
4. Assign one or more faculty members to monitor and supervise ITAs.

N. The orientation committee shall review departmental ITA programs, monitor the development of ITAs and their professional performance in teaching, and work with and assist educational units as feasible and appropriate in improving teaching by ITAs. The director shall report through the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to the Chancellor each semester; this report shall include evaluations of each ITA, detailed descriptions of the orientation and training programs that have been held, and the results of systematic surveys of student opinion.