

# Taking the English Proficiency Interview (EPI): Procedures and Pointers

## WHO TAKES THE EPI, and HOW?

1. The EPI, an approved test of oral proficiency, is required by campus policy for teaching assistants who are non-native speakers of English in order to fulfill Illinois State Law (SB1516).
2. The EPI is administered by the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE).
3. In order to sign up for the test, a department representative (**not** individual students) must call CTE (333-3370) to register potential ITAs (international teaching assistants).

## WHAT IS THE EPI? WHERE IS IT GIVEN ON THIS CAMPUS?

The EPI (English Proficiency Interview) is a test of oral English proficiency in the form of a live, face-to-face interview.

1. During the EPI, you will be asked questions of interest to you and your interviewer. The topic of those questions will often revolve around academic life and will include terminology particular to your field of study (definition of terms).
2. You are rated on Overall Communicative Ability. You can meet the eligibility requirement with a score of 5 or 6 (score range is 2-6). In addition, a score of 4CP (conditional pass) will allow you to become a TA provided you enroll in a special ESL course aimed at helping you during your first semester of teaching.
3. **The test takes place at the Center for Teaching Excellence, 249 Armory Building. You need to arrive 15 minutes early in order to complete check-in and be ready for your interview.** The test itself takes about 15 minutes. (Confirm your test time with your department representative, look up the directions to the Center, and please be on time. Late arrivals will not be tested.)
4. For more information about the test:
  - a. A sample interview is available on the CTE website.

[http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/oral\\_eng/test\\_prep.html](http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/oral_eng/test_prep.html)

## ON THE DAY OF THE EPI...

1. Arrive at the Center for Teaching Excellence, 249 Armory, 15 minutes before your assigned test time.
2. **Bring a picture ID with you (student ID or driver's license), and your University Identification Number (UIN printed on your student I-Card).** **No other equipment is allowed at the test site.** Bring no paper, pencils, tapes, clocks, cell phones, or other electronic devices.
3. **The Center for Teaching Excellence is not obligated to test students who fail to show up on time.**

## DURING THE EPI...

1. Try to sound as natural as possible.
2. Focus on communicating with the interviewer.
3. Don't try to memorize possible topics or answers.
4. Relax and speak as you would to a student, colleague, or friend.
5. Students are expected to adhere to the Illinois Student Code, especially section 1-401 covering Academic Integrity.

## AFTER THE EPI...

**Results of the test will be sent to your department in approximately 10 business days.** If you do not receive the results within this time, please contact your department directly. CTE is not permitted to release results to individual students--only to department representatives.

1. If you pass...  
Congratulations! You are now ready to complete the next phase of requirements for ITAs, the Graduate Academy for College Teaching, or the Graduate Symposium on Grading and Office Hours.
2. If you do not pass...
  - a. Campus policy requires you to do an English improvement activity before retaking the EPI. To fulfill this requirement, you must take either ESL 504, ESL 506 or ESL 510 in a semester **after** the EPI was taken. Ten hours of approved tutoring also qualifies. A list of qualified tutors has been sent to your department. You may also pick up a list from the Linguistics Department located in 3070 FLB. **A letter from the tutor indicating completion of ten hours of tutoring must be brought to the EPI.**

Your department has information regarding test dates and registration procedures.