

## ALI 235: Intermediate Writing Skills (2 units)

**Section No:** 10112

**Instructor:** Pamela Minet-Lucid

**Office:** PSD 106R

**Classroom:** THH 117

**Email:** minetluc@usc.edu

**Class time:** Fridays 9-11:50

**Office Hours:** by apt.

**Cell:** 808 428 8091

**Semester Holidays:**

**Jan. 16 (Mon) Martin Luther King's Bday**

**Feb. 20 (Mon) Presidents' Day**

**March 13-17 (Mon-Fri) Spring Break**

**Last day of Class:**

**April 21 – our class**

**Apr. 25 – all ALI courses**

**Apr. 28 – all USC courses**

**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.”<sup>1</sup>

### **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. You will work on writing in a variety of ways through focused, consecutive writing, writing interactively, writing using images to support ideas, writing for academic digital media like blogs, e-books, videos, presentations.

### **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:

- Practice (a lot) and develop your fluency and accuracy in writing in English
- 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

<sup>1</sup> 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

### Required Textbook (not in bookstore)

**Book title:** *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers*

**Author:** Nigel A. Caplan

**Publisher:** University of Michigan Press

**Date:** 2012

**ISBN-13:** 978-0-472-03501-4

Additional handouts will be given in class and posted on Blackboard, including:  
*Writing Up Research* by Robert Weissburg and Suzanne Buker (Pdf on BB site)

Course content and reading/ writing assignments on Blackboard are an essential part of this course. Students are responsible for course assignments and updates announced on Blackboard and sent via e-mail. Hence, it is important to check Blackboard and e-mail on a regular basis.

### LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments are not encouraged and may not be accepted except in the case of emergencies and with the prior approval of your instructor.

### OFFICE HOURS

Your instructor has office hours for one-to-one meeting with students. Office hours provide you with a time to ask questions and discuss the course content. 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, hopefully you will not need to miss class. However, if you find it 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.

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

Assignments	Percentage of Total Grade
<b>Paper 1 – interview</b> your classmate and introduce yourself	10%
Personal or professional <b>blog</b> 4-7 entries over the term	10%
<b>Paper 2:</b> A problem or issue from your field and include an image (1-2 pages)	10%
Midterm in-class writing assessment	10%
End of term in-class Writing Assessment	10%
<b>Problem-solution paper (in two parts)—<i>this can be on the same topic as Paper 2:</i></b>  <b>Paper 3: literature review</b> (summarizing and synthesizing information from sources) —establishiing a context and providing background information on a problem. (1-3 pages; minimum 3 sources)  <b>Paper 4: Problem-solution research paper:</b> Evaluating, analyzing and concluding the solution (s) to a problem – includes the literature review information. This paper adds to the writing in Paper 3 and provides a solution to the problem. (Could also write a new paper, if desired) (4-6 pages; minimum 5 sources)	10%  15%
<b>Writing Slides (about your paper topic) –</b> using parallel structure and nominalization; citing sources (5 slides minimum; share your topic in a small group)	5 %
Group Media-Based Writing project	10%
Classwork, attendance, participation, in-class writing, interactive writing	10%

## 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](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.

## 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](#). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on [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](#), or to the [Department of Public Safety](#). 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](#), 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. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the [American Language Institute](#), which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. [The Office of Disability Services and Programs](#), 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](#), 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. Please use the homework given in class or the announcements posted on Blackboard as the final information on assignment requirements and due dates. Thanks!**

*A variety of grammar issues will be covered depending on the specific needs of the students. Vocabulary work and in-class practice sessions will also be incorporated into the coursework.*

Week	Weekly Topics	Lessons and Assignments
1	Diagnostic Classmate Interviews Course Introduction/Syllabus Review Check VT and Reported Speech Compare backgrounds with classmate	<u>HW</u> Writing Assignment: Classmate Introduction Submit on BB Buy TEXTBOOK
2	Identifying Plagiarism Paraphrasing Practice <b>CG Chapter 2</b> Academic writing strategies Bloggin and journaling – developing fluency	<u>HW</u> Writing Assignment: – Personal blog
3	<b>Grammar Choices (GC) Chapter 2</b> Clauses GC Chapter 3 Professional writing – resume/cover letter	<u>HW</u> Begin Paper 2: Introduce an issue from your field of study with an image
4	GC Chapter 3  Summary Writing Skills Use of Introductory Phrases Attributive Verbs Appropriate VT  Workshop on Paper 2 INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES WITH STUDENTS over weeks 4-6	Submit Paper 2 – end of week
5	Reviewing Previous Research Citation Focus(Info vs. Author Prominent) <i>Selection from WUR and other sources</i> Library Orientation GC Chapter 4 Verbs	<u>HW</u> Begin Paper 3: Literature review paper (section) Gather sources/create REF works list
6	Preparing Questions for Further Research GC Chapters 4	

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	Workshop on Paper 3	
7	<p>Use of Indirect Questions in Purpose Statements</p> <p>Modal Verbs/Degree of Tentativeness</p> <p>Negative Formations- little (non-count)/few (count)</p> <p>Preparing for PPT Presentation</p> <p>GC Chapter 5</p>	<p><u>HW Paper 3 – lit review paper due end of week or beginning of week 8.</u></p> <p>Submit/workshop on parts of the paper</p>
8	<p>Parallel Structure in writing and presentations</p> <p>PPT Oral Presentations (in groups) – writing slides</p> <p>Mid-term writing assessment</p>	<p>Explain the context/importance of topic/personal connection with it/ need for further research/evaluation</p> <p><u>HW</u></p> <p>Submit Writing Assignment -- PPT Slides on BB</p>
9	<p><u>Slides due</u></p> <p><u>Midterm Consultations-</u></p> <p>Discuss how to further research</p>	<p>.Think about and get assignment for: Paper 4 (this is cumulative)</p> <p>– solutions, evaluation, argument ... develop lit review topic further or new topic. 5 pages minimum; five sources; correct academic format for your field of study</p>
10	SPRING BREAK	
11	<p>Conducting Own Research</p> <p>Developing your Academic Claims (Choice of individual or pair digital projects)</p> <p>GC Chapter 6</p> <p>Begin Group Digital Media Project</p>	<p><u>HW</u> Begin planning digital media writing project –group media project</p> <p>Work on Paper 4</p>
12	<p>Using Evaluative Language -hedging/boosting</p> <p>GC Chapter 6 continues</p> <p>Writing with the Corpora</p> <p>GC Chapter 7</p>	<p><u>HW work on Paper 4</u></p> <p>Add more data/evaluation/suggestions to literature review paper (paper 3) or work on new topic for Paper 4</p>
13	<p>GC 6-7</p> <p>In-class workshop on Paper 3</p>	<p><i>Submit</i> Paper 4: (compiled or new paper) on BB (this week or next week)</p> <p>Revise digital media project as needed</p>
14	<p>In class work on Digital Media Projects</p> <p>Teacher Feedback on media projects drafts</p> <p>Grammar Issues review</p> <p>Media Project workshop</p> <p>GC Chapter 8</p>	
15 Last Day April 21	<p>Present /share digital media projects</p> <p>End of term in class Writing Assessment</p>	<p><i>Submit</i> digital media project to BB</p>