Faculty Document 2007-10

Department of Geology & Geophysics Screening Procedure for Non-Native English Speaking Graduate Students Who Plan to be Teaching Assistants

- As soon as possible after arrival in Madison, the student must take the SPEAK test. If the student does not pass the SPEAK test with a score of at least 50, they must enroll in an English as a Second Language (ESL) course during their first year of enrollment.

- Before the end of the first year of enrollment the student may take the SPEAK test for a second time. If the score is 50, or higher, the student becomes eligible to become a TA. If, however, the student scores 45 on this test, he or she may request evaluation by a Departmental panel, which also must be completed prior to end of the Spring semester of the first year of enrollment.

- The Departmental Panel comprises a discussion with 3 faculty members and the head TA. The faculty will not include the graduate student’s advisor, but will include members of the Graduate Studies Committee.

- The panelists will each ask the graduate student to answer a question from the Introductory Geology 100 discussion section manual, or an equivalent. Based on the clarity of the student’s response to these questions, the faculty on the panel will decide by voting yes or no, whether he or she is sufficiently proficient in spoken English. A student must receive a majority yes vote to become eligible to become a TA in the Dept.

- The panel exam vote will be sent to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education (Nancy Westphal-Johnson).

- At the end of this and subsequent semesters, the student and faculty TA evaluations for this graduate student will be reviewed as is normal practice in the Geology and Geophysics Dept. These evaluations will be made available upon request to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education (Nancy Westphal-Johnson).