USC University of Southern California

ALI 245: Academic and Professional Writing Skills III

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Office: Royal Street Parking Structure 106
Class Time: Tue/Thur 5:00-6:20

Room: Online
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Office Hours: By Appointment

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 at an American university and be prepared for the academic and professional world. Readings and assignments are designed to apply principles of style and clarity in writing. The course will also cover specific language issues (i.e., grammatical correctness) and focus on developing cohesion and coherence in form and concision of message.

Course Objectives
This course aims to prepare students for professional writing experiences. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand and apply various stylistic principles in academic writing.
- Compose grammatically correct passages with clarity of form.
- Practice analysis in written form through synthesis of academic papers and other materials.
- Write an original academic research paper in your field of studies.
- 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 conventions for grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Learn strategies to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Course Materials

Required:
Exploring Options in Academic Writing: Effective Vocabulary and Grammar Use
Jan Frodesen & Margi Wald
University of Michigan Press

Recommended:
Academic Writing for Graduate Students, 3rd Edition: Essential Tasks and Skills
John M. Swales & Christine B. Feak
University of Michigan Press

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

(Chapters needed for this course will be uploaded on ARES)

In addition to the textbooks required for the course, handouts and links to selected websites will be uploaded to USC Blackboard (https://blackboard.usc.edu) for course assignments and readings. You will find these under the "Course Content" 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.

Office Hours
Your instructor has scheduled regular office hours for individual meetings 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 due to 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 can help you.

More than six 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 both prepare for class and practice material covered during class time. 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 Assignment	20%
Final Research Paper	30%

Course Assignments & Exams
This course focuses on writing skills. Most assignments will involve writing or revising. The course may also include in-class writing tests.

Writing Assignments
Graded writing assignments will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor and may include the following:

Summary and Synthesis, Technical Reports, Surveys, Literature Review, Annotated Bibliography, and Critical Reviews.

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 the experience of writing a paper as an academic researcher. This project requires demonstration of a number of distinct academic writing skills (which we will cover in the course of the semester) in both creation and presentation of your paper. You may choose to conduct original research by forming focus groups, conducting qualitative interviews, or reviewing secondary research on your topic.

Please note that 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.

Requirements for Final Paper

The Final Research Paper must:

- Be approximately 1200-1500 words in length (double-spaced) in 12-point font
- Include at least one illustration (e.g., table, graph, chart) with relevant commentary
- Have a minimum of five scholarly sources (preferably peer-reviewed journals)
- Provide documentation of sources using the style in your field (e.g., APA, IEEE)
- Include a "References/Works Cited" page at the end of your essay where you list the sources you used in your paper.

Final papers must be turned in by the due date unless a student has experienced a serious emergency (contact the instructor). Students must submit their final papers 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://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. 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://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. 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. *The Center for Women and Men*, http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/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 for more information. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute*, http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and
workshops specifically for international students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs*, http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, 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.

Zoom etiquette

- Please test your Zoom connection before class. Connectivity issues are not uncommon, but testing your internet before class begins can help to address some of these problems.
- Please try to appear on Zoom if possible and not connect only via audio. ALI classes are designed to be interactive and you will get much more out of the class if you are able to participate fully.
- When in breakout rooms, try to practice English with your partners. You may be paired with another speaker of your native language, but the ALI class is a chance to immerse yourself in English, so make the most of the opportunity.
- Try not to have other devices on or windows open that will distract you from the class. To emphasize the above again – ALI classes are interactive and we expect you to direct your attention to the instructor and your classmates.

Course Schedule*

WEEK	TASK	HOMEWORK
1 (8/23-25)	Diagnostic Course Introduction Summary Writing	Partner Introduction
2 (8/30-9/1)	Professional Writing (Bio Statements, Resumes) EOAW Ch 10 First consultations begin	Summary Writing Professional Writing
3 (9/6-8)	EOAW Ch 10 Consultations continue	Revising resumes and summaries
4 (9/13-15)	Synthesizing and combining ideas in writing	Rough Draft of Synthesis
5 (9/20-22)	Paraphrasing and Plagiarism AWGS Ch 1 (ARES)	Second Draft of Synthesis
6 (9/27-29)	Virtual Library Visit Academic Integrity AWGS Ch 1 (ARES)	Writing a review
7 (10/4-6)	EOAW Ch 9	Topics for Midterm Papers

8 (10/11-Fall Break)	Midterm consultations Midterm Papers	Midterm Paper Draft 1
9 (10/18-20)	EOAW Ch 8	Midterm Paper Draft 2
10 (10/25-27)	EOAW Ch 7 Professional Writing (email)	Thesis Statements/Introduction Final Paper
11 (11/1-3)	EOAW Ch 6	Data Commentary Final Paper
12 (11/8-9)	EOAW Ch 3	Conclusion Final Paper
13 (11/15-17)	Final Papers First Draft/EOAW Ch 4	
14 (11/22)	Final Papers Second Draft/Final Blog Introduction	
15 (11/29)	Final Papers Due/Final Blog Presentation	

**Subject to change at instructor's discretion*