

## ALI 244 Advanced Intermediate Oral Skills

Instructor: Olivia V. Martínez

Office: PSD 106S

Email: ovmartin@usc.edu

Office hours: TBA

**USC'S UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENT:** According to the University, "[a]cademic success in the United States depends on your ability to communicate effectively in English,"<sup>1</sup> and the "ability to communicate effectively in English—to read, write and speak the language fluently—is vital to your success as a university student."<sup>2</sup>

**PREREQUISITES:** Students are placed into ALI 244 based on the results of the International Student English (ISE) Exam<sup>3</sup> or a previous ALI oral skills course.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to help you meet the above requirement by improving your oral communication skills. More specifically, you will work on

- grammatical accuracy
- clearer pronunciation
- fluency
- vocabulary use
- cultural awareness
- listening comprehension

These language skills will be addressed in the process of doing various academic communicative activities, such as

- telling a story
- summarizing articles on a topic
- leading and participating in discussions
- creating research questions
- conducting a survey
- analyzing, graphing, and reporting data
- giving presentations
- practicing for a job interview

**COURSE MATERIALS:** All handouts will be made available on Blackboard. Please be sure to check Blackboard before each class and have your printed materials ready for each class.

---

<sup>1</sup> International applicants. *University of Southern California: Undergraduate admissions*. Retrieved on January 4, 2013, from [http://www.usc.edu/admission/undergraduate/apply/inter\\_students.html](http://www.usc.edu/admission/undergraduate/apply/inter_students.html)

<sup>2</sup> Proficiency in English. *University of Southern California Graduate Admissions: International students*. Retrieved on January 4, 2013, from <http://www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/englishproficiency.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali/ise/>

**ALI ATTENDANCE POLICY:** More than **3** hours of absence will be reported to the ALI student advisor. 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.)

**TARDINESS POLICY:** Attending class on time is important since tardiness is an inconvenience to your classmates. Coming to class late will also count towards the number of hours missed.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** ALI and USC are very diligent in keeping students honest about their work. Copying another writer's work, improperly paraphrasing or citing a source, and getting "editorial revision by another person that results in substantive changes in content or major alteration of writing style" constitute academic dishonesty and can have serious consequences on your status as a student at USC.<sup>4</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:**

- Story-telling presentation
- U.S. Constitution presentation
- Survey Presentation
- Job interview
- Other assignments
- Participation

Please note: 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. Since this is a proficiency-based course designed to help improve your oral skills, your proficiency in these oral skills at the end of the course determines whether you will be advised to take an additional class or not. Therefore, it is in your own interest to do your best to participate fully in every assignment.

**MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:** There will be three major assignments in this course.

Storytelling presentation: You will give a 4-minute presentation in which you tell a story and reflect on the meaning of the story. The purpose of this story is for you to learn to connect with your audience in words and body language.

US Constitution Project: This is a group project in which you will create a survey and lead discussions about the US Constitution. You will give two group presentations on this project.

Job interview: This will be a mock interview in which you sell yourself as the best candidate for a job position.

Additional details on each assignment will be provided during the semester.

---

<sup>4</sup> Behavior violating university standards and appropriate sanctions. *University of Southern California: SCampus student guidebook*. Retrieved on January 4, 2013, from <http://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>

**CONFERENCING AND OFFICE HOURS:** During the semester I will be meeting with you individually to discuss your progress and strategize with you to help you reach your personal goals in English communication. In addition, please feel free to stop by during my office hours to practice your English.

**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. For more information, see [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html).

**CLASSROOM COURTESY:** As a courtesy to your classmates and teacher, please refrain from chit-chat when others are talking. Use of technology (e.g., smart phones, iPads) is permissible when looking up information or checking the definition of a word; however, text-messaging is distracting and takes your attention from class discussion, so it is forbidden during class. Also, while it is understandably easier to speak your native language to others from your home country, this can be uncomfortable to others in the class who don't speak your language and certainly defeats the purpose of being in an English class, so please use English only in the classroom.

**HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY SPEAKING SKILLS?:** Most of you have already studied English for many years, and you have a great deal of passive knowledge; in other words, you know a lot of grammar and vocabulary, but you just have a difficult time using it fluently. In this class, we will give you information and practice to help you improve your pronunciation, intonation, and fluency, but without lots of practice outside of class, you will not see much improvement. One cannot play piano or basketball by just learning about the instrument or sport; hours and hours of practice are necessary. The same is true about language learning. Just physically being in the US will not improve your English (there are people who have lived in Los Angeles for over 20 years who can hardly speak English). If you really want to improve your English communication skills while you are at USC, make sure you are using English the majority of the time you are speaking. Do your best to find opportunities to converse with others in English, even other non-native speakers of English.

Other sources/Apps: Duolingo, Elevate, Illuminate, Google Voice/Siri, Rachel's English (YouTube Channel), ALI Conversation Groups (details TBA).

**COURSE CALENDAR:** Please note that changes may be made at the teacher's discretion.

Week	Topics/Activities	Assignments
1	Course introduction; listening diagnostic and diagnostic presentation	Watch and evaluate your story. Begin revising
2 (Martin Luther King Jr.)	What makes a good story? Discussion of cultural issues/US Constitution Job goals Question formation/intonation	Revise story and prepare to present in class Watch videos on US Constitution and bring questions to class
3	Storytelling –Non-verbal communication, making requests –intonation review U.S Constitution (Resume or CV?)	Draft and pilot survey
4	Active Listening –Verb Tense Review Vowels (Cover Letter?)	Draft of survey; conduct survey
5	Rhythm/Stress Consonants Career Center help	Present Survey Results
6	Midterm Diagnostics (Self-Evaluations) Adjustments in Connected Speech (Finding the right job posting)	Self-Evaluation of 1min presentation sample
7 (Pres' Day)	Midterm Consultations ("Hamilton" parts, job postings, interview questions)	Select "Hamilton" parts Find the right job posting and make a list of possible interview questions
8	Body Language in Presentations Story telling during a job interview –identifying questions that require stories	Begin to analyze "Hamilton" parts –find sounds with difficult sounds Select interview questions –"Stories"
9	Continue Analysis of parts Practice Job Interview	Mark intonation, rhythm, stress and adjustments Prepare Job Questions
10	SPRING RECESSS	
11	Prepare "Hamilton" presentations -Rhythm, stress, intonation, sounds, body language Job Interview practice/analysis	Interview preparation –have questions ready, record a practice interview –select 1-2mins. to transcribe and correct Practice "Hamilton" presentations
12	Practice Presentations Practice Diagnostics Feedback	Prepare for Final Assessments
13	"Hamilton" Presentations- Begin original "Hamilton" dialogues	Choose "Hamilton" part and begin your original dialogue
14	Final Listening Assessment Job Interviews	Finish and practice "Hamilton" presentations.
15	Original "Hamilton"-like Presentation Feedback	Videos submitted or set up time to be recorded
16	Individual/Group Consultations as needed	