MEMO TO: Department Chairs

FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Cawlfield, Vice Provost, Academic Support

DATE: March 12, 2019

SUBJECT: Communication Skills Workshop for GTAs – Fall Semester 2019

The Communication Skills Workshop for Graduate Teaching Assistants will be offered August 12 – August 16, 2019. Seminars and related activities will take place Monday and Tuesday, August 12 & 13, and assessments for GTA appointments will be conducted Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, August 14, 15, & 16, 2019.

WHO IS INVOLVED: Anyone who is to be awarded a Graduate Teaching Assistant appointment must first be nominated to attend the workshop by his/her department chair and/or designee. As the Workshop is funded only to assess those students who will be holding a GTA position in the following semester, please be selective in these nominations. Students who wish to hold GTA appointments must successfully complete the workshop in order to meet the standards established by the campus and Board of Curators in compliance with Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 170.012 (attached).

RESERVATIONS: In order for potential GTAs to make necessary arrangements, please provide the workshop staff, the names and email addresses of all graduate students whom you anticipate will be attending the workshop by Friday, June 28, 2019. If you already know the names and email addresses of students who should be enrolled, please send them to the workshop staff now! Please send other names as you have them, keeping in mind the Friday, June 28, 2019 deadline, as enrollment after the deadline may not be possible.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS: To attend the workshop, non-native speakers of English must pass the SPEAK (Spoken English Assessment) test. Students should arrange to be tested on this campus by the workshop staff. The deadline for taking this test on this campus is Friday, July 26, 2019.

CAUTION: Please encourage non-native speakers currently on campus to sign up for the SPEAK as soon as possible. Workshop staff time is limited and only a few tests per day can be administered. However, your attention is especially called to Section 170.012.1 of the Missouri Revised Statutes (attached) that prevents non-native speakers from holding teaching appointments during their first semester of enrollment.

REASSESSMENTS: Those who did not pass assessment in a previous workshop may be reassessed and must submit their completed enrollment form as soon as they receive it but no later than Friday, July 26, 2019. Their participation in all workshop activities is mandatory.

For further information, please contact Lucy Sutcliffe lucys@mst.edu or Sylvia Dees deess@mst.edu or call the office at (573) 341-4863.
Graduate teaching assistants’ communication in English language requirements -- testing and reports.

170.012. 1. Any graduate student who did not receive both his primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language shall not be given a teaching appointment during his or her first semester of enrollment at any public institution of higher education in the state of Missouri. Exceptions may be granted in special cases upon approval of the chief academic and executive officers of the institution.

2. All graduate students who did not receive both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language shall be tested for their ability to communicate orally in English in a classroom setting prior to receiving a teaching appointment. Such testing shall be made available by the public institution at no cost to the graduate student.

3. All graduate students prior to filling a teaching assistant position as a graduate student, who have not previously lived in the United States shall be given a cultural orientation to prepare them for such teaching appointment.

4. All public institutions of higher education in this state shall provide to the coordinating board for higher education on a biennial basis a report on the number and language background of all teaching assistants, including a copy of the institutions current policy for selection of graduate teaching assistants.

5. The provisions of this section and sections 174.310 and 175.021 shall not apply to any person employed under a contract of employment in existence prior to August 13, 1986.