



The Intensive American Language Center

McAllister Hall 116
PO Box 643251
Pullman, WA 99164-3251
Telephone: (509) 335-6675
Fax: (509) 335-1141
E-Mail: ialc@wsu.edu
Webpage: <http://www.ialc.wsu.edu>

Open Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Closed on National Holidays



The ITA Exam: The International Teaching Assistant Evaluation

- Q. *What is the ITA Exam?*
- A. The ITA Exam is also known as the International Teaching Assistant Evaluation.
- Q. *Why do I have to take the ITA Evaluation?*
- 1. The ITA Evaluations are a WSU requirement at the behest of the State of Washington. All Washington State universities administer some form of the ITA Evaluation. The WSU Graduate School policy is that all International TAs for whom English is a Second Language must be screened for English proficiency, regardless of the nature of their assignment.
- 2. Also, it assists you, the ITA, by identifying and minimizing potential problems in the classroom.
- Q. *When is the deadline for ITA Evaluations?*

- A. The Graduate School requires that ITAs be evaluated **before** their teaching assignments can be approved.
- Q. *When can I take the ITA Evaluation?*
- A. The ITA Evaluation is usually offered five times a year: twice each semester and once during the summer.
- Q. *How will I know when the Evaluation is being offered?*
- A. The ITA Coordinator sends the Graduate School a memo with the latest evaluation schedule. The Graduate School then notifies each department of the upcoming evaluation schedules, and your department will notify you.

You can also check our website at <http://www.ialc.wsu.edu>. Click on “**International Teaching Assistants**” on the main page.

- Q. *What is the IALC’s role in this process?*
- A. The IALC provides the ITA Evaluation to help ITAs fulfill the Graduate School’s requirement for ITAs (see above).

Exceptions to the ITA Evaluation: Please direct any questions to Dr. Debra Sellon, Associate Dean, Graduate School. French Ad., Room 324; or by phone: 335-6424. A **Request for Waiver** of ITA Evaluation requires a memo or letter from the Chair of the Department to Dr. Sellon.

- Q. *What am I, the ITA, responsible for?*
- A. Registration, contacting your Department Representative, and arriving on time for your Evaluation. Also, contacting the Graduate School as needed about your evaluation.

The ITA Exam: Registration

- Q. *When and where do I register for the ITA Evaluation?*
- A. The Intensive American Language Center (IALC) Office, McAllister Hall Room 116, from Monday – Friday, between 12 Noon and 5:00 PM. Ask for Ms. Angela Bonner.

There are five steps you must follow to properly register for the ITA Evaluation:

- 1) Come to McAllister 116 and pick up an ITA Evaluation Registration Form.
- You can also **download** the Registration Form and information from our site at www.ialc.wsu.edu. Click on “**International Teaching Assistants**,” then select “**ITA Registration Form**.”
- 2) While you are in McAllister 116, you can ask about the most current evaluation schedule.

You can call 335-6675 (before you come to McAllister to register) and ask for the most recent evaluation dates & times. You can also check the current schedule online at: <http://www.ialc.wsu.edu>.

- 3) You and your Department Representative (or Advisor) should discuss which times work for both of you. Be sure to have several in mind when you come to schedule your exam.
- 4) Bring your completed registration form to McAllister 116 **at least two working days before your evaluation**. Then schedule the test.
- 5) Come to McAllister 116 **at least** five minutes before your evaluation time.

- Q. *Why do I have to choose several times for my evaluation when I only need to schedule one time?*
- R. The ITA evaluation schedule can fill up quickly. Having more than one time in mind will keep you from having to arrange new times with your Department Representative.

- Q. *Who is in charge of the ITA Evaluation?*
- A. Jen Walser, ITA Coordinator, is in charge of arranging the ITA evaluation schedule and ITA examinations. Angela Bonner registers students for the evaluation.
- Q. *Who can answer my questions?*
- A. **Registration:** Angela Bonner, McAllister 116, 335-6675, or angelab@wsu.edu. Monday – Friday, 12:00-5:00 p.m.
- B. **Evaluation results, specific questions & viewing of videotapes:** Jen Walser, ITA Coordinator, McAllister 131, 335-1534, or jwalser@wsu.edu.
- C. **Evaluation Waivers, Results & Enforcement:** Dr. Debra Sellon, Associate Dean, Graduate School, 335-6424, or dsellon@wsu.edu.

The ITA Exam: The Evaluation Process

- Q. *What is a Department Representative and why do I need one?*
- A. Your Department Representative is a professor or advisor from your department. This person must be present at your ITA evaluation. This is to ensure that a person who is fluent in the material presented will be at your evaluation.
- Q. *Who is on the Evaluation Committee?*
- A. Two people from the IALC conduct the evaluation: the ITA Coordinator and an ITA-trained IALC Instructor. If the Coordinator is not available, there will be two ITA-experienced IALC Instructors present.
- Q. *What does the Evaluation Committee do?*
- A. The Committee will be your “class:” they will observe your lecture, ask you questions at any time during your lecture, and may also present you with classroom situations.

Q. *What am I required to do for my presentation?*

A. You will need to prepare a 10-minute mini-lecture on a 100- or 200- level topic from your field of teaching, research, or study, which is familiar to you.

PLEASE NOTE: Present your lecture to the committee as if you are actually teaching students; you should have neither your lecture completely memorized, nor should you read directly from note-cards.

Q. *What will I be evaluated on?*

A. There are four basic skill areas: 1) Overall Language Comprehensibility, 2) Cultural Awareness, 3) Communication Skills, and 4) Interaction with Students. Please see your copies of the TEACH Rating Sheet and the Ratings Guidelines for subgroups within these skill areas that are included in the evaluation.

Q. *Is there any equipment I can use?*

A. A white board and an overhead projector are available for your use. You should use one of them, but you are not required to use both of them. PowerPoint presentations are not acceptable, as they hinder accurate evaluation of language by the examiners.

Q. *How long does the ITA Evaluation take?*

A. Evaluations are scheduled in 30-minute increments, allowing for set-up time beforehand and conference time afterwards. Your own lecture will last between 5-10 minutes.

Q. *Will I be video-taped?*

A. Yes. Your lecture will be videotaped and kept on file with the ITA Coordinator for two (2) years. You may make an appointment with the ITA Coordinator to view your tape.

Q. *What happens after I have finished?*

A. You will wait in the room while the two Evaluators leave the room to discuss your presentation. After that, your Department

Representative will be asked to step out and discuss your rating with the two Evaluators.

Q. *How long will the discussion last?*

A. The discussion usually takes between 5-10 minutes. The Evaluators and your Department Representative will then let you know of the results.

Q. *What if I have questions about the Evaluation results?*

A. **For questions regarding evaluation components**, contact Jen Walser, ITA Coordinator, McAllister 131, 335-1534, or jwalser@wsu.edu. Results of the evaluation are sent to the Graduate School and the employing department. **For other questions about enforcement or recommendations**, contact Dr. Debra Sellon, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, at 335-6424, or dsellon@wsu.edu.

The ITA Exam: Other Frequently Asked Questions

Q. *Can I call ahead to ask about Evaluation times?*

A. Yes. However, we do not schedule students over the phone unless you have already registered or need to change your time. If necessary, you may call from our office to speak to your Department Representative and arrange a time.

Q. *What if I miss my ITA Evaluation?*

A. Please call the IALC **as soon as possible**. It may be possible to re-schedule you. However, please be aware that you may need to wait until the next available ITA evaluation time on the schedule.

Q. *What happens if I need to cancel or change my scheduled Evaluation time?*

A. Please call the IALC at 335-6675 **at least two working days before** your scheduled time if you know that you are going to miss, or need to change your evaluation time.

Q. *Is it possible to take the ITA Evaluation again?*

A. Yes. You are welcome to take the Evaluation again. You must wait a minimum of 2 months to re-test and you must not use the same lesson that you used in the previous test.
* The "Course Recommendations for ITAs" leaflet has more information about some of the classes that are available to improve your English skills. The leaflets are available at McAllister 116 and online at <http://www.ialc.wsu.edu>. Click on the "ITA" link.

Q. *Is there more information available?*

A. Yes. You can find the ITA Evaluation Information link at <http://www.ialc.wsu.edu>. Click on "International Teaching Assistants." When you are at the IALC office, you will also receive the following items:

- ◆ A TEACH Rating Sheet (this is a copy of the rating form used in your evaluation).
- ◆ Ratings Guidelines (these explain each point on the TEACH Rating Sheet).
- ◆ The ITA Exam brochure.
- ◆ A leaflet of "Recommended Courses for ITAs."
- ◆ An optional survey.

A Few Suggestions:

1. Completely fill out the (gray) Registration Form before you bring it back to the IALC Office.
2. Be **at least 5 minutes early** to the evaluation.
3. Bring the office and home phone numbers of the Department Representative with you on the day of your evaluation.
4. The topic selected should not be new to you. Past knowledge and experience with the material you present will make the evaluation process much easier.
5. **REMEMBER:** You are responsible for registering for the exam, contacting your Department Representative, and arriving on time for your evaluation.

ITA Evaluation Results:

APPROVED FOR DUTIES THAT INCLUDE RESPONSIBILITY FOR AT LEAST SOME STUDENT GRADES AND/OR SAFETY:

1 – Approved for teaching all levels of classes and for any other duties in which TAs are needed by the Department.

2 – Approved for teaching upper level classes only (junior and senior level) and any other duties the Department may need that do not involve instruction of new material for lower level students.

3 – Approved for teaching (of labs, etc.) or other duties that support other instructors' courses and that may involve grading of students; but the ITA is assisted or supervised by another instructor from the Department and is **NOT SOLELY** responsible for: a) instruction of new material for lower-level students, or b) overseeing situations that may put anyone's physical safety at risk.

APPROVED FOR DUTIES THAT INCLUDE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSIGNING FINAL GRADES AND/OR SAFETY:

4 – Approved for limited teaching duties that support courses taught within the Department, but that **DO NOT** involve a) assigning final grades, b) any instruction of new material, or c) responsibility for labs or other situations that put anyone at physical risk.

5 – Approved for activities – such as grading papers, exams, and homework – that do not involve contact with students as part of the job.

Good Luck!

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