**ALI 235: Academic and Professional Writing**

**Section No: 10115**

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| **Instructor: Juli Kirkpatrick** | **Office: PSD 106S** |
| **Classroom: THH 117** | **Email: jkirkpat@usc.edu** |
| **Class time**: 2:00-3:20pm | **Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-12pm** |
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| Semester Holidays: **1/18, and 2/15**  ***Spring Break 3/14-3/18*** | Last Day of Classes**: 4/26** |

**According to USC:** “The ability to communicate effectively in English - to read, write and speak the language fluently - is vital to your success as a university student, and may also serve as a vital tool in your future academic and professional success. USC graduate students are therefore expected to demonstrate proficiency in English at all levels of graduate study.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Course description**

In this course you will work on writing skills needed to succeed in the academic environment at USC. The course will use instructor provided as well as student provided authentic materials on academic topics. The assignments and course work cover major components of academic writing, including understanding the organizational structure of academic papers, paraphrasing and summarizing others’ ideas, and using outside sources to support arguments. The course will also cover specific language issues (grammar, vocabulary, register) that are often problematic for non-native speakers of English.

**Course goals**

The overall goal of this course is to make your writing more accurate and academically appropriate. Accordingly, in this class you will do the following:

* Learn about the conventions of academic writing
* Apply the process of synthesizing and citing outside sources through research
* Use paraphrasing /summarizing skills to avoid plagiarism.
* Vary sentence structure to improve cohesiveness, conciseness and precision
* Edit your writing and vocabulary to develop awareness of greater usage accuracy
* Implement digital media tools to enhance your writing experience

Proficiency in English. USC Graduate Admissions: International Students. Retrieved on Oct. 18, 2012, from http://www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/english.html

**Course materials**

1. *Writing Up Research* by Robert Weissburg and Suzanne Buker (Chapters 2 and 3 on Blackboard)
2. Caplan, Nigel A *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan (ISBN: 9780472035014)

In addition to the required textbooks for the course, selected websites and Handouts will be loaded onto the USC Blackboard website for course assignments and readings. You will find these under the Course Content section of Blackboard. During the course you will also be required to find academic journals that specifically address issues related to your Final Reseach Paper.

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments are not accepted except in the case of serious personal emergencies and with the prior approval of your instructor. You should therefore work on assignments well before the due date so that it will not have as big of an impact on your work.

**Office Hours**

Office hours provide you with a time to ask questions and discuss the course content. If you are unable to attend the scheduled office hours, please feel free to contact your instructor and set up a time to meet.

**ALI attendance policy**

Improving proficiency in a second language requires practice; hence, it is important that you not miss classes. If you find it absolutely necessary to be absent from class because of illness or an emergency, keep in mind that you are responsible to master all information presented during your absence. Do not ask the instructor to repeat important information - identify a classmate who will help you.

More than 6 hours of absence will result in a course grade of NC (no credit). Absence is counted for *any* reason, including illness, emergencies, and conference attendance. (Athletes, please note that a written excuse for absence due to competitions must be filed with the ALI Student Advisor.)

**Assessment:** This is a credit/no credit (CR/NC) class, which means that you will not receive a final letter grade (A/B/C/F) on your USC transcript. However, assignments are given to prepare for and practice material that is covered in class and the point totals for the assignments must be 70% in order to pass the course. Since this is a proficiency-based course designed to help improve your academic writing skills, your proficiency in these skills at the *end* of the course determines whether you will need an additional class or not. Therefore, it is in your own interest to do your best on each assignment. Do not expect your writing ability to improve simply by coming to class and putting minimum effort into your assignments.

**Course Assignments 2-4 combine to make a final research Paper**

Writing #1–Introductory report on Classmate

Writing #2- Short writing on concept from field.

Midterm Exam on Grammar elements

Writing #3 –Establishing the Context and Integrating a Literature Review

Writing #4 –First Draft of Problem/Solution Paper plus Midterm slides

Writing #5- Final draft of Paper and Digital Representation in Group Media Project

To help the instructor evaluate your writing progess and proficiency, the course grading will be based on a 100% grading scale with the following breakdown

**Selected Writing Assignments 30%**

**Midterm Exam 25%**

**Final Research Paper 25%**

**Group Media Project 20%**

**Evaluation Criteria for Research Paper**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Content | Grammatical Structure & Style | Sources & Citation | Organization |
| Range and depth of argument and/or analysis; logic of argument; quality of research or original thoughts; awareness of opposing views. Use of | Ease of readability; appropriate voice, tone and style for assignment; use of hedging-boosting language; clarity of and variety of sentence structure; absence of comma splices, run-ons, fragments; accurate spelling; careful proofreading | Use of 3 minimum sources specified; use of proper in-text citations using appropriate style (e.g., APA, IEEE, MLA); reference/works cited page at the end of the paper | Clarity of thesis statement; logical and clear arrangement of ideas, effective use of transitions; good development of ideas through supporting details and evidence |

**Academic integrity**

USC upholds high standards of academic integrity. ALI, in keeping with these standards, has to ensure that international students, new to the university learn to practice academic integrity. Copying another writer’s work, improperly paraphrasing or citing a source, and getting outside assistance with your work constitute academic dishonesty and can have serious consequences on your status as a student at USC. In this course, we will discuss ways to promote academic integrity in your work (for information on how to avoid plagiarism, see <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/grad_ai.htm>.Please note that while it may be helpful to have a native speaker proofread a paper for a class in your major, this would be considered cheating in this class because you are being evaluated on *your* English skills, not someone else’s.

**Students with disabilities**

Any student requiring accommodation based on a disability is required to register with the Disability Services and Programs office (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved recommendations can be obtained through DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 9:00am-5:00pm, M-F. The DSP phone number is (213) 740-0776.

**Classroom courtesy**

As a courtesy to your classmates and teacher, please make sure that your cell phones are off during class time and refrain from conversation when your teacher or others are talking. Text-messaging /social media is distracting, please stay focused on the class activities for maximum benefit. Also, please use only English in the classroom.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism—presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words—is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, [*Behavior Violating University Standards*](https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on [scientific misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the [*Office of Equity and Diversity*](http://equity.usc.edu/), or to the [*Department of Public Safety*](http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us). This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community—such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member—can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. [*The Center for Women and Men*](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/), provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage, [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu), describes reporting options and other resources.

## Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the [*American Language Institute*](http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali), which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. [*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html),provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes

travel to campus infeasible, [*USC Emergency Information*](http://emergency.usc.edu/), will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Course Schedule: *Please note that this is subject to change at instructor’s discretion***

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| Week | Weekly Topics | Lessons and Assignments |
| 1 | Summary and Response Diagnostic  Course Introduction  Classmate Interviews | HW  **Writing #1** Classmate Introduction Paragraph  (*bring hard copy to class for peer review week 2)*    **Submit Writing #1 on BB and add comparative paragraph about yourself** |
| 2 | Compare backgrounds with classmate  Peer Review of Classmate Paragraph  GC Unit 4 pp. 64-65  Correcting for VT and Reported Speech  On Writing #1 | HW  *Read Writing Up Research (WUR)Chapter 2 pp20-27 Do. Exercises 2.5-2.10* ***on BB***  *Bring example from Ex 2.4 to class*  ***Submit on Blackboard***  ***Writing #2*** *Write 2-3 paragraphs explaining a concept from you field to a non-expert audience* |
| 3 | Conferences on Tues/Wed to go over first 2 writing assignments  GC Unit 2 | HW  WUR ex. 2.5 2.6 and 2.7  **Revise/Submit Writing #2 on Blackboard** |
| 4 | Summary Writing Skills  Use of Introductory Phrases  Attributive Verbs  Appropriate VT | Go over examples from WUR Chapter 2 HW  Naked Olympics In class Summary  *HW*  *Read WUR Chapter 3 pp. 41-49*  Ex 3.2 and 3.3  Ex. 3.4 (Bring sample lit review to class) |
| 5 | GC Unit 3  Reviewing Previous Research  Citation Focus(Info vs. Author Prominent)  *Go over WUR Chapter 3* pp. 50-56  Library Orientation | HW Gather sources for a 3-5 page paper about a problem/trend in your field. |
| 6 | GC Unit 5 Count/non-count nouns  Generic References. | *Read WUR Chapter 4* pp.65-74  Write a 2-3 paragraph introduction plus literature Review on concept/trend Challenge related to major (Problem/Solution Format)  Follow example in WUR ex. 2.2 p. |
| 7 | Midterm Review and Exam | **HW Writing #3 Draft 1**  Submit 2-3 page Introduction plus Literature Review on Blackboard (min 3 sources) |
| 8 | **Midterm Consultations on Exam plus**  **Feedback on Writing #3**  **Discuss preparation of PPT slides** | Revise Writing #3 and complete entire 3-5 page paper with evaluation/discussion of possible solutions/implications  Prepare PPT slides to share with Class wk 9 |
| 9 | Share slides in class | Submit completed 2nd draft of Writing #3  Submit PPT Slides Writing #4 on BB |
| 10 | Spring Break |  |
| 11 | Refining Paper  Developing your Academic Claims  Introduction of Media Projects  (Choice of individual or group digital projects)  Using Evaluative Language -hedging/boosting  ***Chapter 6*** | HW Add more evaluation discussion to Writing #3 Draft 2 by using  more hedging/boosting language to |
| 12 | Classes canceled due to Conference attendance | Work on Digital Media Projects./Individual papers |
| 13 | In class work on digital media projects  GC Unit 7 | Individually Revise Final Paper (Writing #5) |
| 14 | Present digital media project to rest of class. | HW  **Final Draft Writing #5 due on Blackboard** |
| 15 | Last Day of Class- Course Evals |  |

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)