**Summer Oral Skills Workshop for International TAs**

**Activities:**

The program will provide participants with a variety of speech/interaction environments to build learner confidence and add incremental challenge levels. Warmup activities will include instructor-led group discussions and small-group peer conversations. Challenging activities will include solo presentations to the full group of 15 participants and instructor. Less frequent, student-led interviews/interactions will involve invited staff or faculty guest speakers, and graduate student mentors/language partners who are expert English speakers.

Sample activities will include:

* Impromptu speaking topics
* Community-building conversation topics
* Brainstorm presentation topics
* Presentation on an assigned topic
* Presentation on a chosen topic
* Group critique of presentation
* Self-critique of presentation video
* Instructor critique of presentation video
* Short outside assignments: pronunciation/vocabulary instructional videos, sample presentations (1-2 hours per week)
* Longer outside assignments: prepare and practice for an in-class presentation (2-3 hours per week)

**Outcomes:**

The program aims to improve fluency, comprehensibility, and appropriateness in conversations, presentations, and Q/A discussion on academic topics. Successful participants will improve their overall ability by alternately isolating and synthesizing discrete language skills. A detailed list of outcomes follows:

Audience engagement: Body language; eye contact

* Participants will use gestures, facial expression, and eye contact.
* Participants will effectively position themselves in the room.

Audience engagement: Opening questions and other “hooks”

* Participants will design openings that activate latent knowledge and arouse curiosity.

Organizing: signpost vocabulary

* Participants will use transitional words and phrases and other discourse markers.

Organizing: Pausing, pacing, and vocal inflection

* Participants will use rhythm and intonation to signal idea boundaries and idea relationships.

Clarity: articulation, pace, and volume

* Participants will effectively modulate speed and volume.
* Participants will develop clear articulation of vowels and consonants.
* Participants will choose words appropriate to their target audience, i.e., undergraduate students in an introductory class.
* Participants will introduce technical words in ways that are appropriate to their target audience.

Interaction: answering questions

* Participants will respond appropriately to audience questions

Interaction: negotiating difficult questions

* Participants will seek clarification from audience members

Teaching skills: white board use

* Participants will use white board/chalk board effectively

Teaching skills: PowerPoint slides

* Participants will prepare and use slides effectively

Test preparation: Understanding the TA English Language Evaluation

* Participants will know the purpose and format of the evaluation
* Participants will understand cultural norms appropriate to the evaluation

**Assessment:**

The program will involve three assessment components: student self-assessment (pre- and post-program); instructor assessment of students (pre- and post-) and a post-program self-evaluation by the instructor of the program overall.

**A. Students’ self-assessment**

* Students will self-assess **on the first day, and again on the last day**, of the program.
* Students will rate their confidence and perceived ability in each of several dimensions which the workshop is designed to address.

The dimensions vary from general to specific and therefore overlap:

(1) Confidence to give clear academic presentations in English;

(2) Confidence to carry on conversations effectively in English with native speakers;

(3) Ability to speak fluently, i.e., at a natural speed, without excessive pausing or slowing;

(4) Ability to clearly pronounce speech sounds (i.e., vowels and consonants) when giving a presentation or academic conversation;

(5) Knowledge of cultural appropriateness in academic conversations and presentations.

**B. Instructor’s assessment of students**

The instructor will assess each student **at the beginning, and again at the end,** of the program. Students will be video recorded giving a three-minute self-introduction (i.e., your background, your research emphasis, and a general definition of your research field or research question). The first assessment will take place on the first or second workshop day, and the final assessment will be made sometime during the last two workshop days.

Criteria for instructor assessment will be more specific than for the student self-assessment:

1. Fluency
   1. Speaks w/o excessive pausing or slowing
   2. Speaks in semantically dense units
   3. Links speech units smoothly
   4. Answers questions at length and in sufficient detail
2. Language accuracy
   1. Articulates segmental (vowel, consonant) speech sounds carefully
   2. Links syllables and words effectively
   3. Modulates intonation effectively
   4. Modulates rhythm effectively
   5. Accuracy at the word, sentence, and rhetorical levels
3. Appropriateness to context
   1. Chooses topics appropriate to an academic presentation/conversation
   2. Chooses words appropriately in a variety of contexts
   3. Uses a volume appropriate to the room/audience size
   4. Uses hedging, linking, and interacting vocabulary effectively
   5. Answers questions appropriately
   6. Body language contributes to effective communication

**Schedule:**

The beginning and ending dates have been chosen so that students will not arrive in the U.S. more than the legally allowable interval before the start of fall quarter classes, and so that instruction will end close to the date on which TA English Language evaluations are planned to begin.

Thursday-Sunday, August 24-27: Students arrive (no instruction)

Monday, August 28: Class 9 a.m. – noon

Tuesday, August 29: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Wednesday, August 30: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Thursday, August 31: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Friday, September 1: Class 9 a.m. – noon

Monday, September 4: Labor Day (no instruction)

Tuesday, September 5: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Wednesday, September 6: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Thursday, September 7: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Friday, September 8: Class 9 a.m. – noon

Monday, September 11: Class 10 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Tuesday, September 12: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Wednesday, September 13: Class 9 a.m. – noon; individual/pair/small group instruction TBA

Thursday, September 14: Class 9 a.m. – noon (last day of instruction)