

The TOEP is used to test the oral English ability of non-native English speaking graduate students in order to determine their eligibility for working as teaching assistants (TAs). TAs need to have exceptional oral English skills so that they can effectively communicate with students. The TOEP assesses these communication skills with a 20-minute classroom simulation.

The TOEP has Three Sections:

TOEP Section 1 (2-3 minutes) – Introduction

Introduce yourself to the audience (two undergraduate students and two raters). Make an introduction that is appropriate for a classroom setting (for example, include information like your name, your educational background, your home country, etc.). The audience will ask you some general questions based on your introduction.

TOEP Section 2 (5-7 minutes) – Presentation of Course Document

A course document will be available for you to download when you register for the TOEP. The document will be a syllabus, an assignment sheet, or some other type of common class document. Make sure that you review the document *before* the test. In section 2 of the TOEP, present the assigned course document to the audience as if you were a TA for the course. Assume that the professor already gave the document to the students in the lecture; you will need to highlight the key information in the document and answer questions about it.

Please note that **the course document will have intentional mistakes and typos** so that the raters can see how you address those errors. Make sure that you are familiar with all of the terms in the document as well as other vocabulary related to teaching a class since the audience will ask you questions about the document and the course. *Note:* If an answer is not in the document, you can make one up.

Bring your copy of the document to the exam. You may add your own notes to the document, but please do not read from the document or your notes.

TOEP Section 3 (8-10 minutes) – Mini-Lesson

Prepare a 7-8-minute mini-lesson on a basic topic in your field. Choose a topic that a general undergraduate audience will be able to understand; do *not* choose a topic that requires specialized knowledge or prior coursework. During section 3, you will deliver your lesson and answer audience questions for a total of 8-10 minutes. You may be interrupted during your lesson to answer questions or to define terms.

****You may not use any notes or a computer during the TOEP except for the course document used in task 2. You are encouraged to use the whiteboard and markers in the exam room.****

TOEP Eligibility

To be eligible to take the TOEP, you must be a non-native English speaking graduate student who has taken the IELTS, TOEFL iBT or the SPEAK test and earned one the following scores:

- 6.5 - 7.5 on IELTS Speaking
- 22 - 25 iBT TOEFL Speaking
- 40 - 45 SPEAK

Students with scores below these ranges are not eligible to take the TOEP unless their LIN 25, LIN 26, or LIN 391 instructor makes a recommendation to IAE recommending that the student take the TOEP. Students with scores above these ranges have already satisfied the TA English language proficiency requirements.

Preparation for the TOEP

In the same way that you will need to prepare for teaching a lesson as a TA, you will need to spend some time preparing for the TOEP. Practice your presentation in front of other people and get feedback from them to help you improve. You may also want to check out materials designed to help international TAs prepare for the TA experience such as *Teaching American Students: A Guide for International Faculty and Teaching Assistants in Colleges and Universities* by Ellen Sarkisian.

TOEP Scoring and Results

Test takers are assessed in the following six categories:

Phonetic & Phonological Competence (pronunciation of individual sounds and words)	Fluency/Speech Flow (rate of speech, intonation, etc.)	Rhetorical Organization (how ideas are connected, transitions, etc.)
Grammatical Competence	Vocabulary (range and use)	Question Handling

There are three possible results:

Pass: Students who earn a PASS have fully met the English language requirements for a TA position.

Conditional Pass: Students who earn a CONDITIONAL PASS have partially met the English language requirements for a TA position. This means that they may hold a TA position for up to two quarters while concurrently enrolled in approved English language instruction or workshops. The two quarters they are permitted to serve as a TA are only allowed *once*, after the first Conditional Pass. *For example, if you received a Conditional Pass, worked as a TA for two quarters, and then received*

another Conditional Pass, you would not be eligible to continue as a TA until you received a Pass on the TOEP.

Fail: Students who earn a FAIL have not met the English language requirements for a TA position. They may not hold a TA position and are encouraged to take English language coursework.

Retaking the TOEP

Students may not take the TOEP twice in the same quarter. Students who wish to retake the TOEP must complete 20 hours of approved English language instruction before each retake.

TOEP Schedule and Registration

The TOEP is offered at the beginning of the academic year and at the end of each quarter. The TOEP schedule is created near the end of each quarter, and an announcement is sent to all potential TOEP takers a few weeks before the exam dates. Check the IAE website for the latest information on test dates and to register for the TOEP: http://iae.ucdavis.edu/graduate/qualify_as_ta.html.

Accommodations

Please contact us at iae@ucdavis.edu if you have a documented disability and need accommodations during the TOEP. For more information about disability services, please visit the UC Davis Student Disability Center.