

ALI 245: High Intermediate Writing Skills (2 units)

Section No.: 10157

Instructor: Nina Kang

Office: JEF209

Classroom: THH209

Email: ninakang@usc.edu

Class time: 2-3:20pm

Office Hours: TBD

Midterm Exam: Oct 13 (Mon)

Writing Assessment: Nov 19 (Wed)

Semester Holidays:

Sep 1 (Mon) Labor Day

Last day of Class: Dec 1 (Mon)

Nov 26-28 (Wed-Fri) Thanksgiving

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has been designed to give you the academic writing skills needed to succeed in an American university and be prepared for an academic or professional world. Readings and assignments cover major components of academic writing, including genre-specific rhetorical organization and styles, data commentaries, paraphrasing, summarization, and citation. These units also cover specific language issues (grammar, vocabulary, academic and professional register) that can be difficult for non-native speakers of English.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to prepare you for professional writing experiences. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Craft texts in different genres (e.g., summary, problem statement, annotations, etc.).
- Produce an original academic research paper in your field of studies.
- Practice analysis in written form through synthesis of academic papers.
- Provide constructive feedback to peers on their written work, and address issues identified by the instructor and peers when revising one's own written work.
- Correctly use the preferred citation style (e.g., IEEE, MLA) in your field of studies.
- Use standard written English's conventions or grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Learn strategies to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

¹ Proficiency in English. USC Graduate Admissions: International Students. Retrieved on Jan. 10, 2014, from <http://www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/english.html>

COURSE MATERIALS

Swales, John M., & Feak, Christine B. (2012) *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills* (3rd ed.). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. (ISBN: 978-0-472-03475-8)

In addition to textbook required for the course, selected websites and handouts will be loaded onto USC Blackboard website: <https://blackboard.usc.edu> for course assignments and readings. You will find these under the “Course Documents” section of Blackboard. During the course, you will also be required to find academic journals that specifically address issues related to your Final Research 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

Your instructor has scheduled regular office hours for one-to-one meeting with students. 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. Assignments are given to prepare for and practice material that is covered in class. 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 your final assessment. 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. You will be expected to demonstrate significant and meaningful improvement in your writing skills by the end of the semester.

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
Selected writing assignments	50%
Midterm Exam	10%
Writing Assessment	10%
Final Research paper	30%

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & EXAM

There will be in-class tests and home assignments during the semester. These serve as self-assessment for you to see your strength and weaknesses as well as for the instructor to see areas where additional instruction is necessary. The in-class midterm, in-class writing assessment, and the final research paper, together with the on-going evaluation of your work will help the instructor assess your writing skills.

Midterm & Final Exam

Students are required to pass the midterm and writing assessment with a score equivalent to 70% in order to receive credit for the course. The Midterm will include course material covered up to that point in the semester. The writing assessment, which is cumulative, will require students to demonstrate writing skills reflecting significant, meaningful, and verifiable progress.

Writing Assignments

Graded writing assignments will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor and may include the following: Process Writing, Extended Definition, Process Description, Literature Review, Annotated Bibliography, Critical Reviews (of books, products, or movie), and Summary Writing.

Professional Writing

Students will have the opportunity to develop a professional writing portfolio consisting of cover letter, resume, bio-statements, etc. Other aspects of professional writing, such as email and letters of complaints may be discussed in class.

Final Research Paper

The major assignment for this course is a Final Research Paper. The purpose of the final project is to provide you with an experience of writing a research paper as a specialist in your field. The final project requires demonstration of a number of distinct academic writing skills in both creation and presentation (which we will cover in the course of the semester) of your paper. Please note, your topic must be approved prior to officially starting your research writing process. You may NOT change your topic without instructor's approval. Therefore, be thoughtful and conscientious about your topic choice.

The Final Research Paper must meet the following requirements:

- Approximately 7-pages in length (double-spaced) in 12-point font
- Minimum of 2 illustrations (e.g., table, graph, chart) with data commentary
- Minimum of 5 scholarly sources (preferably peer-reviewed journals)
- Documentation of sources using the style in your field (e.g., APA, IEEE)
- “Reference/Works Cited” page at the end of your essay where you list the sources you used in your paper (not counted towards the required minimum)

Final papers must be turned in by the due date unless a student has experienced a serious emergency (contact the instructor). In addition to submitting a hardcopy of the paper, student may be additionally asked to submit their final paper to turnitin.com via Blackboard to ensure that the work is not plagiarized.

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 understand, internalize, and 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 is distracting, please stay focused on the class activities for maximum benefit. Also, please use English only in the classroom.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Computer use as a tool to learning is acceptable in the classroom, but please keep in mind the importance of being courteous and attentive to the professor and other students when they are speaking. In other words, NO social media use should go on during class time.

Course Schedule*

WEEK	TASK	HOMEWORK
1	Diagnostic Course Introduction Unit 5, Summary Writing	Response Writing to Myth of America's Decline Bio Statement, Email
2	*Labor Day Holiday Professional Writing (Bio Statements, Resume, Cover Letter, Email)	Summary Writing
3	Library Orientation Database Research using RefWorks	Professional Writing
4	Cont. Professional Writing Academic Integrity & Citation	Cont. revising prof writings Unit 1, TBD
5	Approach to Academic Writing Unit 1, pp. 4-49	Unit 2, TBD
6	General-Specific Text Unit 2, selections from pp. 55-87	Term Definitions
7	Cont. Unit 2 Midterm Exam Review	Writing Assignment Take-home Practice Midterm Exam
8	MIDTERM EXAM Grammar Review	Unit 3, TBD
9	Problem-Solution Text Unit 3, pp. selections from pp.100-130; 137-8	Unit 4, TBD
10	Qualtrics Survey Collaborative Writing Project	
11	Data Commentary Unit 4, selections from pp. 139-180	
12	Cont. Units 3 & 4	Writing Final Paper
13	Writing Workshop	Writing Final Paper
14	Writing Assessment Final Paper Presentation	Writing Final Paper
15	Consultation	

**Subject to change at instructor's discretion*