ALI 235: Intermediate Writing Skills (2 units)

Section No.: 10123

Instructor: Nina Kang

Office: PSD 106J

Classroom: SOS B45

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Class time: TTh 2-3:20

Office Hours: TBA

Midterm Exam: Oct. 11 (Tues)

Final Exam: Nov. 17 (Thurs)

Semester Holidays:
Sep. 3 (Mon) - Labor Day
Nov. 23-25 (Wed-Fri) - Thanksgiving

Last Day of Class:
ALI – Nov. 29
USC – Dec. 2

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. USC graduate students are therefore expected to demonstrate English-language proficiency."[1] A degree from USC signifies that the holder has achieved the proficiency in English that is required for professional and academic endeavors

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 Objectives

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
- Use standard written English's conventions or grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

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[1] Proficiency in English. USC Graduate Admissions: International Students. Retrieved on Jan. 7, 2016, from http://www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/english.html

Course Materials

Caplan, Nigel A. (2012). *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. (ISBN: 9780472035014)

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 "Weekly Lessons/Course Content" sections 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 do 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.

Selected Writing Assignments 40%
Midterm Exam 20%
Writing Assessment 10%
Final Research paper 30%

Course Assignments & Exam
There will be an in-class exam 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, writing assignments, and the final research paper, together with the on-going evaluation of your work will help the instructor assess your writing skills.

Midterm & End-of-Term Writing Assessment
Students are required to pass the midterm and the final 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 will require students to demonstrate writing skills reflecting significant, meaningful, and verifiable progress.

Professional Writing
Students will have the opportunity to develop a professional writing portfolio consisting of resume, bio-statements, etc. Other aspects of professional writing, such as email and cover letters 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 4-5 pages in length (double-spaced) in 12-point font
- Minimum of 3 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)

Additionally, 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 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://studentaffairs.usc.edu/files/2015/11/SCampus-Final-112015_v8.pdf. 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://dps.usc.edu/contact. 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://engemannshc.usc.edu/cwm/ , provides 24/7 confidential support, and the *Sexual Assault Resource Center* webpage, https://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://ali.usc.edu/ , which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs*, http://dsp.usc.edu/ , 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.

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 tim

Course Schedule*

WEEK	TASK	HOMEWORK
1	Diagnostic Course Introduction	Classmate Report Writing
2	Professional Writing (Bio Statements, Resume, Email)	Bio Statement, Email
3	Cont. Professional Writing	Resume/CV
4	GC, Unit 4 (verbs) Academic Integrity & Citation	Cont. revising prof writings Unit 4, TBD
5	GC, Unit 1 Summary Writing	Unit 1, TBD Summary Writing
6	General-Specific Text/Choosing a Topic GC, Unit 2	Introduction Writing Unit 2, TBD
7	Final Research Paper Midterm Exam Review	Take-home Practice Midterm
8	MIDTERM EXAM Consultations	Topic Proposal
9	Library Orientation Database Research using RefWorks	Unit 3, TBD Outline & References
10	Final Research Paper GC, Unit 3	Unit 4, TBD
11	Problem-Solution Text GC, Unit 4	Unit 6, TBD
12	Hedging/Qualifications GC, Unit 6	Writing Final Paper
13	Style Guides Writing Workshop	Writing Final Paper
14	Writing Assessment Feedback on Writing	Writing Final Paper
15	Consultation	

Subject to change at instructor's discretion

American Language Institute   *Course Syllabus, ALI 235*