The Speak Test is offered to University of Nevada students by appointment. Please contact IELC for a speak test appointment. ESL@unr.edu or 775-784-6075

Background Information:
The SPEAK test is utilized by the Graduate School to determine the language skills of non-native English-speaking graduate teaching assistants. The SPEAK test is administered by the Graduate School Instructional Development (GSID) program staff. Each non-native English-speaking graduate teaching assistant is required to take the SPEAK test. The test is independently scored by two trained GSID staff members. If the scores are not in close agreement, a third GSID staff member scores the exam as well. The score reflects the English language speaking ability, and hence the degree to which the teaching assistant can communicate in a teaching situation. To insure that teaching assistants are assigned teaching duties consistent with their ability to communicate effectively in spoken English, the following guidelines are set forth:

Scoring Guidelines:
Test raters’ scores are averaged and final scores are reported in increments of 5. With a score of 50, 55 or 60 (out of a possible 60 points), the TA is eligible to teach with no restrictions. With a score of 45 or lower, the TA may provide teaching assistance such as grading, lab preparation, and other activities that involve a minimum of spoken English communication, AND must enroll in an appropriate English remediation Bridge Course through the Intensive English Language Center (IELC). The IELC will assess the language deficit and enroll the student in the appropriate course. In some cases, for students receiving a score of 40 or 45, English 519 would be recommended. This course is designed for international graduate students and involves all four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Testing Protocol:
The SPEAK test administrator suggests that the examinee spend time studying the SPEAK Practice Test and then meet with the test administrator to orally review the Practice Test prior to taking the SPEAK test. This procedure will, in many cases, help to lower the test anxiety of the examinee.
The Educational Testing Service, which produces the SPEAK test, suggests that a student should wait at least two months before retaking the SPEAK test. However, in cases of extreme nervousness or if an international student has just arrived in the United States, exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the SPEAK test administrator. In this case, if a student receives a score of 45, he/she may retake the test within two weeks. If the student does not achieve a score of 50 on the second test, he/she must wait two more months before retaking the test.

Bridge Courses and Enrollment Requirements:
Bridge course credits will be accepted towards fulfilling the enrollment requirement (6 credit minimum for graduate assistants), but cannot be used to fulfill graduate program requirements.