

Introduction to Expository Writing

BSU101

Semester 1

Credit Hours 03

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course prepares undergraduates to become successful writers and readers of English. The course helps students develop their fundamental language skills with a focus on writing so that they can gain the confidence to communicate in oral and written English outside the classroom. The course is divided into five units and takes a PBL (Project-based Learning) approach. Unit themes target the development of 21st century skills and focus on self-reflection and active community engagement. Course activities include lectures, group, pair and individual activities, as well as a series of required assignments, including reading and writing across various genres. Finally, the course prepares students for taking the next course in the sequence, 'Expository Writing II: Cross-cultural Communication and Translation Skills'.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Analyze basic communication skills and use them effectively in oral and written English
2. Develop skills as reflective and self-directed learners
3. Critically evaluate and review various types of texts and summarize them
4. Develop analytical and problem-solving skills to address various community-specific challenges
5. Intellectually engage with different stages of the writing process, such as: brainstorming, mind mapping, free writing, drafting and revision, etc.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, the students will be able to

1. Write, edit and proofread a short essay in English language
2. Present ideas to the whole class in team presentations using English that is comprehensible and engaging.
3. Critically analyze a text written in English using SQW3R strategies
4. Conduct small-scale research about their communities
5. Draft a letter to editor.

Course Outline

1. **Unit 1: Self-Reflection**
*Introduction to the basics of the writing process,
Introduction to the steps of essay writing,
Students practice prewriting activities like brainstorming, listing, clustering and freewriting,
Students practice outlining of the essay*
2. **Unit 2: Personalized Learning**
*Students reflect on their learning process
Group discussion about learning styles based on the reading material provided to students
Introduction to personalized learning Students practice goal setting and create a learning plan*
3. **Introduction to the structure and significance of oral presentations**
*Introduction to the structure and significance of oral presentations
Class discussion about content selection and slide preparation for oral presentations
Peer review through a gallery walk*
4. **Unit 3: Critical Reading Skills**
*Introduce authentic reading (DAWN newspaper and non-specialist academic books/texts
Conduct classroom reading activities (using strategies skimming, scanning, SQW3R,
previewing, annotating, detailed reading and note-taking) using standard tests (TOEFL and IELTS)
Assign books/articles/reports for their individual home assignments*

5. *Share model review reports and annotated bibliographies*
- Unit 4: Community Engagement**
- Showing short documentaries to students on global environmental issues*
Student-led brainstorming on local versus global issues
Teacher-led introduction to the unit assignment (using assignment sheet)
Readings (or other input sources - video, social media) from local news on possible community issues, letters to editor and op-eds
Identify research problems
Begin drafting research questions based on the problems identified
Facilitating students on developing research questions in groups
Draft interview or survey questions for community research (in English or L1)
In-class role-plays of interviews with community members
Engaging students in critical reading and reflection on the issues found in different communities
In-class work on understanding interview information, how to present interview or survey information
Refining the research questions, designing a detailed research plan in groups, dividing the tasks and deciding the timeline for the completion of the project
Exposure to interview questions and interviewing techniques to develop an in-depth understanding of the issues
Continued group work on report outline In-class lecture and group work on analyzing information
Discussion based on translating the data from the source language to the target language (English)
Sharing the experience of field work in class orally

Mid Term

- Teacher feedback on outline of report (globally to entire class and individually to groups as needed)*
Think-pair-share the findings (group similar issues)
Individual writing of reflection on the community engagement project and their role in the group
Brainstorm using creativity for dissemination - cartoons, advertisements for university magazine or beyond, creating posts for FB
Summarizing/ converting the report to a letter to the editor to highlight the
6. **Unit 5: Letter to the Editor**
- Teacher-directed instruction on genres (types) of writing focusing on letter-writing*
Model-practice-reflect: Introduce types of letters comparing the use of formal and informal vocabulary and phrases in each type
Introduce the format and purpose of the letter-to-editor explaining with the help of an actual letter from a local newspaper
Group reading of sample letters-to-editor selecting ones that deal with issues familiar to the students
Invite a guest lecturer (local newspaper editor or faculty from journalism) to talk about what issues are currently raised in letters-to-editors and what are editors' criteria to accept letters for publication
Work in groups to continue reviewing letter samples, analyzing the structure of letters
Each group identifies an issue they want to write about and give a brief oral presentation to the class
Submit the first draft of letters (to the teacher and peer-review group)
In-class peer review of drafts using a checklist focusing on content and structure
DUE: First draft of letter (to teacher and peer review group)
Groups revise first draft of letter

Differentiate among revision, proofreading and evaluation (as sub stages of finalizing documents)
Discuss critically the draft-letter and implement the 'revision' phase of writing
Reading of (DAWN) newspaper and sharing important letters (to editors) on local issues
Groups revise second draft of letter
Explicit instruction (paragraph structure, syntax, diction, grammar, and mechanics)
Classroom discussion/debrief of activity
Discuss critically and finalize the draft-letter as the last phase of writing

Essential Reading

Organizing an Essay,

Accessed at:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/chapter/organizing-an-essay/>

Learning Preferences and Strengths

Accessed at:

<https://opentextbc.ca/studentssuccess/chapter/learning-preferences-and-strengths/>

Examine Applicable Strategies

Accessed at:

<https://opentextbc.ca/studentssuccess/chapter/examine-applicable-strategies/>

Planning the Presentation

Accessed at:

<https://opentextbc.ca/studentssuccess/chapter/planning-the-presentation/>

1. Oh, U. L. (May 26, 2020). Talking to kids about xenophobia. National Geographic. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/family/2020/05/talking-to-kids-about-xenophobia-coronavirus/>

2. <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/book-reviews/>

Community Engagement Toolkit for Planning (2017) Guiding principles [pp 7-24]

Developing Community Engagement Plan [pp 13-29].

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-good-and-bad-researchquestions.html>