IE-WRITING SKILLS

ASIGNATURAS CONVERGENTES
Professor: VICTORIA FONTANA
E-mail: vfontana@faculty.ie.edu

Academic year: 19-20
Degree course: FIRST
Semester: 1º
Category: COMPULSORY
Number of credits: 3.0
Language: English

PREREQUISITES
SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This course is based on three interlocking abilities which are developed over the fifteen sessions – effective research, critical thinking and academic & professional writing.

Using a common theme of an International Conference that will stretch over the length of the course the students will learn how to think critically in a written context. They will apply the 4S model (sense, strength, structure and style) to a literature review, an op-ed (a newspaper article containing opinions about a given subject and which is usually placed opposite the editorial page) and a final poster presentation, as well as in other writing contexts.

One of the main goals of the course will be the development of research skills so that students understand the critical role these play in presenting polished, credible and authoritative papers and reports.

A further aim is to develop critical thinking skills in order to fully understand and be able to analyse academic and professional texts in the areas and subjects related to their core degrees and in their future careers.

This course also familiarizes students with the various aspects of the writing process and guides them in the preparation of academic and professional papers, written communication, reports and essays across all subjects on their degree. The course provides useful tools and resources while giving students the opportunity to work through the writing process and other related areas such as brainstorming and creativity, advanced argumentation and persuasion, fast reading, deconstruction of texts, learning styles and effective note taking, all in a supportive and cooperative environment.
OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Find information to develop, support and refute their ideas (via the library and the Internet) more efficiently; choose appropriate and relevant sources.
- Use the IE library, Google Scholar and/or Web of Science for effective research.
- Recognize credible and relevant sources that can be used in academic formats.
- Quickly and effectively scan texts for key information.
- Be self-aware with respect to learning styles and coding of memory and apply this to note-taking.
- Develop creative and brainstorming techniques for elaborating possibility trees and alternative frameworks.
- Take notes on research and writing, brainstorm, outline and organize ideas.
- Evaluate and express the relevance of credible academic sources to their writing topic.
- Correctly and effectively incorporate ideas of others into their writing and avoid plagiarism by using correct citation methods (in-text citations, summarizing, paraphrasing, etc.).
- Correctly prepare formatted, organized references (using the APA system used in Social Sciences and related fields).
- Be familiar with and understand the structure and contents of academic and professional texts such as qualitative and quantitative studies, case studies, literature reviews, academic posters, op-eds and policy briefs.
- Identify and write correctly structured academic papers, such as argumentative, expository, and compare/contrast research essays, literature reviews, op-eds and other kinds of professional texts and written communication.
- Identify and produce a well-written thesis statement.
- Deconstruct and construct texts using critical thinking methodology.
- Self and peer-evaluate academic papers for content and organization.
- Employ effective argumentation when writing papers and identify errors in other writer’s arguments.
- Work towards writing that is clear, concise, critical and credible.
- Understand different styles of writing and develop different registers of formal and professional expression, knowing when to use and apply them.
- Understand the psychological effects of language and employ framing techniques using critical thinking, conceptual metaphor, etc., making deliberate choices in writing.
METHODOLOGY

This course is practical, adapted to the needs of each student, and supplemented with extra material and resources to permit each student to find their own path while acquiring fundamental academic skills common to all IE students. By combining ‘learning by doing’, self-paced learning and study, group work, access to digital media, lectures, instructor and peer feedback, and specialized workshops, this course places each student at the centre of the entire learning process.

Through a common syllabus and evaluation criteria every student can feel confident that they are receiving the same essential academic skills as their peers. However, the methodology is also designed to be flexible and robust enough to permit students to write on subjects linked to their own degrees, go more in depth in areas where they feel they need to improve, explore in areas that catch their interest, and learn at their own speed outside class through the use of videos and online materials.

The professor is a facilitator, who is there to guide and improve students’ research skills, critical thinking, and academic & professional writing. For this reason, students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute with individual work as well as to work with peers (in pairs or small groups) and as a large group toward mastering the aforementioned concepts. The students will learn through peer review, instructor feedback (in class and on their homework assignments and final paper), critical analysis of texts and group discussion. It is also expected that students will keep up to date with and use the online videos and resources to complement knowledge learned in class.

An International Conference on Data and the Behavioral Sciences is the overall theme that will unite the elements of the course, enabling the students to see the practical application of the areas that they learn on the course.

The extremely practical nature of this course is aimed at making students self-aware and self-sufficient in the areas of research, critical thinking and academic and professional writing as these are abilities and skills that they will need in all their subjects and beyond University.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching methodology</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>40.0 %</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
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<td>30 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
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<td>0 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other individual studying</td>
<td>20.0 %</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>75 hours</td>
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PROGRAM

SESSION 1

Course Introduction: Introduction to course (content, rules, evaluation, etc.). Explanation of course structure and evaluation system. The 4 S model and introduction to the International Conference theme: International Conference on Data and the Behavioral Sciences. Introduction to Literature Review / Instructions. Introduction to conference themes/sectors. Introduction to critical thinking. Understanding different types of thinking and how these relate to the interpretation of visual images and written text.

SESSION 2


SESSION 3

Critical Thinking & Research: Entering the IE library on-line in order to find relevant sources for research paper. Primary vs Secondary evidence and sources. Using Google Scholar and the Web of Science. Apply these tools to the investigation of conference paper topic.

SESSION 4


SESSION 5

Critical Thinking & Research: Note-taking: Cornell notes, mind-mapping, concept mapping, etc. Understanding of learning styles and working memory. Examining sources for literature review.

SESSION 6


SESSION 7


SESSION 8


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SESSION 9
Speaking statistics: How to understand and communicate statistics effectively and convincingly and be aware of how they can be misused. Logical fallacies. How to use supporting evidence in writing.

SESSION 10
Academic Structure, Style & Format: Standard formal style: Overview of transitions, academic style, QPS, and common mistakes, formal versus informal language. APA style: Correct incorporation of research into academic and professional writing - References, in-text citations, plagiarism. Choosing Sources for Literature Review.

SESSION 11
Recapitulate & Review: How to look at a study. Exploration of a peer-reviewed journal article and its components. Identify the most relevant elements. What to look for and decipher in each section. Reference page as a tool.

SESSION 12
***LITERATURE REVIEW DUE on the Day before session 12***

SESSION 13
***Op-ed Rough Draft Due in class today***
Deconstructing an op-ed: Examining structure, language and style. Critique: Critiquing a colleague’s op-ed article in a peer review process designed to encourage the reader and writer of the critique to self-reflect as well as help the person whose paper they are critiquing.

SESSION 14
***OP-ED FINAL VERSION DUE***
Making an APA poster: Poster layout. From paper to poster. Applying critical thinking to determine communicative goals. From text to speech. Being concise and effectively conveying the gist of your project.

SESSION 15
Final Poster presentations in pairs: Conference Poster. A panel of judges will evaluate the posters and choose the best ones (1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes will be awarded).
BIBLIOGRAPHY
The manual that is used on the course is available at the Writing Center Website in pdf format.

https://sites.google.com/faculty.ie.edu/ieuniversitywritingcenter
EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grading criteria will be common for all students across all Writing Skills groups. Independently of any variations in how a session is taught, all professors use common evaluation rubrics and criteria. There is also coordination across the interpretation and application of this evaluation. This is done with the students' interest in mind, ensuring objectivity and fairness across the subject.

Regardless of whether a student passes or not in the evaluation part of the course, more than 30% absences on the course is an automatic fail per IE policy.

Students will be evaluated as follows:

Continuous evaluation (30% of final grade):
- Assignments completed and turned in on time.
- Preparation of reading assignments, attendance, and active participation in class, both individually and as part of a group.
- Analysis of texts and quizzes
- Preliminary paper plus evaluation template.
- Homework – thesis statement, outline, etc.

Mid term paper (30% of final grade)
- Review of sources (literature review) connected with topic. There will be a focus on academic research, evaluation of sources, etc.
- This will directly complement the final writing and presentation and put into practice key research skills learned in the first part of the course.

Final Writing (25% of final grade):
- Content (research, focus on ideas, incorporation of examples and ideas from bibliography, strength and logic of argumentation).
- Organization (organization of ideas, arguments, information and citations).
- Thesis statement (overarching point clearly defined and properly formatted).
- Introduction and Conclusion (coherent and well-developed).
- Evidence and support (assertions are backed up with reliable sources).
- Language (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, use of text markers).
- Correct bibliography and in-text citations.

Poster Presentation (15%)
- Poster Presentation incorporating all of the areas that have been used on the course.

Late Submissions
- A student will receive a mark of zero for any work (essays or assignments) submitted after the due date indicated by the professor.

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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Continuous Evaluation</td>
<td>30 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Presentation</td>
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Sobresaliente/Outstanding: 9.0-10.0 (A to A+)

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Consistently produces work of the highest quality and craft; exhibits notable progress and development over the course of the semester; meets all course objectives at highest level; attendance is near-perfect, and contributions to course discussions are extremely valuable.

**Notable: 7.0-8.9 (B to B+)**
Completes all assignments with work of above-average quality and craft; exhibits significant progress and development; meets most course objectives; attendance and participation are very good.

**Aprobado: 6.0-7.0 (C to C+)**
Completes all assignments with work of acceptable quality and craft; exhibits some progress and development; meets a majority of course objectives. Attendance and participation are acceptable.

**Aprobado: 5.0-6.0 (D)**
Assignments are delivered but are incomplete and/or of low quality and craft; exhibits little progress and development; meets few course objectives. Attendance and participation are poor, but absences do not total more than 30%.

**Suspensio: 0-4.9 (F)**
Work is incomplete, missing, or does not meet course objectives. Attendance and participation are poor.

**Automatic Failure/Suspensio: 0 (F)**
Please note that a student who misses 30% or more of the scheduled sessions receives an automatic 0.0, and loses his or her right to the second “convocatoria.”

**RETAKE POLICY**
Each student has 4 chances to pass any given course distributed in two consecutive academic years (regular period and July period).

Students who do not comply with the 70% attendance rule will lose their 1st and 2nd chance, and go directly to the 3rd one (they will need to enrol again in this course next academic year).

**PROFESSOR BIO**

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28th June 2019
Professor: VICTORIA FONTANA
E-mail: vfontana@faculty.ie.edu

Victoria holds an M.A. in World Language Education from The University of Washington, Seattle, WA, a B.A. in Spanish Language and a B.A. in Italian Language from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a Certificate in Contemplative Psychotherapy from Nalanda Institute for Contemplative Science. She is currently earning an M.A. in Mindfulness-based Approaches at Bangor University in Wales.

She has taught Spanish, English, Writing, Pronunciation and Art Appreciation at IE University.

She has designed curriculum for and taught Spanish, English and Italian as a second language at all levels, as well as Literature, Writing and Bilingual Education to a diverse group of students and professionals at different institutions including IE University, CECO/ICEX, APUS University (USA), The College for International Studies (Madrid) and the Comunidad de Madrid.

She has also designed and taught specialized courses on Professional Writing, Public Speaking, Pronunciation, Meditation and Mindfulness. She is certified as a Mindfulness Consultant by the Universidad de Miguel Cervantes through the Escuela de Desarrollo Transpersonal, and as a Meditation Teacher by FENACO through the Asociación Ser Esmeralda.

In addition to teaching, she has established herself professionally as an exhibiting artist, interpreter, translator, having translated published books, articles and films; and diction coach for professional actors and singers.

OTHER INFORMATION
Office Hours available for appointment at vfontana@faculty.ie.edu
CODE OF CONDUCT IN CLASS

1. Be on time: Students arriving more than 5 minutes late will be marked as “Absent”.
   Only students that notify in advance in writing that they will be late for a specific session may be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

2. If applicable, bring your name card and strictly follow the seating chart. It helps faculty members and fellow students learn your names.

3. Do not leave the room during the lecture: Students are not allowed to leave the room during lectures. If a student leaves the room during lectures, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter and, therefore, will be marked as “Absent”.
   Only students that notify that they have a special reason to leave the session early will be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).

4. Do not engage in side conversation. As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed. If you have a question, raise your hand and ask it. If you do not want to ask it during the lecture, feel free to approach your teacher after class.
   If a student is disrupting the flow of the lecture, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

5. Use your laptop for course-related purposes only. The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor. The use of Social Media or accessing any type of content not related to the lecture is penalized. The student will be asked to leave the room and, consequently, will be marked as “Absent”.

6. No cellular phones: IE University implements a “Phone-free Classroom” policy and, therefore, the use of phones, tablets, etc. is forbidden inside the classroom. Failing to abide by this rule entails expulsion from the room and will be counted as one absence.

7. Escalation policy: 1/3/5. Items 4, 5, and 6 above entail expulsion from the classroom and the consequent marking of the student as “Absent.” IE University implements an “escalation policy”: The first time a student is asked to leave the room for disciplinary reasons (as per items 4, 5, and 6 above), the student will incur one absence, the second time it will count as three absences, and from the third time onward, any expulsion from the classroom due to disciplinary issues will entail 5 absences.