



USC University of
Southern California

**ALI 244—10127: High Intermediate Oral Skills
Spring 2018**

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Course Info: TTR 2-3:20 pm SOS B45
Office: Royal Street Structure 106
Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

ALI 244 is a high-intermediate level course designed to help you meet your English requirement and/or your desire to improve your English skills by exploring and improving aspects of oral and aural language in the American university setting including skills in cultural awareness, speaking fluency, vocabulary building, pronunciation, oral grammatical accuracy, and listening comprehension. Students will develop listening and speaking skills through informal conversations, formal discussions, oral independent projects, mock job interviews, and presentations. In addition, students will learn key grammatical structures and pronunciation principles to facilitate effective communication. Students are expected to complete all assignments. Students should expect to develop autonomous and collaborative skills both in and outside of the classroom.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this course is to help improve various aspects of oral and aural communication skills of American English to help facilitate and meet the needs of university-level academic coursework. Your professor will focus on various language and communication topics in order to support your maximum development as students at this university.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- Handouts will be made available in class or on Blackboard. All handouts should be brought to class as if they were your textbook. We will frequently refer to previous handouts as needed throughout the course, so be prepared!
- Please bring a notebook or standard size (8" x 11.5") loose leaf notebook paper to class at all times for class notes or homework submission.

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN:

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| Homework completion, attendance, and participation in class activities: | 25% |
| Speaking Projects (Student Organization and Conversation Group) | 20% |
| Leading and Participating in a Discussion | 20% |
| Mock Job Interview | 15% |
| Final individual/group presentation (group and individual scores combined) | 20% |

GRADING PROCEDURES AND COURSE ASSESSMENT/COMPLETION:

To receive credit for this class, students must:

- Attend classes regularly and arrive on time (see Attendance and Tardiness Policy below)
- Participate actively. Active participation consists of daily attendance and positive interaction with the instructor/classmates on all group work in the classroom and out.
- Complete ALL course requirements successfully (a course average of less than 70% will result in a grade of NC). A successfully completed assignment is finished on time, is thorough, and is of high quality.

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 skills at the end of the course determines whether you will need an additional ALI oral skills course or not. Therefore, it is in your own interest to do your best to participate fully in every assignment.

Upon completion of this course, students will receive a grade of Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC). It must be noted that in some instances, a student may receive a passing (CR) grade, but also be required to complete an additional ALI oral skills course if the instructor believes that further practice is necessary.

You will have access to your course grade throughout the semester via Blackboard "My Grades." We will also discuss your course progress at mid-semester, but please feel free to discuss your grades with me at any time throughout the semester.

HOMEWORK INFORMATION AND POLICIES:

- ❖ All major course projects will be completed in stages and will require regular homework to be handed in on time to demonstrate progress. All homework assignments should be completed by the due date. **In the event that a homework assignment is handed in late, it can still be evaluated by the instructor and graded, but then will receive a reduction in points equivalent to one letter grade for each day the assignment is late.** Do not let this occur on a regular basis as it will quickly affect your ability to receive "credit" in this class; it can result in a "No Credit" and requirement to repeat the class next semester.
- ❖ If you are unable to attend a class, you must make arrangements to submit your work via a classmate, Blackboard, or e-mail submission.
- ❖ There are no make-up days for major course in class exams such as discussions, mock job interviews, and presentations. Therefore, it is not in your best interest to miss these important class days!! In the event of an extreme emergency, please contact me as soon as possible.

ALI ATTENDANCE POLICY AND TARDINESS (BEING LATE TO CLASS): Students should attend every class and be punctual. If you have 3 hours of absence, it must 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.) Attending class on time is also important since tardiness is an inconvenience to your classmates and professor. Coming to class late will also count towards

the number of hours missed. Students who come to class more than 10 minutes late will also be marked absent rounded up to the next 30 minutes. Students consistently arriving more than a couple minutes late to class may also be marked absent for the time missed.

CLASSROOM COURTESY AND ETIQUETTE:

- As a courtesy to your classmates and professor, please refrain from chatting with classmates when others are talking.
- Since this is an oral skills English class, the focus will be on speaking and listening in English. Please use English as your mode of communication at all times while in the classroom. 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.
- Use of electronic devices during class can be distracting. In order to promote a learning environment conducive to discussions and focused practice with your professor and classmates, please do not use cell phones, laptops, iPads, etc. during class unless instructed to do so. Reserve time to check your e-mail, surf the web, text message, etc. for before/after class.

A NOTE ABOUT IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS:

Many 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 may have a difficult time using it accurately and/or fluently when you want or need to. In this class, I will give you information and practice to help you improve your pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and grammar, 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 (it's truly a "labor of love!" ☺). The same is true about language learning. Just physically being in the U.S. 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.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: 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* (<http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/scampus/>) and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that original work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Students will be referred to the Office of

Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, if there is any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

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://dsp.usc.edu/> .

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. : 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.

EMERGENCIES: 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.

ALI 244 Course Calendar (T/TR) SPRING SEMESTER

| Week | Date | Topics/Activities | In Class and Homework Assignments |
|------|------------------|--|--|
| 1 | 1/9, 1/11 | Course and student introductions; Student organization project begins | Diagnostic presentations Involvement Fair and Campus Activities |
| 2 | 1/16, 1/18 | Discuss Involvement Fair; Culture and Conversation Strategies | Select a student organization and begin attending meetings; Begin Conversation Groups |
| 3 | 1/23, 1/25 | Conversation/Discussion Strategies: Requesting Information Non-verbal communication Active Listening Stress and Rhythm | Conversation and Discussion Strategies Pronunciation Skills |
| 4 | 1/30, 2/1 | Conversation/Discussion Strategies: Offering Opinions, Agreeing/Disagreeing Clarifying Ideas | Conversation and Discussion Strategies |
| 5 | 2/6, 2/8 | Conversation/Discussion Strategies: Question formation Suggesting and Persuading Interrupting Vowels in English | Selection of discussion topics and distribution of materials |
| 6 | 2/13, 2/15 | Leading vs. Participating in a Discussion TED Talks, NPR Reports, Song Lyrics Analysis | Discussions Begin |
| 7 | 2/20, 2/22 | Leading vs. Participating in a Discussion TED Talks, NPR Reports, Song Lyrics Analysis | Discussions Continue Discussions Self-Evaluations Assigned |
| 8 | 2/27, 3/1 | Resumes and Job Postings | Job Search Strategies |
| 9 | 3/6, 3/8 | Job Interview Skills | Job Search Strategies |
| | 3/12-3/16 | SPRING BREAK | (NO CLASSES) |

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| 10 | 3/20, 3/22 | Mock Job Interviews | Mock Job Interviews |
| 11 | 3/27, 3/29 | Organizing a Presentation | Group/Individual presentations assigned |
| 12 | 4/3, 4/5 | Linking Ideas of a Presentation | Groups meet to prepare presentations |
| 13 | 4/10, 4/12 | Strategies for delivering a presentation | Prepare for and practice presentations |
| 14 | 4/17, 4/19 | Group/Individual presentations | Group/Individual presentations; Evaluation of final presentations |
| 15 | 4/24 | Course wrap-up; Giving Presentation Feedback | Course Evaluations (online) |

In addition, we may have grammar and/or pronunciation foci each week.