

Seminar for International Teaching Assistants

Introduction

As part of our commitment to excellence in teaching, Florida Atlantic University (FAU) has established a minimum level of English language and teaching proficiency by which all international graduate students must demonstrate to work as graduate teaching assistants. In order to assure that these standards are upheld, the Graduate College, in conjunction with the Department of Teaching and Learning, has established the Seminar for International Teaching Assistants (SITA).

SITA is a multi-purpose program designed to prepare international graduate students to teach undergraduate students at FAU. Such preparation includes developing an understanding of the teaching role in American university classrooms, providing training in English pronunciation and intonation, practicing classroom communication skills and instructional strategies, and assisting students during the first semester of teaching at FAU.

Teaching Eligibility and Participation

All International Teaching Assistants are required to successfully pass a Panel Review prior to beginning their teaching assignments. To pass the Panel Review, each International Teaching Assistant must give a Panel Presentation, consisting of a ten-minute lecture. Additional details about the Panel Review and Presentation are provided in the Panel Review section below.

Some students may be eligible to waive participation in the SITA program and can make this request by completing Form 13 - Request to Waive SITA Training. Note: Students must meet all requirements listed on Form 13. Those students requesting a waiver will have the opportunity to pass the Panel Review prior to the start of the SITA program.

The first week of the course is mandatory for all International Teaching Assistants who have not previously received a waiver and/or passed the required Panel Review. (Note: Existing FAU international graduate teaching assistants are exempt from fulfilling this requirement).

Students who score below 61 on the iBT TOEFL (or equivalent), under 55 on the SPEAK test, or under 65 on the Phone Pass oral proficiency will be required to attend both the initial week of SITA training, and the extended SITA program, which meets for nine additional sessions throughout the fall semester. (All other ITA's not passing the panel review during the initial week of training will be required to attend the nine week session as well.)

SITA requires a genuine commitment from the graduate student both to participate and to be successful. Students are expected to be punctual and attend all sessions. Any student whose attendance, participation, or performance falls below minimum standards may be dropped from the program.

Program Schedule for the Fall 2012 Semester

The SITA program takes place the week before fall semester classes commence. There are nine additional sessions offered throughout the fall semester for a subset of teaching assistants requiring additional language and teaching development.

August 8, 2012	Deadline to submit Request to Waive SITA Training (Form 13) to the Department of Teaching and Learning
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	(ED 355)
August 10, 2012 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	SITA Panel Presentation 1 (for participants requesting to waive SITA training). Students must register with Dr. Barbara Ridener to participate in the SITA Panel Presentation 1. Students who do not successfully pass the SITA Panel Presentation 1 must attend the five day SITA Seminar.
August 13 - 17, 2012 (choose any of the following times) 9 a.m. -12 p.m. 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. 5 p.m - 8 p.m.	Five day SITA Program (concludes with SITA Panel Presentation 2. All sessions provide duplicate instruction to enable participants to attend other university, college, department, and personal obligations. The SITA Seminar will be held in ED 333.
August 17, 2012	SITA Panel Presentation 2 (for students completing SITA Seminar)
September 8, 2012	Extended SITA Program starts (mandatory attendance)
September 15, 2012	Extended SITA session 2 (mandatory attendance)
September 22, 2012	Extended SITA session - special topic
September 29, 2012	Extended SITA session 4 (mandatory attendance)
October 6, 2012	Extended SITA session 5 (mandatory attendance)
October 13, 2012	Extended SITA session - special topic
October 20, 2012	Extended SITA session 6 (mandatory attendance)
October 27, 2012	Extended SITA session 7 (mandatory attendance)
November 3, 2012	Extended SITA session 8 (mandatory attendance)
November 10, 2012	SITA Panel Presentation 3 (for students completing intensive SITA Seminar)

Panel Review

Every international teaching assistant must be deemed "ready to teach" by a panel of reviewers prior to beginning an assignment. This panel consists of the following individuals: a faculty member from the candidate's department (if available), an ESL rater, a faculty member from an unrelated department, a faculty member with teaching expertise, and an undergraduate student. Each candidate's [Panel Presentation](#) will consist of a 10-minute lesson on a topic

assigned by their department. Candidates who demonstrate spoken English proficiency and the ability to present their topic in a clear and organized fashion will be judged ready for a teaching assignment throughout their tenure as graduate students at FAU.

SITA candidates who do not pass the panel review will be unable to hold a teaching assignment; however, they will not lose financial assistance for the period of time it was offered in the original offer letter. These students are encouraged to take further English language lessons so that they may take the SITA program again at its next offering.

The type of assignment each SITA graduate receives is determined by the individual department or academic unit. Common assignments include tutor, laboratory assistant, and recitation leader. In some cases, SITA graduates are given full responsibility for a class. Each department exercises its own judgment about content readiness and sets its own standards for performance.

Click [here](#) to view the requirements for the Panel Presentation.

Forms

The [SITA Participant Information Form](#) was created to gather information about SITA participants. It is designed to be completed by the department chair/school director (or designee) awarding the assistantship.

[Waiver/Form 13](#)

Resources

Previous Session Materials From Fall 2011:

[SITA session 1.ppt](#)

[SITA session 2.ppt](#)

[SITA session 4.ppt](#)

[SITA Communication Skills.ppt](#)

[SITA Learning the Language.ppt](#)

[SITA Navigating the Classroom.ppt](#)

Professional Developments- Prezi for SITA: <http://prezi.com/v6hxi35q6mk2/copy-of-professional-development/>

Materials From Other Universities and Websites:

Teaching Strategies:

University of Nebraska: http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/dev/gta_handbook/strategies/

Teaching in the U.S. Classroom: http://www.stanford.edu/dept/CTL/cgi-bin/docs/newsletter/us_classroom.pdf

Asking Effective Questions, University of Southern California: http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/

[asking_questions.html](#)

Answering and Asking Questions, Kansas State University:
<http://www2.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/askquest.htm>

Tips for using visual aids in your speech: <http://www.publicspeache.com/speaking-tips/tips-for-using-visual-aids-in-your-speech.php>

Technology principles: <http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html>

Creating PowerPoints: <http://tep.uoregon.edu/technology/powerpoint/powerpoint.html>

Tips for using technology / University of Michigan: <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/inst/tips.php>

Eye Contact: What does it communicate in various cultures?
<http://www.brighthub.com/education/languages/articles/9626.aspx#ixzz1X0GIqSIG>

Nonverbal Communication: Speaking Without Words: http://www.rpi.edu/dept/advising/american_culture/social_skills/nonverbal_communication/reading_exercise.htm

Educational Development:

University of California- Berkeley: <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/tenways.html>

Ways to keep audience attention during your presentation: <http://www.speakingaboutpresenting.com/content/7-ways-audience-attention-presentation/>

Engaging the students / University of Michigan / Videos: <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/faculty/Thurnau/ThurnauVideos.php>

How to speak: Lecture tips from Professor Patrick Winston-Video: [click here](#)

Public Speaking Importance: <http://www.effective-communicating.com/public-speaking-importance.html>

Teacher expectations, John B. Diamond - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: [click here](#)

What to Expect Your First Year of Teaching:

5 keys to success: <http://www.superteacherworksheets.com/student-teaching.html>

DePaul- College of Education: <http://education.depaul.edu/CurrentStudents/StudentTeaching/ExpectationsStudentTeacher.asp>

Student Expectations- St. Petersburg College: <http://www.spcollege.edu/ecampus/help/expectations.htm>

Email Etiquette: <http://www.emailreplies.com/>

Language development:

Site with audio tongue twisters for accent reduction: [click here](#)

Ten tips for accent reduction, by Lisa Mojsin: http://www.accurateenglish.com/ten_tips_for_accent_reduction_.htm

Helpful interactive tools: <http://www.americanaccent.com/>

More tongue twisters: <http://www.uebersetzung.at/twister/en.htm>

Free English lessons with English grammar and vocabulary exercises online: www.englishpage.com

Interactive tools for sentence construction and writing: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

More interactive online tools; games, tests: <http://www.learnenglish.de/>

Common American slang expressions: <http://www.manythings.org/slang/>

American Idioms and Slang: <http://www.schandlbooks.com/AmericanSlangIdiom.html>

Comprehensive list of American slang terms and definitions: <http://www.infosquares.com/americanslang/>

FAQ

Is the SITA program mandatory?

Yes. All International Teaching Assistants for whom English is not their native language must attend the first week of the course and pass the Panel Presentation.

How often is the SITA program offered?

The SITA program is offered once a year, prior to the beginning of classes in August.

What if I do not pass the Panel Presentation?

If a student is not recommended as “ready to teach” by the panel, he/she needs to attend the extended SITA program during the fall semester and pass the final presentation.

Is participation in the extended SITA program mandatory?

The extended program is mandatory for all the ITAs who do not pass the initial presentation panel.

How can I request to waive the SITA training?

Students must meet all the requirements listed on Form 13.

Does the ITA who is eligible for a waiver still need to make a presentation?

Yes.

Contact Us

The SITA program is coordinated by the Department of Teaching and Learning. For additional information about the program please contact SITA.FAU@fau.edu.