



北京大学
汇丰商学院

Peking University HSBC Business School

Course Code

Writing in English

Module 4, 2016

Course Information

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30 – 5 p.m. or by appointment

Classes:

Lectures: Tuesday & Friday 1:30-3:20

Venue: PHBS Building, Room 323

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Writing is “the active mind seeking relationships, finding forms, making meanings.”

(Ann Berthoff, “Tolstoy, Vygotsky, and the making of meaning,” 1978.)

- **Course highlights: Students will perform a “global online debate”** with counterparts in a communication studies course at the University of Rhode Island, USA. Such will provide a real-world purpose for meaningful “conversation” in writing (expository writing), argumentation skills (argumentative/academic writing), and reading (critical thinking, vocabulary building).

Course overview:

Purpose

“Writing” is not merely being able to use and spell a lot of words correctly and put them in the proper order in sentences. However, for second language (L2) learners, writing in English is most often taught as a function of language learning. Focused mainly on vocabulary building and grammar – usually to prepare students for tests – this approach overlooks the act of **writing as communication**. Designed to develop second-language-learners’ written **communication skills**, this course will focus on the **communicative** approach to writing.

We communicate to meet needs – to find out or provide information for all kinds of reasons, or to persuade others – whether it is to survive or thrive. As communication that is set down somewhere (paper, computer, mobile device) rather than spoken into the air, writing, above all, represents **thinking**.

Not only does writing require the writer to **think critically**, but it also requires that the writer take responsibility for what is written. The writer’s first responsibility, therefore, is to set down thoughts and ideas so that they make sense to the **reader**, and to do so **ethically**.

But even before words are written, the writer needs to know his/her audience, the reader(s), so that he/she can enter into a conversation (communication) with them. For instance, think about how you read, and as you read do you recognize that you are thinking as you read? For instance, when you read a news headline like this, “Major Earthquake in Sichuan Province,” you may think, “Oh, how horrible! Where? When? How many people were hurt or killed? How much damage was done? Are rescuers still looking for people?” and so on. As you read the story, you want these questions answered.

So that the writer can have an effective conversation with the reader, he/she first needs to have a conversation with him/herself **keeping the reader/audience firmly in mind**. That mental conversation might go something like this:

- ♦ How much do you, my audience, know?
- ♦ How much do I need to explain to you?
- ♦ Have I written so that it will make sense to you?
- ♦ Have I included all the information you need for your understanding?
- ♦ Have I let you know whose ideas have influenced my thinking and cited – given credit – to those whose words and ideas I quoted, summarized or paraphrased?
- ♦ If I am trying to persuade you, then have I provided a claim, support and evidence that will be convincing?
- ♦ Have I anticipated the kinds of objections or questions that you may have and addressed them in my work?

By the way, do not get the mistaken notion that if you are writing for your teacher’s assignment that he or she knows all about it, so you can just skip over a lot of details. Teachers make writing assignments so that you can learn how to communicate in writing with a certain audience – and that audience is not necessarily the teacher.

THEREFORE, the purpose of this course is to help students improve their writing in English so that, ultimately, they prepare successful academic papers, particularly a satisfactory thesis. Underpinning this purpose is helping students learn to think.

Goal

Reader-focused content development for expository, argumentative and academic writing – not “perfect” English – is the goal of this course.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

No textbook is required, but various hand-out materials will be provided from a variety of resources, not limited to but including the following:

- Beebe, S., & Beebe, S. (2010). *Public speaking handbook*. Boston: Pearson.
- Braine, G., & May, C. (1996). *Writing from sources, a guide for ESL students*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing
- Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing*. New York: Norton.
- Holt, S. (no date). Professional business English communication for non-native speakers. Unpublished workshop outline and content developed for the University of Minnesota.
- Johnson, S. (2009). *Winning debates: A guide to debating in the style of the world universities debating championships*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Langan, J. (2004). *Ten steps to advancing college reading skills*. West Berlin, NJ: Townsend Press.
- Marshall, J. (2006). *How to write an essay*. New York: Spark Publishing.
- Raims, A. (2002). *Keys for writers*. Boston; Houghton Mifflin.
- Roen, D., Glau, G., & Maid, B. (2011). *McGraw Hill guide to writing for college, writing for life*. NY: McGraw Hill.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment
Our graduates will be effective communicators.		
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	This will be demonstrated in writing for the global online debate and other assignments Students will participate in peer review to both provide helpful feedback to classmates and sharpen their own analytical and communication skills.
Our graduates will be trained in ethics.		
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Students will demonstrate ethical, reader-focused writing through assignments and peer review. Students will respect and demonstrate academic integrity through understanding plagiarism and how to avoid it evidenced in their writing assignments.
Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	Students will participate in an online debate with counterparts at a US university.
Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.		This will be demonstrated in writing assignments.

2.2 Course specific objectives

Good writers are good readers and good critical thinkers. Therefore, in order to execute effective and responsible writing, students will learn how to understand and interpret what they read and to think critically before they write. In particular, students will participate in a global online debate based on readings in environmental issues. Additional readings and exercises for the course will come from a variety of sources on a variety of topics to help students develop a broader understanding of the world and themselves.

Writing instruction will focus on the following:

Process

Writing will be approached first as a process and “conversation” with the reader and last as a product. Students will learn how to evaluate a piece of writing, and **peer review** will be a primary component of the course.

Academic Writing

As the ultimate aim of this course is coach students for successful master’s thesis writing, students will

- 1) Learn what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
- 2) Develop or improve the ability to understand and interpret academic research papers and other reading in English. “Interpret” means the ability to paraphrase and summarize what you have read in your own words. This is key for all academic writing and is essential for a successful thesis.
- 3) Exercise critical thinking and express ideas to be demonstrated in a brief written work, with a clearly stated thesis, supporting evidence, and appropriate in-text citation and references.

The Conventions of Writing

The rules, or conventions, of writing in English will be embedded in coursework, and practicing them will be elemental to writing exercises and assignments. Specifically, the course will be concerned with the following:

- Summarizing, paraphrasing, and direct quotes.

- Citations/references
- Organization
- Syntax (sentence structure) and conciseness
- Grammar

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

Assessment task	Weighting	Explanation
Class participation	30%	This course is designed for skill building in a workshop-type setting with peer review – much of the work will be performed in class with discussions and immediate feedback. Missing three classes may result in automatic failure of the course. In-class work must be done in class and cannot be made up later. NO EXCEPTIONS.
Assignments & quizzes, etc.	50%	Assignments, quizzes or other evaluative work. Some quizzes may be unannounced and may not be made up.
Final assignment	20%	This course culminates in a final writing assignment to be performed on the last day of class. There will be no final exam.
Total	100%	

***TARDINESS AND ABSENCE FROM CLASS**

- 1) You must arrive in class on time. Attendance is marked at the beginning of each class. If you are not in class when attendance is taken, you will be marked absent, even if you show up late.
 - 2) You may be granted two excused absences from class if you request leave ahead of time. **IMPORTANT – for part-time students, this means only ONE excused absence per module, since this course is split between modules one and three.**
 - 3) Absences that are not considered leave but for which you can provide written verification of illness or emergency may be excused at the discretion of the instructor.
- As stated above, **missing three classes (for any reason) may result in automatic failure of the course. Failure to come to class without request for leave will be marked as an unexcused absence.**

Late Work

All assignments must be handed in on the date due (at the beginning of class or via electronic submission, depending on the individual assignment).

Any work that is handed in late will result in an automatic lowering of your assignment grade by five points, unless you provide documentation of illness or other compelling emergency. Each subsequent class meeting day on which the work is not turned in will be debited by one point per class meeting.

Your Grades

Your grades throughout the course, as well as your final course grade, are EARNED NOT GIVEN.

Your work will be evaluated based on clearly defined criteria using a rubric; your strengths and weaknesses will be clear to you based on the rubrics – there should be no mystery about your marks.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student's work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconduct, which includes plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation

with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicating a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honor points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a failing grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

This course calendar may be adjusted at any time at the discretion of the instructor

Week	Day	Date	In-Class Topic/Activity for Today's Date/ Reading/Assignments
1	Fri.	Apr. 29	<u>Course introduction: Writing as communication and as process; course focus on content development, sense making, organization, citations/references</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole language development with emphasis on critical reading and critical thinking as a process leading to good writing • Overview of <u>process writing</u> and <u>peer review</u> • Overview of <u>global online debate</u> and <u>teambuilding</u> • <u>Syllabus</u> review Various hand-out materials for the above.
2	Tues.	May 3	<u>Expository writing: The basics of writing to inform, explain</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader-focused writing and audience analysis • Conventions of writing and other workbook exercises in-class and to do on your own • VIDEO and ON-DEMAND WRITING IN-CLASS • INTRODUCTION TO PEER REVIEW and relationship to highly functioning teams
2	Fri.	May 6	<u>IN CLASS WORK TODAY:</u> Draft your “electronic handshake” message and autobiography; peer review <u>Avoiding plagiarism</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary, paraphrase, and quotation • In-text citations • Reference list
3	Tues.	May 10	<u>IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE – Summaries and paraphrasing</u> <u>Writing to persuade: Argumentation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They say... I say...</i> Templates for introducing arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ READ BEFORE FRIDAY’S CLASS – “Don’t Blame the Eater.”

3	Fri.	May 13	<u>Identifying facts and opinions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don’t Blame the Eater,” discussion and analysis. • Supporting your position with facts, researched sources • Common flaws in arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ HARD COPY DUE IN CLASS TODAY OF “Electronic Handshake” message and autobiography for teacher scoring.
4	Tues.	May 17	IN CLASS WORK TODAY – BRING YOUR LAPTOP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin working with team on position paper... understanding the team position... brainstorming... • Begin Internet search for your position, topics.
4	Fri.	May 20	IN-CLASS WORK –BRING YOUR LAPTOP Develop your team position; team breaks up position into segments for each team member to independently develop
5	Tues.	May 24	IN-CLASS WORK –BRING YOUR LAPTOP Develop first draft of your individual segment of the position paper
5	Fri.	May 27	BRING YOUR COMPLETED SEGMENT OF POSITION PAPER WITH RESEARCHED CITATIONS AND REFERENCES FOR FORMAL PEER REVIEW. Hand in peer review along with your peer’s segment of the position paper for teacher scoring and comment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>ELECTRONIC HANDSHAKE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY POSTED in Sakai Forums by midnight</u>
6	Tues.	May 31	IN-CLASS WORK -- BRING YOUR LAPTOP <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) ARRIVE IN CLASS HAVING READ YOUR U.S. TEAM COUNTERPART’S ELCTRONIC HANDSHAKE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY for class discussion 2) Continue working with team to refine the team position paper incorporating all segments.
6	Fri.	June 3	<u>IN-CLASS WORK -- BRING YOUR LAPTOP</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Finalize position papers</u> – last chance for in-class team review, teacher help, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams make brief presentations on their topics and positions for papers ➤ POST BY MIDNIGHT – GLOBAL ONLINE DEBATE BEGINS: Position paper posted in Sakai Forums by midnight (what you posted is due in hard
7	Tues.	June 7	<u>Begin preparing for debate rebuttal paper.</u> BRING HARD COPY TO CLASS OF YOUR U.S. TEAM COUNTERPART’S POSITION PAPER. Team analysis of the above – mark up their papers on hard copy; whole class discussion. Teams begin strategizing rebuttals
7	Fri.	June 10	NO CLASS DUE TO HOLIDAY
8	Sun	June 12	IN-CLASS WORK, SO BRING YOUR LAPTOP Teamwork on rebuttal strategy. Individual work on your segment of rebuttal.

8	Tues.	June 14	<p>IN-CLASS WORK – Final analysis and peer review of your rebuttal paper.</p> <p>POST BY MIDNIGHT – GLOBAL ONLINE DEBATE REBUTTAL: Posted on Sakai by midnight</p>
8	Fri.	June 17	<p>IN-CLASS WORK – Draft your farewell message and personal reflections; peer review.</p> <p>Class discussion on the above.</p> <p>Finalize after class and...</p> <p>POST BY MIDNIGHT – GLOBAL ONLINE DEBATE ENDS: “Electronic Farewell” message and personal reflection posted in Sakai Forums by midnight. Hard copy due next class.</p>
9	Tues.	June 21	<p>BRING YOUR LAPTOP FOR IN-CLASS RESEARCH</p> <p>➤ FINAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT: Argumentation paper on a health issue in China Media reports on this handed out, read and discussed in class.</p> <p>REVIEW ON IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND REFERENCES</p>
9	Fri.	June 24	<p>IN-CLASS WRITING – Work on your final argumentation essay.</p> <p>I recommend that you have a classmate peer review your work for feedback, suggestions, proofreading before handing it in on Tuesday.</p>
10	Tues	June 28	<p>Final assignment due in class.</p> <p>IN-CLASS DISCUSSION AND FINAL REFLECTIONS ON THE GLOBAL ONLINE DEBATE, ETC.</p>