



USC University of  
Southern California

## **ALI 224-10103: Academic and Professional Speaking Skills I Fall 2021**

**Professor Kimberley Briesch Sumner**  
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Office Hours: By virtual appointment (Zoom)

**Course Info: TTR 2-3:20 pm ONLINE**  
**Office: Royal Street Structure 106**

### ***Course Description:***

ALI 224 is a Level I speaking course for both undergraduate and graduate level international students. This course explores aspects of oral and aural language in the American university setting including skills in listening comprehension, speaking fluency, vocabulary building, pronunciation, and oral grammar. Students will develop listening and speaking skills through lecture and peer note-taking, formal and informal conversations, and culture challenges 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.

### ***Learning Objectives:***

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

### ***Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required***

The online nature of this course and others you may be taking this semester will require a computer/laptop with Internet capability in a private setting. If your connection is weak and you are using a wireless connection, try using a hardwire system to strengthen your connection. You will also need video and sound/mic capabilities to participate appropriately. You may find your learning and classroom performance will be more rewarding with an aftermarket webcam and a headphone set with mic, which can improve the delivery of presentations we will complete during the class for course evaluations. Finally, you will need access to word processing software such as MS Word in order to hand in professional-looking assignments. If you find you have trouble with any of these requirements, please contact me and check out the resources below that USC has available to support students.

### ***USC technology rental program***

I recognize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please submit an application. The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

## **USC Technology Support Links**

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

### **Required Course Materials:**

- Computer/laptop with Internet capability in a private setting (not an Internet café). If your connection is weak and you are using a wireless connection, it may be helpful to use a hardwire system to strengthen your connection. An occasional day of poor Internet service may occur and is understandable, but your Internet should be consistently strong enough to support both audio and video throughout the duration of class.
- Video and sound with mic capabilities.

### **Optional Course Materials:**

- College ruled standard size 8.5" x 11" loose-leaf (filler) notebook paper (for in class notes and homework assignments)
- 1 1" 3-ring binder or 1 2-pocket folder (for various course handouts found on Blackboard)

### **Major Course Requirements and Grade Breakdown:**

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|---|-----|
| • In Class Assignments, Attendance, and Class Participation | 25% |
| • Culture Challenges and Homework Preparation for Class     | 25% |
| • Mid-Semester Presentation                                 | 25% |
| • End of Semester Presentation/Assessment                   | 25% |

### **Grading Scale**

ALI 224 course final grades will be determined using credit/no credit (CR/NC) criteria, which means that you will not receive a final letter grade (A/B/C/F) on your USC transcript (i.e., it will not affect your GPA). To receive credit for this class, students must:

- Attend classes regularly and arrive on time.
- Participate actively. Active participation consists of daily attendance and interaction with the professor/classmates on all group work in the classroom and out in English. In order to earn full participation points, you must communicate in English. If the professor needs to ask you repeatedly to speak in English, you will lose participation points and will not receive a passing participation grade.
- Complete ALL course requirements successfully (a course average of less than 70% will result in a grade of NC). You can keep track of your course grade by using the My Grades function in Blackboard. The course average is set up with a weighted average based on the "grade breakdown" criteria shown above. 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.
- Complete all assignments successfully. A successfully completed assignment is finished on time, thorough, and of high, professional quality.

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 listening and speaking 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 to participate fully in every assignment.

Upon completion of ALI 224, many students will move on to ALI 234 (Academic and Professional Speaking Skills II) for more skill development and practice. However, students who show minimal improvement in their listening and speaking skills may be required to retake ALI 224. In other words, even if you receive credit for ALI 224 for doing all the assignments, you may be required to retake ALI 224 or take an additional oral skills class if your speaking level does not meet ALI's standards for the next level or for release. Therefore, it is in your own interest to do your best on each assignment. Do not expect your speaking ability to improve simply by coming to class and putting minimum effort into your assignments. It will take diligent effort on your part. **As you probably know, very few students make significant progress if they spend most of their time speaking their native language;** you really should speak English at least 75% of the time to notice improvement.

### ***ALI Attendance Policy:***

To the extent that you are healthy, all 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) unless extenuating health circumstances arise.** 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.

### ***224 Homework/Assignments Policy:***

- ❖ All homework assignments should be submitted on or before the due date. Some major course projects will be completed in stages and will require regular homework to be handed in on time to demonstrate progress.
- ❖ If you need more time to complete a homework assignment, please contact me ASAP (as soon as possible) to request an extension. Reasonable accommodation can be made for these requests made in advance of class. Do not make a request during class on the day the work is due. Bear in mind that frequent requests for extensions (more than 2 or 3 times during the semester) will not be granted.
- ❖ In the event that a homework assignment is handed in late without an approved extension, it can still be evaluated by the instructor and graded, but will NOT receive full credit. A reduction in points equivalent to one letter grade can be given 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 are still responsible to submit any homework due on the day you are absent. Please be sure you submit your work via Blackboard, Google Drive, or e-mail submission on time unless you have requested an extension AND it has been approved by the professor.
- ❖ Unless you need to miss class due to illness, there are no make-up days for exams. This includes scheduling conflicts caused by other professors who schedule meetings, project presentations, and/or exams during our class time. In the rare yet possible occasion when this occurs, **it will be your responsibility to inform me and your other professor of the class conflict as soon as the conflict is evident** so that some accommodation can be worked out. In the event of any extreme emergency prior to an exam, please contact me as soon as possible.

### ***Classroom Courtesy and Etiquette/Netiquette:***

- As a courtesy to your classmates and professor, please refrain from chatting with classmates when others are talking.
- The goal of this class is to improve many aspects of oral skills. Since this is an English class, the focus will be on communicating in English. Please use English as your mode of communication at all times while in the classroom and breakout rooms. 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.
- If you need to look up an unfamiliar word, first consider asking the professor to explain the meaning or give a synonym; your question may help others with the same question and can create an opportunity for classroom learning.
- Use of electronic devices during class for purposes other than class participation can be distracting. In order to promote a learning environment conducive to discussions and focused practice with your instructor and classmates, please do not use cell phones, laptops, iPads, etc. during class unless using them to participate in the class or classroom activities. Reserve time to check your e-mail, surf the web, text message, etc. for break time or before/after class.
- If you have a question or concern about your ability to follow any course policy, please send me an email prior to class, so we can discuss expectations and make any appropriate accommodations needed.

### ***Classroom Norms***

It is my sincere hope that you will always feel welcome to participate during whole class presentation and discussion. In this way you are welcome to and in fact encouraged and expected to ask questions or comment on classroom material being presented. If the professor asks a question, the expectation is that all attendees respond in some way. Ways to respond may be verbally (in this case unmute yourself) or non-verbally with a shake or nod of the head. Smiling and eye contact with the screen during the class also indicates attentiveness and interest in the class and is a valued cultural norm in the United States.

With this being said, in small group activities be sure that you balance your listening time with speaking time. If you tend to speak less in group activities, really work to speak up more frequently to help balance the interaction with others. Listening is an important value in conversation, but giving your opinion or expressing your thoughts is very important as well. Similarly, if you tend to offer your opinion or speak more than others, be aware of this tendency and encourage others to offer their opinion more frequently. Work to listen with interest to what other participants contribute.

### ***Synchronous session recording notice***

All synchronous sessions of this course will be recorded and can be found on Blackboard in the Zoom folder for this class.

### ***Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment***

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

### ***SCampus Section 11.12(B)***

*Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC*

*Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).*

**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*, <http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/scampus/> 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/>.

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.

**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.

## **SUPPORT SYSTEMS:**

**WRITING AND LANGUAGE:** 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 - (213) 740-0776 [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)**

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs. 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.

**STUDENT HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call**

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling) Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call**

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org) Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES (RSVP)** - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu](http://studenthealth.usc.edu) Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

**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 of the 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. *Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention & Services*, <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/counseling-services/>, offers counseling free of charge, and the *Title IX Office* webpage, <https://titleix.usc.edu>, describes reporting options and other resources.

**OFFICE OF EQUITY AND DIVERSITY (OED)** - (213) 740-5086 | *Title IX* – (213) 821-8298  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

**REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BIAS OR HARASSMENT** - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and micro-aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

**USC CAMPUS SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION** - (213) 821-4710  
[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

**DIVERSITY AT USC** - (213) 740-2101 [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu) Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

**USC EMERGENCY** - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call  
[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu) Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

**USC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY** - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call  
[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu) Non-emergency assistance or information.

## ALI 224 Course Calendar\*\* FALL SEMESTER (T/TR)

Dates	Topics and Selected Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> 8/24-Day 1 8/26-Day 2	Course Introduction and Requirements; Diagnostics  Student Introductions
<b>Week 2</b> 8/31-Day 3 9/2-Day 4	Conversation Skills and practice; Vocabulary: Language of "Hello"
<b>Week 3</b> 9/7-Day 5 9/9-Day 6	Topic Presentations  Culture Challenge 1  Office Hours and Office Visit Etiquette
<b>Week 4</b> 9/14-Day 7 9/16-Day 8	Student/Teacher Consultations: Practice Visiting a Professor's Office and Diagnostics debrief
<b>Week 5</b> 9/21-Day 9 9/23-Day 10	Grammar: Monitoring for accuracy of past tense  Culture Challenge 2  Pronunciation: Consonant Sounds
<b>Week 6</b> 9/28-Day 11 9/30-Day 12	Pronunciation: Consonant and Vowel Sounds  Presenting about your Country and Hometown
<b>Week 7</b> 10/5-Day 13 10/7-Day 14	Grammar: Monitoring for accuracy of 3rd person singular

Dates	Topics and Activities
<b>Week 8</b> 10/12-Day 15 10/14-(NO CLASS: FALL BREAK)	<b>Mid-Semester Assessment: Country and Hometown Presentation</b>  10/14-(NO CLASS: FALL BREAK)
<b>Week 9</b> 10/19-Day 16 10/21-Day 17	Pronunciation: Word Stress and Sentence Stress  Culture Challenge 3
<b>Week 10</b> 10/26-Day 18 10/28-Day 19	Pronunciation: Word Stress and Sentence Stress  Presentation Assigned—Informative Presentation: Explain an important concept from your major or something of interest to you.
<b>Week 11</b> 11/2-Day 20 11/4-Day 21	Thought Groups and Pausing  Presentation Preparation
<b>Week 12</b> 11/9-Day 22 11/11-Day 23	Presentation Week  Giving Opinions/Feedback
<b>Week 13</b> 11/16-Day 24 11/18-Day 25	
<b>Week 14</b> 11/23-Day 26 11/25-(NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY)	Presentation Self-Reflections and Peer Evaluations  NO CLASS 11/25: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
<b>Week 15</b> 11/30-Day 27 12/2-(NO CLASS: ALI FACULTY DAY)	Presentation Self-Reflections and Peer Evaluations  NO CLASS 12/2: ALI FACULTY DAY