



USC University of  
Southern California

## ALI 244—10127: Academic and Professional Speaking Skills III Spring 2024

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Office Hours: By appointment (Zoom or office)

Course Info: TTR 5:00 pm-6:20 pm SOS B43  
Office: Royal Street Structure 106

### **Course Description:**

ALI 244 is a level III speaking 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, 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 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.

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

This is an in-person on campus course, but in consideration of the challenging circumstances we may encounter in the event of an outbreak of illness or need to attend classes remotely, all students should proactively prepare themselves to complete some class sessions online via Zoom. In the event that the course reverts to Zoom for a session(s), students 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. 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. 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. 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 immediately and check out the resources below that USC has available to support students.

### **USC Technology Support Links**

[Blackboard help for students](#)  
[Software available to USC Campus](#)

### **Required Course Materials:**

- **21st Century Communication 3 (2017)**. By Lynn Bonesteel ISBN: 978-1-337-27582-8 (textbook only)  
(Textbook with **Optional Online Workbook Access Code** ISBN: 978-1-337-27582-8).
- 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 microphone capabilities.

### **Additional Useful Materials**

- A way to take notes during class and during group work. I recommend either 1) college rule standard 8.5" x 11" loose-leaf notebook paper or a 2) college rule notebook.
- A system to keep course handouts. We will frequently refer to previous handouts as needed throughout the course, so be prepared! I recommend either to save handouts on your local computer in a course folder or to print them and keep in a small 3-ring binder or 2-pocket folder.
- You should have in-class access to an ESL or American English-English dictionary. Apps such as Dictionary.com and Merriam-Webster are excellent resources, but dictionaries which only give translations are not sufficient.

### **MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

In-Class Activities, Attendance, and Class Participation	25%
Homework Completion/Preparation for Class	25%
Presentations	25%
Final Project	25%

### **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).
- If quarantining and using Zoom, keep your Zoom camera on during class. If you are not well, it is not necessary to attend in person or via Zoom. Please focus on getting well.
- Participate actively. Active participation consists of daily attendance and positive interaction with the instructor/classmates on all discussions and 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.

ALI 244 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 (i.e., it will not affect your GPA). Assignments are given to prepare for and practice material that is covered in your textbook and in class. 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 ALI 244, 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.

**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, conference attendance, and when other professors schedule meetings, project presentations, and exams during our class time. (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.

#### **HOMEWORK INFORMATION AND POLICIES:**

- All homework assignments should be completed by 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 as soon as possible (NOT during class on the day the work is due) and request an extension. Reasonable accommodation can be made for these requests. Bear in mind that frequent requests for extensions (more than 2 or 3 times during the semester) will not always 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 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 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.
- There are no make-up days for major course assignments, presentations, or exams. Therefore, it is not in your best interest to miss these important class days!! 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:**

- 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 and break out rooms/groups. 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 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.

## **A NOTE ABOUT IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS:**

Many of you have studied English for several 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. 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.

## ***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.

### **Zoom session recording notice**

All Zoom sessions of this course will be recorded and can be found for download and reference in the class Zoom area of Blackboard. If you have trouble finding the course recordings, please be sure to ask for help.

### **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*.

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 STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES - (213) 740-0776** <https://osas.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 Office of Student Accessibility Services office (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved recommendations can be

obtained through OSAS. 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.

**DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND HARASSMENT** are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)*, <https://eeotix.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.

**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 244 Course Calendar\*\* (T/TR) SPRING SEMESTER

Week	Date	Course Units and Important Dates
1	1/9, 1/11	Course and student introductions
2	1/16, 1/18	Unit 1: Bringing Dreams to Life
3	1/23, 1/25	Unit 1: Bringing Dreams to Life; Syllable Stress
4	1/30, 2/1	Unit 1: Bringing Dreams to Life; Intonation and Pauses
5	2/6, 2/8	<b>Individual presentations</b> ; Unit 2: Say it Your Way
6	2/13, 2/15	Unit 2: Say it Your Way; --ed endings
7	2/20, 2/22	Unit 2: Say it Your Way
8	2/27, 2/29	<b>Pair Presentations</b> ; Unit 5: Stress: Friend or Foe?
9	3/5, 3/7	Unit 5: Stress: Friend or Foe?; Thought groups
	SPRING BREAK	March 10-17 (NO CLASSES)
10	3/19, 3/21	Unit 6: Treasured Places <b>Class Cancelled on 3/21 (Professor away at Conference)</b>
11	3/26, 3/28	Unit 6: Treasured Places; Linking
12	4/2, 4/4	Unit 6: Treasured Places
13	4/9, 4/11	Final Project (Elevator Pitch, Mock Interview, or Reporting on Research)
14	4/16, 4/18	Final Project (Elevator Pitch, Mock Interview, or Reporting on Research)
15	4/23, 4/25	<b>4/23: LAST DAY OF CLASS; FINAL PROJECT</b> <b>4/25: ALI Faculty Workday (No Class)</b>

\*\*Professor may alter chapters and topics depending on individual course section needs.