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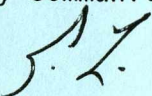


BULLETIN

To the Faculty, Staff and Students of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

Vol. 18, No. 8
July 13, 1987

MEMO TO: The University Community

FROM: Earl Lazerson 

SUBJECT: Public Act 84-1434

In order to comply with Public Act 84-1434, the University must undertake the process of certifying the oral English proficiency of all those who provide classroom instruction. The following material details the background of the Act, guidelines for implementation, and the process to be followed in responding.

Background

Senate Bill 1516, "An Act to require oral proficiency in the English language among all classroom instructors at public institutions of higher education," was approved by the House and Senate during the spring 1986 session of the Illinois General Assembly. On September 14, 1986, in vetoing the bill, Governor Thompson described its requirements as "a travesty to free speech and professionalism of our college personnel." After expressing his concern that the bill would exclude gifted scholars from Illinois classrooms, the Governor described its provisions as "a legislative remedy to an issue not identified at this time as a statewide or universal problem." Notwithstanding these concerns, a motion to override the veto passed the General Assembly during its fall 1986 session, and the bill became law over the Governor's objections.

The new law, Public Act 84-1434, amends the Charter of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University to provide that "the Board . . . shall establish a program to assess the oral English proficiency of all persons providing classroom instruction . . . and shall ensure that each person who is not orally proficient in the English language shall attain such proficiency prior to providing any classroom instruction to students. The program required by this section shall be fully implemented . . . by the beginning of the 1987-88 academic year. . . ."

A system-wide task force appointed by Chancellor Pettit on February 11, 1987, to develop recommendations with regard to compliance with the Act reported the results of its deliberations in early May. On June 11, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution incorporating recommendations of the task force and directed the issuance of guidelines for implementation of the policy.

Guidelines

The attached "Guidelines on the Implementation of Public Act 84-1434" assign to department chairs the primary responsibility for assessing the oral English proficiency of classroom instructors. As the attached form indicates, a chair may cite any of a wide variety of indicators in certifying that an instructor "is orally proficient in the use of the English language." Given the range of applicable indicators, chairs should be able to proceed expeditiously to the certification of most faculty members.

If available indicators appear insufficient or ambiguous in a particular instance, the chair must seek the advice of a Review Committee. If the Review Committee recommends certification of the instructor, the chair may cite that advice as one of the applicable indicators supporting his or her decision to certify. Conversely, if the Review Committee recommends that the instructor pursue an individual developmental program in oral literacy, the Review Committee may proceed to a favorable recommendation following the instructor's successful completion of the program.

Process

Because the Act requires full implementation "by the beginning of the 1987-88 academic year," we must proceed at once to address its requirements according to the following schedule:

- July 13 Student Senate and Faculty Senate receive requests for nominations to Review Committee
- July 22 Deadline for Review Committee nominations to Office of the President
- July 27 Review Committee appointed and charged
- August 3 Chair certifications of continuing (including all tenured) faculty judged proficient and notifications of requests for Review Committee recommendations due to deans
- August 26 Recommendations from Review Committee due to chairs
- August 28 Chair certifications of remaining continuing faculty (or notification of refusal to certify) due to deans
- September 15 Chair certifications of new faculty judged proficient and notifications of requests for Review Committee recommendations due to deans
- September 18 Review Committee recommendations due to chairs
- September 21 Chair certifications of remaining new faculty (or notification of refusal to certify) due to deans

Following this demanding period, during which we must consider within a short time the oral English proficiency of all current faculty members, the application of the law will be limited in practical terms to new faculty members, and departments can proceed to incorporate this review obligation into their respective recruitment practices.

In the meantime, however, we face a formidable challenge in responding sensitively, responsibly, and, above all, expeditiously to Public Act 84-1434. I know that the University community will respond with understanding and good will as we meet our legal obligation of compliance.

Attachments

CHANCELLOR GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC ACT 84-1434,
"ORAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS"

Pursuant to Board of Trustees resolution, the Chancellor of Southern Illinois University directs that Public Act 84-1434 be implemented at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Assessment Programs

- A. Programs to assess the oral English proficiency of all individuals who serve as classroom instructors for academic credit shall be established at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.
- B. Through such programs, each individual who seeks to serve as an instructor in classes offered for academic credit during the 1987-88 academic year and thereafter will be certified as being proficient in the oral use of the English language.

2. Assessment Procedures

- A. Primary responsibility for assessing oral English proficiency of classroom instructors will ordinarily reside at the departmental level, with the department chair undertaking individual assessment and certification. Primary responsibility for assessing the oral English proficiency of department chairs will ordinarily reside at the school or college level, with the dean undertaking the assessment and certification of chairs.
- B. Certification of oral English proficiency may be based upon one or more of the following indicators:
 - 1. Peer evaluation of a classroom session.
 - 2. Teaching evaluation forms completed by students.
 - 3. Oral presentation before an on-campus audience.
 - 4. Personal conference with the department chair.
 - 5. Departmental conference attended by students and/or faculty.
 - 6. Favorable recommendation by a campus-based special review committee (see paragraph 3 below).
 - 7. The successful completion of developmental activities on oral language proficiency.
 - 8. Other indicators appropriate to an individual's assessment.

- C. To the extent practicable, these indicators will be used to assess the oral English proficiency of current faculty, new faculty, current graduate teaching assistants, and new graduate teaching assistants. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to prevent the application of more rigorous standards.
- D. The dean of the appropriate school or college will indicate acceptance of a chair's certification. Such acceptance confirms the chair's authority and competence to undertake such assessment.
- E. A form which indicates certification will be placed in the permanent personnel file of the affected individual.

3. Special Review Committee

- A. The appropriate President will appoint special review committees for the Carbondale, Edwardsville, and Springfield campuses, and for other locations as necessary. Each committee shall have at least three members including one student, one faculty member, and an individual knowledgeable in the assessment of oral English proficiency.
- B. A department chair may choose to call upon the special review committee to assist in the assessment of the oral English proficiency of an individual.
- C. In the event that a department chair does not certify that an individual is proficient in the oral use of English, the special review committee will provide an independent assessment of the individual's oral English proficiency.
- D. In the event that the special review committee does not certify an individual as proficient, the committee working with the individual and the chair of the department will recommend an appropriate course of action to the dean of the individual's school or college.
- E. The committee may be called upon to assist in resolving student or faculty complaints regarding oral English proficiency.

4. Grievances

Nothing in these guidelines is intended to detract from or abrogate the rights and privileges enjoyed by students and faculty under existing grievance procedures.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY AT EDWARDSVILLE
CERTIFICATION OF ORAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Name of Instructor _____

Department _____ School _____

Rank _____ Date Hired _____

Certification of the oral English proficiency of the faculty member named is based upon the following indicator(s):

- A () Peer evaluation of a classroom session.
- B () Teaching evaluation forms completed by students.
- C () Oral presentation before an on-campus audience.
- D () Personal conference with the department chair.
- E () Departmental conference attended by students and/or faculty.
- F () Favorable recommendation by a campus-based special review committee.
- G () The successful completion of developmental activities on oral language proficiency.
- H () Other: _____.

Following evaluation of applicable indicators, I certify that the instructor named above is orally proficient in the use of the English language.

s/ _____

Name _____

Chair, Department of _____

Date _____

I accept this finding.

s/ _____

Name _____

Dean, School _____

Date _____

I have reviewed this form.

s/ _____

Named Instructor

Date _____

Public Act 84-1434 requires that all persons providing classroom instruction at Southern Illinois University be proficient in the oral use of English. Prior to the first day of the Fall Quarter, 1987, and thereafter, each individual who provides classroom instruction must be certified as proficient. This form, once completed, will become a part of the individual instructor's permanent personnel file.