

Academic Regulation, Procedure - Office of the Provost

CATEGORY: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
SECTION: Faculty Appointment and Tenure
SUBJECT: Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 29, 1991
PAGE(S): 3

I. PURPOSE

To define the process for evaluating the English language fluency of all individuals hired to teach and for certifying to the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that those individuals specified by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act, and who are hired subsequent to September 7, 1990, are fluent in the English language.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all full-time, part-time, and visiting faculty, including teaching assistants and teaching fellows (TA/TFs), instructional staff, and other academic employees who teach at either the undergraduate or graduate level. Individuals whose work is limited to courses in which the primary language of instruction is not English are not required to demonstrate fluency in the English language.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Centers and Departments are responsible for determining that all individuals hired to teach are sufficiently fluent in the English language for effective communication with the student who will take courses in the department or academic center.

The Academic Dean or Department Chair is responsible for completing a Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching form to certify that the appointee is certified to teach, certified for laboratory instruction only, not certified to teach, or exempt from certification as specified by Policy 02-02-16, Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching.

The Office of the Provost is responsible for approving the test administered by the English Language Institute (ELI) to non-native speaking TA/TFs and for establishing, in consultation with ELI, minimum scores acceptable to permit a TA/TF to teach.

The English Language Institute (ELI) is responsible for constructing a test, approved by the Office of the Provost, designed to assess spoken English and administering the test to new TA/TFs who are not native speakers of English.

Computing and Information Services (CIS) is responsible for the data entry of certification data.

The Office of Management Information and Policy Analysis (MIPA) is responsible for generating reports listing all individuals who teach and their respective certification codes, and providing those reports to the Office of the Provost by August 15 of each year for the prior Summer, Fall, and Spring Terms. By September 1 of each year, MIPA will file with the Department of Education a certification stating that all individuals specified by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act, hired either since the effective date of the Act or hired subsequent to the last annual certification, are fluent in the English language.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Assessment of Faculty, Instructional Staff, and Other Academic Employees

Academic Center/
Department

1. Determine internal guidelines for conducting interviews to evaluate the English language fluency of all full-time, part-time, and visiting faculty, instructional staff, and other academic employees hired to teach.
2. Before an individual teaches a class, evaluate their English language fluency through two personal interviews following established internal guidelines.
 - a. One interview must be conducted by the academic dean or the department chair
 - b. One interview must be conducted by a senior member of the faculty
3. Conduct further evaluation, if necessary, such as a professional presentation before peers, which simulates as closely as possible a teaching situation.
4. Grant teaching assignments only to individuals demonstrating a sufficient level of oral mastery of English for effective communication with students.
5. Certify that a determination of English language fluency has been made following Procedure C, Certification of English Language Fluency.

B. Assessment of Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows

Academic Center/
Department

1. Before assigning TA/TFs who are not native speakers of English to teach a lecture, recitation, or laboratory, arrange for a test of the individual's spoken English to be administered by the English Language Institute (ELI).

ELI

2. Administer the test specified by the Office of the Provost. Forward the test scores to the appropriate academic center/department, together with the established minimum acceptable score.
3. Provide required remediation in the form of tutoring or a class to any TA/TF realizing an unsatisfactory score.

Academic Center/
Department

4. Grant teaching assignments only to individuals passing the test with satisfactory scores.

Note: Academic centers or departments may demand higher scores than the established minimum.

5. Certify that a determination of English language fluency has been made following Procedure C, Certification of English Language Fluency.

C. Certification of English Language Fluency

Academic Dean/
Department Chair

1. Complete and sign FORM 0132, Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching (Exhibit A), indicating whether the appointee is certified to teach, not certified to teach, certified for laboratory instruction only, or exempt from certification.
2. Forward the original (white) and gold copy of FORM 0132 to the Office of Faculty Records with the appointment form. Retain pink and yellow copy for academic center/department personnel files.

Faculty Records

3. Verify that each Appointment Form is accompanied by FORM 0132, Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching.
4. Batch and forward the white copies of FORM 0132 to CIS for data entry and retain gold copies.

CIS

5. Enter the certification data into the data file, and return the white copies of FORM 0132 with a batch edit list to the Office of Faculty Records.

MIPA

6. By August 1 of each year, match the certification file with the Faculty Activity Reporting system and generate two reports as follows:
 - a. One listing all individuals who taught with the corresponding certification code of "Y" - Certified
 - b. The other listing all individuals who taught with corresponding certification codes of "N" - Not Certified, "L" - Certified for laboratory instruction only, or "E" - Exempt from certification
7. Forward the reports to the Office of the Provost no later than August 15 of each year.
8. By September 1 of each year, file a certification with the Department of Education stating that all individuals specified by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act, hired to teach subsequent to September 7, 1990, or hired subsequent to the last annual certification, are fluent in the English language.

V. EXHIBIT

[Exhibit A, FORM 0132, Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching](#)

VI. REFERENCE

[Academic Regulation: Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching](#)