

SAMPLE SYLLABUS FOR ESL015

ESL 015

Composition for American Academic Communication II

Department of Applied Linguistics

The Pennsylvania State University

2015

Instructor:	Office:
Course Section:	Office Hours:
Course Meetings:	Phone: 814-863-0031 (TA room)
Class time:	Email:

Course Description

The goal of this course is to help you develop the reading and writing skills you need to participate successfully in academic reading and writing tasks at an American university. In this course you will practice academic writing, which includes *summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, organizing your ideas, doing basic library research, supporting your claims with good forms of evidence, and preparing citations*. You will participate in all stages of the writing process, which means that you will brainstorm, draft, revise, give and get feedback through peer review, and proofread. You will also learn and practice useful reading skills and strategies to support your research and writing activities.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Use the writing process effectively. This means that you will be able to generate ideas, plan and draft essays, revise your writing, and identify and correct major grammatical problems. You will also be able to give and take guided feedback through peer-review.
2. Write different kinds of essays that meet the needs of different audiences and purposes. Your essays will demonstrate that you understand the concept of audience, genre, and voice.
3. Use critical reading skills to get information from academic texts. You will be able to identify main points and details, determine audience and purpose, summarize, and respond to written English texts.
4. Use academic vocabulary related to course readings accurately and appropriately.
5. Use outside source material effectively and ethically through summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing sources appropriately.
6. Write clear and comprehensible sentences and paragraphs that form coherent and cohesive texts.
7. Identify and correct common grammatical and mechanical errors, and know how to seek further help from sources outside of class.

Required Textbook

Rosa, A. & Escholz, P. (2012). *Models for Writers: Short Essays for Composition*. (11th Ed.) Boston: Bedford St. Martins.

Additional Materials

- A notebook or paper for in-class writing assignments.
- We will regularly use ANGEL, PSU's online platform [substitute Edmodo or whatever other e-platform you prefer]. Assignments and important activities will be posted on ANGEL at <https://angel.psu.edu>

Course Requirements

<i>Attendance & in-class participation</i>	5%	<i>A</i>	95-100
<i>Peer reviews & HW</i>	5%	<i>A-</i>	90-94.9
<i>Journal entries</i>	10%	<i>B+</i>	87.9-89.9
<i>Reading assignments & responses</i>	10%	<i>B</i>	83.33-87.8
		<i>B-</i>	80-83.32
		<i>C+</i>	75-79.9
<i>Major Writing Assignments (total 70%):</i>		<i>C</i>	70-74.9
1. <i>Extended definition text</i>	10%	<i>D</i>	60-69.9
2. <i>Comparison/Contrast text</i>	10%	<i>F</i>	<59.9
3. <i>C/C Oral presentation</i>	5%		
4. <i>Topic Proposal</i>	10%		
5. <i>Annotated Bibliography</i>	10%		
6. <i>Problem Solution Essay</i>	20%		
7. <i>Oral presentation</i>	5%		
			<i>The Penn State grading scale does not allow the option of awarding grades of C-, D+ or D- grades.</i>
<i>Total:</i>	100%		

Course Policies

Preparation of HW and written assignments

All major assignments must be prepared digitally. Some classwork activities may be completed in handwritten form.

Classroom Distractions

Everyone uses digital accessories these days to help them in their coursework. You are welcome to bring laptops, iPads, cell phones, etc., to class, but you are expected to use them only as much as they help you participate in our class activities. I may request you to turn off, or put away, such devices at any time. If you continue to use your electronic devices for personal use even after being asked to put them away, participation points will be taken away.

Late Assignments & Extra Credit

Turn in your assignments on time. Every day a major assignment is late brings down your grade by 2 points (out of 100). Smaller assignments and HW that is not turned in will be graded as 0 points. There is an option to earn up to 5 points by doing one or more Extra Credit projects. See details posted on ANGEL / handout. Please note that the Extra Credit projects must be turned in by the stated deadline to earn points!

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED

Attendance & in-class participation (5% of your total grade)

Come to class on time; participate in the activities; do the assigned readings and HW before class; bring your textbook and HW papers to class; contact the instructor if you know that you will have a problem attending on a certain day. You will be assigned various tasks, such as an office hour consultation with the instructor; a library orientation workshop; a visit to a campus activity, etc. These tasks are required!

Missing a class for personal reasons: You are expected to be in class, on time, every day. Of course, life happens, and there may be an occasion when you simply have to miss a class. Our grading system allows you to be absent from class **TWO TIMES** for important conflicts that come up, such as unexpected family situations, visa or official obligations, etc. Please note that these 2 absences are not “free”—they will be counted as absences, but your grade will not be affected as long as you inform your instructor **BEFORE** the missed class and make up the work you miss.

Missing a class for medical reasons: If you are sick and need to miss class unexpectedly, email your instructor immediately. Be sure to contact a classmate or check the class ANGEL site to keep up with any classwork that you miss. Again, a medical absence is not “free”—it will count as an absence. But if you inform the instructor, keep up with the work, and do not miss more than one or two classes, your instructor will most probably be very understanding.

Medically-excused absences: It is a University policy that you will not be penalized for missing several classes due to a serious medical issue. However, to be excused, you **must** provide a “Medical Excuse” note, available from the Student Health Center. Without an

official Medical Excuse form, your absences will have a negative effect on your final grade. (Informing your instructor by email is NOT an official medical excuse; you must get the form from the Health Center, make a copy for all your teachers, and provide your ESL teacher with a copy on the first day that you come back to class.)

More than 4 absences, excused or unexcused, may affect your grade. If you miss more than 4 classes and have not contacted the instructor appropriately, you may receive an academic warning, lose points from your grade, or even fail the class. Consider your learning, your classmates, and your future goals carefully before choosing to skip class. Many students are under a lot of pressure to get good grades for their scholarship or sponsor. Absences are the most common reason for students to fail ESL015.

If you have questions or concerns about absences, remember this formula: IOU

- INFORM your instructor
- OBTAIN the necessary medical notes (if applicable)
- UNDERSTAND the penalty that may be applied to your grade

Peer reviews & other HW (5% of your total grade)

A good writer knows how to read and revise a text. In this class, you will have a chance to work closely with your classmates in giving, and receiving, peer feedback to make your revising better. This is a required part of the class and I will help you develop your peer reviewing skills.

Sometimes you will be assigned HW outside of the writing assignments or reading textbook. These assignments must be completed before class, and you are responsible for bringing them to class with you.

Journals (10% of your total grade)

In addition to the 4 major writing assignments, you will be required to write several informal, communicative texts. These journal assignments are designed to help you develop ideas for your writing; understand the readings better; organize information for better communication; and practice using sentence structures and lexical items that are useful for your writing.

Reading assignments & responses (10% of your final grade)

This is a class for writing and critical reading. We will read several essays in the textbook, and you will find readings during your library research. When a reading is assigned, at least one response activity will also be assigned; you must complete this response activity and bring it to class. Some responses may be assigned for the Journal entry; these do not have to be brought to class.

Major Writing Assignments (70% of your total grade)

- ***Major Assignment ONE: Extended Definition*** (10%)

Focus: sentence & paragraph structure; choosing good illustrative information; domain-specific vocabulary; organization of text; identifying and writing for an audience

Description: Choose an important concept or object from your field of study (your major) and write an extended definition of what it is, what it means, how it is used or how it functions, etc. You may gather information from library sources, the internet, your own experience, and other people. This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 600-700 words.

- ***Major Assignment TWO: Comparison/Contrast text*** (10%)

Focus: Organization of text; use of research information; presentation skills

Description: Choose a topic, as guided by your instructor, and organize information about it using visual design elements to clarify the comparison or contrast you make. You will present the poster or PPT in class, and submit a summary of the information as well. 500-700 word text.

- ***Oral presentation for your Comparison/Contrast topic*** (5%)

This presentation is connected to the C/C assignment; your teacher may ask you to revise the written text on the basis of your oral presentation. Length: one poster or 12 PPT slides; this is designed to be a brief, 4 minute-presentation, so you must practice your timing at home!

- ***Major Assignment THREE: Topic Proposal*** (10%)
and ***Annotated Bibliography*** (10%)

Focus: Gathering and evaluating useful research resources for a problem/solution essay; textual organization; analyzing a problem and describing the background and context of the problem; drafting a strong introduction section

Description: In order to prepare for your final essay (the Problem/Solution essay), you will write up a Topic Proposal document, which serves as an introduction to the problem/solution that you want to write about. This introduction will provide important background context to the problem and analyze some of the challenges and issues that people who want to solve the problem must consider. In addition, you will compile an Annotated Bibliography of useful sources for your final essay (6-12 sources). Annotations should include the main points of the reading; how it will be useful to you

for your essay; how the source reflects, contradicts, or supports the other sources on the list. The list must be prepared in APA style. This Annotated Bibliography will serve as the basis for your list of references in the final essay. The Topic Proposal may serve as the basis for your introduction to the final essay.

Your instructor will help you develop a topic for this series of assignments. The problem you choose should be one for which you can find several suggested solutions; in the final essay you will argue in favor of one of those solutions.

This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised.

Length: Topic Proposal: 2-3 pages, 550-850 words

Annotated Bibliography: 6-12 sources, annotations 200-600 words each

- *Major Assignment **FOUR**: Problem/Solution Essay (20%)*
- *Oral presentation (5%)*

Focus: Development of research question; use of research information; citation and reference formatting; development and support of arguments and evidence; oral presentation skills

Description: Using the sources you gathered in Assignment Three, write an essay that argues in favor of ONE solution to the problem that you are researching. Use the Topic Proposal that you wrote for Assignment Three as the basis for your Introductory section.

While your research focus and research question might change slightly as you do more research, you may not change your topic once you have turned in the Annotated Bibliography and Topic Proposal. Choose a topic that is interesting, researchable, and somewhat controversial.

In connection with the final Problem/Solution essay, you will give a brief oral presentation in class.

This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 1200-1600 words.

PSU Policies

Enrollment & Withdrawal

You are responsible for making all decisions regarding your enrollment status in and any Financial Holds for Penn State courses. Should you decide to withdraw from this course, you must either (1) drop via eLion or (2) complete an official “add/drop” form and submit it to your advisor by University deadlines. If you are failing the course and do not officially withdraw, you will receive a final grade of F. Please talk to me if you have any questions about this process.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else’s words, ideas, and/or data in your work and treating it as your own by either not citing it or by citing it inappropriately. Plagiarism is a very serious issue in the American university system. Within Penn State, the College of Liberal Arts has the following policy regarding academic honesty and plagiarism:

“Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.” (http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Deans_Area/Preparingyoursyllabus.shtml)
Questions about academic integrity can be referred to Ashley Tarbet at aet143@psu.edu or (814) 865-1070.

Disability Access Statement

“The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.”

(http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Deans_Area/Preparingyoursyllabus.shtml)

Questions about disability access can be referred to Jennifer Morris at jxm2@psu.edu or (814) 863-5538.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

“The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state of federal authorities. The Pennsylvania State University does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.”

(<http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/syllabus/policy>)