

TIPS FOR THE MICROTEACHING TEST

I. Do I Need to Have a Microteaching Test?

If you will be a Teaching Assistant in **Modern and Classical Languages** you **do not need** to have a Microteaching Test.

For all other departments, if you received an Overall Score of (57)-(64) on the Versant (phone) Test **OR** if you received an Overall Score of (65) or higher, but a Pronunciation sub-score of less than (55), then you will need to pass the Microteaching Test to demonstrate your English proficiency and be certified to teach.

II. About the Test

The test consists of three parts: a 5-minute prepared presentation, a 2-minute question and answer session on your presentation and a 3-minute extemporaneous response to a question about the definition of a term related to your field of study.

You should prepare a **5-minute presentation** on a topic that would be taught in a beginner/ freshman/ 100's level class in your department. Think BASIC!

You will be rated by an instructor and several undergraduate students. You will also be videotaped. After the results have been compiled, you will have the opportunity to review your videotape with an instructor and will receive copies of all of the evaluation forms.

Your presentation will be timed; at the end of 5 minutes, a timer will sound. You can finish your sentence or thought, but **you do not have to present all of your prepared material!** When you hear the timer you should make some kind of summary or conclusion of the material you've presented so far. What we need is a 5-minute sample of your speech- by that time we will know how well we can understand you whether you finish the lesson or not.

You will then have **2-minutes for us to ask you questions.** The undergraduate raters are instructed to ask any kind of question they can think of; they may ask a question about something you explained quite clearly. **Don't be alarmed!** The purpose is to see how well you understand and respond to our questions.

After that, you will be asked to **define a common term in your field;** you will be asked, "Can you tell us what ____ is?" The term you are to define will be taken from a list that will be given to you when you register for the test.

III. Choosing a Topic

The best place to look for a topic is in a beginning level textbook in your field. These can usually be found in your department office, so check with your department administrative assistant. Choose a problem or topic from the first chapter or so—something that doesn't require a lot of prior knowledge of your subject. **DO NOT CHOOSE A GRADUATE LEVEL THESIS TOPIC!**

It might help you to imagine that an undergraduate student in your class has come to you with a question about this topic: "I don't understand **X**," "Can you explain **X** to me?" Your prepared presentation will be your response to that question.

IV. Structuring Your Prepared Presentation

Begin by greeting the class: For example, "Good morning/ afternoon everyone. My name is/ I am ____ and I'm from the **X** Department (or I am from **X**.)"

Tell us what you will be discussing: "Today we are going to be talking about **X**."

Don't forget to write your topic on the board!

Ask an opening question. A question can let you know if the audience is familiar with your topic; e.g. "Can anyone tell me what **X** is?" Questions also get the audience's attention and help them to start thinking about the subject; e.g. "Have you ever noticed...?" "Have you ever wondered...?" **Don't forget to wait for the class to respond!**

Present your prepared material. We may interrupt you with questions if we need to clarify something you've said. **Therefore, it is not a good idea to memorize your presentation word for word.** If you are interrupted you may forget where you are in your presentation and not be able to continue. We've seen it happen! It is OK to use notes or a written outline, but you may not read your presentation.

When the timer goes off, finish your thought/ sentence and then give a brief summary of what you've discussed so far. Again, you do not have to present all of your prepared material!

V. Answering Questions

As stated above, the undergraduate raters are instructed to ask any kind of question they can think of— good questions, bad questions, questions about things you may have explained clearly, irrelevant questions. A good rule of thumb: assume that we are asking a simple question that requires a simple, direct answer. Microteaching Test questions are unlikely to be about advanced theoretical aspects of your field.

VI. Definition of a Term

In this section of the test you will be asked to talk about one of the terms from the list you were given when you registered for the test. Again, think of this as being

like an undergraduate asking you questions during your office hours. **You are not being tested on your knowledge of your field.** We just want to make sure that you can talk about the subject matter in a way that undergraduates can comprehend easily.

VII. Getting Your Results

After you complete your test, the instructor will compile the responses from the evaluation forms. If only one instructor was present to rate your actual presentation, a second instructor will rate you by watching the video. How long it will take to get the results depends on the number of students who took the test at the same time. The results include if you Passed or Failed and what classes you are required to take, if any.

The results of the test will be sent to your department contact person (usually the department administrative assistant or TA coordinator.) Some departments send these results on to the students and some do not, so **if you have not been told what your result is, you need to ask.** You are responsible for following through on the recommended action, whether it be watching your videotape or taking an English class.

After you receive your results, **we strongly encourage you** to set up an appointment to view your videotape and receive copies of your evaluation forms, even if you have passed the test. There is always useful information in the video or helpful comments on the evaluations that you can use to encourage your strengths and strengthen your weaknesses.

To set up an appointment to watch your Microteaching Test video or to answer further questions about the Microteaching Test contact:
anne.halbert@uconn.edu