SYLLABUS

ALI 246- Intermediate Oral skills for International Teaching Assistants

Term: Fall 2024 **Day & Time:** T/TH 10:00AM-11:50AM
Section: **10153D** **Location:** SOS B38

Instructor: Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos **Office Hours:** by appointment
Contact Info: tzoytzoy@usc.edu **Office:** PSD 106

Course Description
This course is designed for International Teaching Assistants to help them improve communication skills particularly as they relate to TA duties. The course introduces students to a variety of communication and teaching styles guiding them to explore their own and improve overall comprehensibility. Emphasis is given to developing linguistic accuracy and fluency. Course content assignments offer students ample practice for the development and reinforcement of communication skills fostering an appreciation of multi-cultural learning environments.

Learning Objectives
In this course, students will develop an awareness of the importance of pronunciation and how it affects oral discourse. They will develop a working knowledge of different aspects of pronunciation such as vowel and consonant phonemes, prominence, intonation, thought groups and pitch variations. Students will improve their ability to analyze and discuss course content, develop short engaging lessons and brief tutorials, use academic vocabulary effectively to express and explain concepts in their field, and engage in controlled discussions practicing their use of academic and colloquial language.

Course Notes
Upon completion of this course, students will receive a grade of Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC).

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
Select materials will be distributed in class and available on Brightspace.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Self-Introduction (Diagnostic): Students will prepare a 3-min self-introduction using details, images, and interesting facts about themselves and any aspects of their background they want to share with the class. The use of photographs is highly encouraged. There will be a brief Q & A at the end of the self-introduction. The purpose for this initial assignment is to create community in the class. It will also be used as an initial diagnostic by the instructor.

Storytelling (Individual Task): Students will prepare a 3-5 min story to share with the class on a selected theme; see instructions and assignment requirements on Brightspace.

Mock Interviews (Group Project): Students will prepare for and conduct in-class mock interviews. They will alternate in their roles as Interviewers and Interviewees and will carry out interviews inquiring about the duties, experiences, and challenges in the career or educational context of choice. Students will be evaluated on overall communication effectiveness, linguistic accuracy and fluency, and engaging storytelling skills. Interviews will be recorded for self-, peer-, and teacher feedback.

Formal Interview & Presentation (Individual Project): Students will plan and conduct a formal 20-30 min oral interview of a Professor or experienced TA in their department or field of study. Alternatively, a professional in a field of choice can be selected (approved by instructor). Interview will be recorded for analysis. Be prepared to share with instructor the recording upon request. Students will also design an in-class presentation that will include selected clips of the interview accompanied by an oral summary and commentary of highlights and main points discussed. This project should demonstrate improvement in overall communication and presentation skills, pronunciation, and linguistic accuracy.

Battle of the ITAs (Final Individual Project): Students will design and present a 7-minute interactive speech which demonstrates their ability to construct and deliver a speech with fluency and linguistic accuracy, integrating effective storytelling techniques and interactive elements that build rapport with the audience. Speech will be followed by a Q & A session. Presenters will be evaluated on presentation style, delivery, and oral discourse. Presentations will be recorded for self, peer, and teacher feedback. This project should demonstrate significant improvement in overall communication and presentation skills, pronunciation, and linguistic accuracy from the beginning of the semester.

General Evaluation Rubric for Assignments:
Note that each assignment may have additional self, peer, and teacher evaluation rubrics.

	Excellent	Acceptable	Needs Improvement
Depth of thought and practice	Shows evidence of depth of thought and practice in preparation, organization, and clarity.	Evidence of depth of thought and practice could be increased in some areas.	Not evident that serious thought and practice went into preparation or organization.
Connection to course content	Assignment shows engagement with course content and integrates concepts learned in an appropriate manner.	Some parts lack connection to course content, or they are not integrated in an appropriate way.	Fails to relate to course content and other relevant instructions for this assignment.
Completeness	All parts of the assignment are done completely and according to guidelines.	All parts of the assignments or presentation are done completely, however, lacks adherence to guidelines in some areas.	Assignment is not entirely complete, and/or shows marked lack of adherence to guidelines.
Delivery	Presentation shows improvement in comprehensibility, accuracy in vocabulary and grammar use; successful engagement with audience with no breakdowns.	Presentation contains some errors in one or more of the areas related to delivery resulting in some breakdowns in communication.	Presentations contains significant errors which detract from the meaning and cause breakdowns in communication.

Participation & Class Discussions Evaluation Rubric

Students will participate in formal and informal class discussions covering selected topics.
Each session will be customized to fit specific class needs and will build on what was covered in previous sessions. Similarly to how graduate students are expected to contribute to class discussions and TAs are expected to be effective and interactive speakers, you will be required to contribute to all classroom activities, including critiquing classmates' presentations on effectiveness and language use. Students learn from analyzing each other's oral performance and exchanging of ideas. Therefore, come ready to interact and engage in class discussions every session. Students will be evaluated on preparation, argumentation, fluency, and comprehensibility.

Active Participation	Moderate Participation	Low Participation
Exhibits evidence of having completed all assignments and activities according to guidelines that were assigned.	Attempts to participate and has completed most assignments and activities.	Exhibits lack of preparation and non-completion of required assignments.
Initiates discussion and supports points using specific references to readings or specific reference points to class content.	Supports points during discussion but uses general references to readings and other materials.	Rarely initiates discussion and is not able to engage in class or with required readings or other materials.
Furthers the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; comments and questions reflect having thought deeply about the material; thoughtful application of language and communication concepts discussed in class.	Furthers the discussion and builds on the ideas of others; limited application of language and communication concepts discussed in class.	Comments do not further the discussion and do not exhibit careful application of language and communication concepts discussed in class.

The "uSC" Program: The "uSC" (Undergraduate Student Consultant) Program offers our ITAs a great opportunity to practice English with a native speaker outside the classroom. You will be assigned a uSC with whom you will meet outside of class (two hours per week, starting week 4) for a total of 20 hours. This is a requirement and a chance for you to work on teaching skills, fluency, slang, pronunciation, conversation, or any other areas you wish to improve.

Grading Breakdown

Table 1 Grading Breakdown

Assignments	Points	% of Grade
Self-Introduction	5	5
Storytelling	10	10
Discussions, Participation, uSC program	20	20
Mock Group Interviews	15	15
Formal Interview	20	20
Battle of the ITAs (Final)	30	30
TOTAL	100	100

Grading Scale

To receive CR in the class, you need to receive a minimum grade of 75%.

Grading Timeline

All assignments must be completed ON THE DUE DATE. Due to the format of our projects, there will be no makeup midterm or final presentations.

Course Specific Policies

To foster an environment conducive to effective learning and communication, all electronic devices (smart phones, i-pads, laptops) will be used per the instructor's guidance and for class purposes only.

Attendance

More than **4** hours of absence will be reported to the ALI student advisor. More than **8** hours of absence will result in a course grade of **NC** (no credit). If you are late to class, that will also count towards the number of hours missed. In the event you cannot make a class, be sure to check with a classmate for the assignment missed. If you have an unavoidable conflict, please contact me via email as far in advance as possible.

Classroom Norms

As Teaching Assistants, you are expected to demonstrate a professional, positive attitude in all your interactions with your students, professors, advisors, and classmates. A positive attitude is the driving force behind learning and improvement. I expect you to improve greatly in this class and a positive attitude is all we need to get started.

Zoom Etiquette

For select sessions on Zoom, I expect you to be UNMUTED and with YOUR VIDEO ON at all times. The only time you should be muted is if there is background noise.

ITA Exit Exam

To qualify for the ITA exit exam at the end of the semester, students must complete all course-related assignments, attend all meetings with uSC, and not exceed the maximum number of allowable absences for the course. (Please note that absences include hours missed with uSC; make-up uSC meetings must be held prior to the ITA exam date.) Please note that students who fail to attend their scheduled ITA EXAM will be at risk of receiving a No Credit for the course.

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

AI Generators Class Policy
Permitted ONLY for select task preparation
Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is only allowed to help you brainstorm ideas or prepare for class discussions. However, you are to refrain from reading from any AI-generated notes during class discussions or presentations; the aim of your class participation is to use your own language for improved communication.

Use of AI to prepare for assignments: Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each assignment or circumstance. The use of AI tools requires attribution. You are expected to clearly attribute any material generated by the tool used.

Lesson Planning and Delivery: Plagiarism includes the submission of lesson scripts generated by AI; you may use AI to help brainstorm ideas or prepare an outline, but the lesson design and delivery should be your own work.

Group work: Unless specifically designated as a 'group project,' all assignments are expected to be completed individually.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies
USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. 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. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - *(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - *988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call*
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new,

shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - *(213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call*
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - *(213) 740-5086*
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*
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - *(213) 740-0776*
OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - *(213) 740-0411*
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - *(213) 740-2101*
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*
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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call*
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - *(213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - *(323) 442-2850 or* otfp@med.usc.edu
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.