CAS 085: Practical Writing and Conversational Strategies (for ESL/English as a Second Language Students)

This advanced-level course aims to address two specific weak points of graduate level and adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners: writing style and real-life conversational skills. The ESL writing component of this course will focus on implementable, concrete strategies for improving academic and professional writing; writing assignments relevant to the students' actual current professional development will be assigned. The ESL/English as a Second Language conversational component of this course will focus on helping students develop fluency and confidence dealing with typical spoken exchanges in workplace and social settings.

Dates: January 11, 2016 – April 27, 2016, Thursdays, from 6:30-9:30 PM
No classes are held over Spring Break Week (no class Thursday, March 10)

In the event that there is more than one section offered of the course, students must attend the section in which they are registered in without advance permission from the instructor.

Instructor:
Rebecca Allen
Direct Tel: (585) 354-8986
Email: rallen16@ur.rochester.edu
Skype: accentschool_rebecca
Office Hours: By appointment
I am always happy to talk to you. Generally the quickest way to get detailed help is to reach out to me on Skype.

Required Texts:

by Ann Longknife and K.D. Sullivan
ISBN: 978-0764147838

by Audrey Zenner
ISBN: 978-0-9820678-3-3
**Grading Scheme:**
Students will receive a grade of “pass” or “fail”\(^1\) for this course. Students must receive a grade of 70 points to pass the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation 2 points per course meeting x 15 weeks</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Error Analysis and Reading Quizzes on Blackboard 4 quizzes at 8 points each</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Project 9 points for Stage I 9 points for Stage II 20 points for Stage III</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>100</td>
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**Late Assignment/Quiz Policy:** Assignments and Quizzes are not normally accepted after their posted due dates. In the event, that the student has an exceptional circumstance or hardship, s/he should contact the instructor in writing as soon as possible to make a plan for work submission. Assignments/Quizzes are due on by the start of Thursday (i.e. by midnight the prior Wednesday) of their due weeks.

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\(^1\) Some colleges use alternative wording such as “satisfactory”/“unsatisfactory” for a two-grade grading scheme. Students will receive the relevant equivalent of “pass”/“fail” for their college.
Schedule: Due Dates, Class Topics

Week One (January 14)
Discussion Topic: Getting to know you
Read Before Class: n/a
Submit this week: n/a

Week Two (January 21)
Discussion Topic: Jobs and Careers
Writing Skills Topic: Subject-Verb Agreement, Parts of Speech, Brainstorming, Lexical Cohesion, and Scope
Read Before Class: n/a
Submit this week: n/a

Week Three (January 28)
Discussion Topic: Social Ills
Writing Skills Topic: In text citations, Topic Sentences
Read Before Class: Patterns 1 & 2
Submit this week: n/a

Week Four (February 4)
Discussion Topic: Real Beauty
Writing Skills Topic: Paragraph Development
Read Before Class: Pattern 3
Submit this week: Blackboard Quiz 1

Week Five (February 11)
Discussion Topic: Friends and Friendship
Writing Skills Topic: Essay Structure, The Introductory Paragraph
Read Before Class: Pattern 4-7
Submit this week: n/a

Week Six (February 18)
Discussion Topic: Advertising
Writing Skills Topic: Subjective and Objective Language, Hedging, Softening
Read Before Class: Patterns 8-9
Submit this week: Blackboard Quiz II

Week Seven (February 25)
Discussion Topic: Cross Cultural Differences
Writing Skills Topic: Types of Paragraphs
Read Before Class: Patterns 10-11
Submit this week: Stage I Writing Project
Week Eight (March 3)
Discussion Topic: Love and Romance
Writing Skills Topic: Conclusions
Read Before Class: Patterns 12-13
Submit this week: n/a

(NO CLASS MARCH 10, 2016 – Spring Break)

Week Nine (March 17)
Discussion Topic: Food and Eating
Writing Skills Topic: Proofreading and Common Syntax Errors
Read Before Class: Patterns 14-15
Submit this week: Blackboard Quiz III

Week Ten (March 24)
Discussion Topic: Crime and Punishment
Writing Skills Topic: Describing Graphs/Data Trends
Read Before Class: Pattern 16
Submit this week: Stage II Writing Project

Week Eleven (March 31)
Discussion Topic: Movies
Writing Skills Topic: Collocations
Read Before Class: Pattern 17
Submit this week: n/a

Week Twelve (April 7)
Discussion Topic: Travel
Writing Skills Topic: Noun to Verb Ratios in Formal Writing
Read Before Class: Pattern 18
Submit this week: Blackboard Quiz III

Week Thirteen (April 14)
Discussion Topic: Urban Life
Writing Skills Topic: Language for Describing Cause and Effect
Read Before Class: Pattern 19
Submit this week: Stage III Writing Project

Week Fourteen (April 21)
Discussion Topic: Driving Cars
Writing Skills Topic: Common Student Writing Errors/Analyze Past Work
Read Before Class: Pattern 20
Submit this week: Blackboard Quiz IV
English as Second Language Practical Writing and Conversational Strategies Writing Project
This project will be completed in three stages: Stage I (Planning Stage), Stage 2 (Revision Stage), Stage 3 (Final Draft). An assignment sheet for each stage will be given. Below is an overview and scope of the finished product you will create.

Writing Assignment:
Solve a problem – Develop an essay with a thesis statement derived from one of the following prompts.
- Outline a specific societal ill in a specific population in your country or the US. Why is this problem significant? Secondly, what do you propose to be the solution to be? How would you implement the solution? Argue your case for both the significance of the problem as well as the usefulness and feasibility of your proposed solution. Remember to select one very specific problem and solution.
- Outline a specific problem in your industry. Why is this problem significant? That is, what are the human and/or economic costs? Outline a plan for addressing the problem. Remember to select as specific problem and to keep the scope narrow enough for the page constraints of the assignment.

Specifications of the essay:

✔️ These topics are quite broad/non-specific to allow graduate students to select a narrow issue from their area of expertise. Narrowing down the scope of the essay is essential for success. See: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/1/)
✔️ APA source citation methods must be used. Should you want to use another citation method, written email permission from the instructor is required. See: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/)
✔️ The essay should be between 3-4 double spaced pages in Times New Roman 12 point font (not including Works Cited Page)
✔️ Plagiarism is a serious issue and may result in academic consequences, such as failure of the assignment or other serious consequences as per university policy.
✔️ Remember your audience. The paper should be written to appeal to readers outside your field.
✔️ At least five sources must be used. A reasonable balance between internet sources and academic/more reputable sources must be maintained. Wikipedia is not a source for academic writing.
✔️ Perfection, in terms of grammatical errors, is not expected. However, a commitment to continued improvement is. Students will submit an error log with their final draft to help identify their recurrent problems and develop systematic solutions.