

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Beijing

Course Code / Title (BJ/ENGL 110) Academic Research and Writing for US Undergraduates

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: English / Communications, Composition, First-Year Seminar

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites / Requirements: None

Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the essential research and writing tasks common to most academic contexts. This course provides key techniques, guidelines and suggestions to improve the student's academic written communication. Students become familiar with various academic formats and styles, with particular focus on designing and implementing an academic research project. After completing the course, participants should possess a basic repertoire of research and writing skills such as: summarizing and paraphrasing, drawing evidence from the scholarship of others, finding and evaluating print and electronic source materials appropriate for academic research projects, developing original arguments to support a thesis, critically evaluating their own and others' work, and collaborating with other writers throughout the writing process. The course will be task-based, and requires a series of brief, self-designed research papers to practice the required techniques of different academic formats.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students:

- Develop effective written communication skills
- Hone ability to critically evaluate arguments and evidence
- Present focused, logical arguments that support a thesis
- Apply the methods of inquiry of the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities
- Find, analyze, summarize, and synthesize appropriate source material from both print and electronic environments
- Communicate concepts clearly and effectively in all the most common forms of written discourse

Course Requirements

- Students are expected to attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussions, and to complete all readings prior to the class session. Reading assignments are typically 30 pages per session. Graded assignments include: Five short-response papers that apply specific skills introduced in the course.

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- A final, ten-page research paper that incorporates the various skills and styles covered in the class.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Participation: 10%
- Five short-response papers: 50% (5 x 10%)
- Final paper: 40%

Primary Texts

Baily, Stephen. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* (3rd edition). New York: Routledge, 2013.

Dollahite, Nancy E. and Julie Haun. *Sourcework: Academic Writing from Sources*. (2nd Edition). Heinle ELT, 2011.

Greene, Stuart and April Lidinsky, eds. *From Inquiry to Academic Writing: A Text and Reader* (Fourth Edition): LOCATION: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.

Outline of Course Content

Part I: The writing process

Topic 1: The purpose of academic writing

- Common types of academic writing
- The features of academic writing

Topic 2: Reading: finding suitable sources

- Types of text
- Summarizing texts

Topic 3: Developing critical approaches

- Launching the reform and opening up
- Raising the “four cardinal principles”
- The student movement in 1989
- The “Southern Tour” in early 1992

Topic 4: Critical thinking

- Avoiding plagiarism
- Brainstorming

Part II: Reading

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Topic 5: Reading methods

- Fact and opinion
- Reading abstracts

Topic 6: Assessing internet sources critically

- Determining website credentials
- Proper citation
- Pitfalls of Wikipedia

Part III: Summarizing

Topic 7: Stages of summarizing

- Summarizing and outlines
- Finding relevant points

Topic 8: Writing: The planning process.

- Concision and space: Planning section length
- Ratio of introduction, analysis, and summary

Part IV: The language of discussion

Topic 9: Development of ideas

- Taking a critical approach
- Argument and discussion

Topic 10: Cause and effect

- The language of cause and effect
- Cohesion

Part IV: Writing models

Topic 11: Styles and formats

- Emails, formal letters
- CVs, employment documents