BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO (link to code: http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.281)

Section 1. That section 3345.281 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Section 3345.281. As used in this section, “Teaching Assistant” means a student enrolled full-time or part-time in a graduate degree program at an educational institution for which the students received an appointment to provide classroom-related services.

The Board of Trustees of each state university, college of medicine, technical college, state community college, community college, and the Board of Trustees or managing authority of each university branch shall establish a program to assess the Oral English Language proficiency of all teaching assistants providing classroom instruction to students and shall ensure that teaching assistants who are not orally proficient in the English language attain such proficiency prior to providing classroom instruction to students.

According to the Ohio Revised Code 3345.281, all teaching assistants who cannot demonstrate oral Proficiency in English must take the Oral English Proficiency Test (OEPT). However, some departments may require students who are funded by the University of Cincinnati to take the OEPT, such students may include any international student, green card holders and citizens who are not proficient in oral English.

A. Native English speakers

All international graduate students whose native language is English and who receive financial support from general University funds (UGS or graduate assistantship) must be certified by their Department Head or Graduate Program Director as having demonstrated oral proficiency in the use of the English Language, or must be assessed through the Oral English Proficiency Test (OEPT) program. Countries in which English is considered a native language are: Antigua, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Canada (not Quebec), Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grand Cayman Islands, Grenada, Irish Republic, Jamaica, Malawi, New Zealand, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, Virgin Islands.
1. A form for to waive the OEPT can be found online at http://cech.uc.edu/centers/cesl/oept.html or by contacting the CESL Testing office.
   a. Waiver forms must be returned before the end of each testing period for both continuing students not previously certified and new students who are native speakers of English who are not from the U.S.
   b. Students whose native language is English, should be certified by their departments, if there is no doubt about their oral English proficiency. If there is doubt, the student’s proficiency must be assessed by the OEPT program.
   c. Graduate Students for whom forms have not been returned are requested to take the OEPT exam
   d. Graduate departments must send us a waiver form and proof of test scores electronically to oept1@uc.edu.

B. Non-native speakers.

Non-native speakers do not need to take the OEPT if the following conditions are met:
   a) TOEFL iBT score of 26 or higher
   b) IELTS speaking score of 7.5 or higher
1. Graduate departments must send us a waiver form and proof of test scores electronically to oept1@uc.edu.
2. CCM students who will not be teaching do not need to take the OEPT, but should take the CMPT (College of Music Placement Test).

Graduate students who do not meet any of the above requirements, and will have instructional/classroom duties should take the OEPT.

- **Registration.** Students who are planning to take OEPT should register online at www.oept.uc.edu/login.php when registration dates are announced.
- **Test dates.** Testing will occur in August and January.

C. Failing the OEPT

Students who failed the OEPT or did not show up for the OEPT may not be allowed to take a TA position that requires “classroom-related services” until they take and pass the OEPT.

a) Classroom-related services are defined as:
   i. Lecturing;
   ii. Leading discussion or recitation groups; and/or
   iii. Directing or assisting in laboratory groups involving direct contact with undergraduate students.
1. Colleges/departments that have awarded assistantships to students who do not pass the OEPT must reassign the students to duties, which are not classroom-related (e.g. grading or research assignments). **Students cannot lose their assistantship because they have failed the OEPT.**

2. Students will have up to two (2) semesters to improve their skills to the point that they are able to pass the OEPT. Those unable to do so will not be eligible for the next year’s awards involving classroom-related responsibilities.

Colleges/departments will be released from further financial obligation to them. Programs are free to offer research or other assistantships, which do not involve classroom-related services to such students. Students who pass the OEPT by the end of the current academic year can assume classroom-related responsibilities the next academic year.

3. To ensure compliance with the state mandate for proficiency assessment all TA/GA assignments will be monitored by the Center for ESL and/or Graduate School.

**D. OEPT Test Format and Procedures**

1. All tests will be video recorded.
2. Three trained evaluators will test each student.
3. Each test will take approximately 20 minutes.
4. Students will be evaluated on the basis of both their conversation and their academic language skills. The final score for each category is an average of the evaluators’ ratings on three tasks 1) responses to conversational questions; 2) sample lesson; and 3) explanation of course policies and procedures. The criterion for passing is a minimum overall score of 3.00.
5. Results will be forwarded to the departments at the end of the testing period via email. A copy of the evaluation summary form with results and recommendations for further language training will be sent by campus mail to the appropriate graduate program secretaries.
6. Students may take the test twice during the academic year.
7. Students who do not pass the OEPT will be recommended appropriate ESL course(s).
8. Students who pass the OEPT who might benefit from structured practice in oral English will be recommended for appropriate ESL course(s).
9. Students who wish to dispute their OEPT score must first consult with their graduate program director. If a graduate program director believes that a student has been incorrectly evaluated, the graduate program director should contact OEPT Coordinator within 14 days (Teachers College Room 610A, Tel: 513-556-3519; Email: oept1@uc.edu). The OEPT Coordinator and the Director of the ESL Center will consult to determine an appropriate plan of action.
E. Training of OEPT Evaluators

The OEPT Coordinator will train evaluators prior to each testing sessions. Evaluators may be graduate students or faculty with a background in language studies. Previous evaluators who have not participated in OEPT evaluations for more than one academic year may be required to be retrained as a new OEPT evaluator. Training procedures include intensive practice in rating tapes from a wide range of proficiency levels in order to ensure consistency and inter-rater reliability.

F. Changes from Previous Policies:

1. Conditional Passing. Students whose OEPT scores are conditionally passing (scores between 2.50 and 2.99) are required to concurrently be registered for ESL7010 Teaching Skills for International TAs while teaching in their first semester.

2. ESL7010 Requirement. If students pass ESL7010 Teaching Skills for ITAs, they do not need to retake the OEPT and may complete teaching assignment without restrictions.

3. No Shows. Students who do not show up to OEPT test will automatically fail, and must retake the OEPT at the next scheduled testing period (this can be up to 4-8 months later). Please review “Failing the OEPT” for instructions.

4. Unprepared for OEPT. Students who are unprepared for the OEPT will not be allowed to reschedule their OEPT test unless their department contacts us to find an available space. Otherwise, students will automatically fail the OEPT and then must retake the OEPT at the next testing period (this can be up to 4-8 months later). Please review “Failing the OEPT” for instructions.

G. General Information about OEPT

a) About the OEPT test

The OEPT is a 20-minute video recorded interview with trained evaluators. There are four sections to the test:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Warm-Up</td>
<td>Short talk; this section is not scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conversational Questions</td>
<td>Questions will be asked about describing or giving your opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Course Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>Acting as an instructor, this section requires a presentation of Course Policies and Procedures or another syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sample Lesson</td>
<td>Acting as an instructor, teach a short lesson on a basic concept from students' field for undergraduate students</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
OEPT Registration packets can be downloaded from the OEPT website at: [http://www.cech.uc.edu/centers/cesl/oept.html](http://www.cech.uc.edu/centers/cesl/oept.html)

b) **How often is the test offered?**
The test will be given 2 times a year in August and January. Please visit the OEPT website for exact dates: [http://cech.uc.edu/centers/cesl/oept.html](http://cech.uc.edu/centers/cesl/oept.html) or contact OEPT office for further information.

c) **How often can the OEPT test be taken?**
A student who did not pass the OEPT test may only take the test no more than 2 times in one academic year. If a student is not prepared for the test, we cannot reschedule you. If you do not show up for the test, you will automatically fail the OEPT and must retake it at the next session date.

d) **How is the test scored?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OEPT Score Results</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00-1.99</td>
<td>Did not pass; Must take 2 or 3 ESL courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00-2.49</td>
<td>Did not pass; Must take at least 2 ESL courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50-2.99</td>
<td>Conditional Pass; Must take at least 1 ESL course, while teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00-3.49</td>
<td>Passed; May need an ESL course, while teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.50-4.00</td>
<td>Passed; Can teach without restrictions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores will be given based on a scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high). The Center for ESL suggests a 3.5 as the minimum score for teaching without restrictions. However, an **overall score of 3.00** is the minimum passing score for the test. If you score less than 3.00 you will be required to take ESL courses **before retaking the test**.

e) **Where can students get score results?**
Scores will be sent to a student’s Graduate Program Secretary. The test scores should be available 3-5 days after the students’ test date, and no more than 1-2 days after the end of the testing period.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the OEPT exam, do not hesitate to contact the OEPT office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OEPT Office</th>
<th>☑: (513) 556-3519</th>
<th>☑: <a href="mailto:oept1@uc.edu">oept1@uc.edu</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>610A Teachers College</td>
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