



Course Code WRTG

Writing in English (Special Session)

Module Three, 2018-19

Course Information

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Classes:

Lectures: Tuesday & Friday 08:30-10:20

Venue: PHBS Building, Room

Course Website:

If any.

1. Course Description

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

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

1.1 Context

Course overview:

“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 – obtain information, persuade others, entertainment – whether it is to survive or thrive. As communication that is set down somewhere (paper, computer, mobile device) rather than spoken, writing, above all, represents thinking.

Not only does writing require the writer to think critically, 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 understand 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 also thinking? 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.

In order to have an effective conversation with the reader, a writer 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 does my audience, know?
- + How much do I need to explain?
- + Have I written so that it will make sense?
- + Have I included all the information need to enable understanding?
- + Have I properly cited – given credit – the sources I quoted, summarized or paraphrased?
- + If trying to persuade, have I provided a claim, support, and evidence that will be convincing?
- + Have I anticipated and addressed the kinds of objections or questions that may arise?

Do not think that when you are writing for a class assignment that the instructor knows all about your topic. Do not just skip over a lot of details. Teachers make writing assignments to help students learn how to communicate, in writing, with a particular audience – and that audience is not necessarily the teacher.

THEREFORE, **the purpose of this course** is to help students improve their writing in English to enable them to 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.

Prerequisites: None

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

No textbook is required, but various hand-out materials will be provided from a variety of resources.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Yes-article summaries and an essay
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	Yes-in their writing assignments
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in groups for projects, discussion, and presentation.	Yes-working in pairs and an oral presentation
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	No
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyse business problems and identify the ethical	No

	aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	Yes-increased understanding of plagiarism
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	Yes-through course content
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	No
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	No
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	Yes-in their 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. Additional readings and exercises for the course will come from a variety of sources on a variety of topics to help students develop a broad 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 critically evaluate a piece of writing.

Academic Writing

As the ultimate aim of this course is to coach and prepare students to successfully write their master’s thesis, 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, in your own words, what you have read. 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 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 all 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
- Logical organization
- Syntax (sentence structure) and conciseness
- Grammar

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

2.1 Assessment/Grading Details

Weighting	Type	Description
10 pts/%	In Class Work	Grade is based on: class attendance; participation in discussions and group works; and completion of in class

		activities.
5 pts/%	Citation Assignment	Source citation: Introduces and provides applied experience in using the American Psychological Association (APA) source citation style.
10 pts/%	Outline Assignment	Academic Outline: Organizing the main ideas and supporting evidence for an essay in a logical, sequential progression.
30 pts/%	Summary Assignment	Article summary: Reading and summarizing an academic or business-related article.
45 pts/%	Essay Assignment	Position paper: Constructing an evidence-based pro/con argumentative essay to support a specific claim.

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) Absences, for which you can provide written verification of illness or emergency may be excused at the discretion of the instructor.

Missing three classes (other than verifiable emergencies) may result in automatic failure of the course.

Late Work

All assignments must be handed in on time on the due date (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 10%, 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 5%.

Grades

Grades throughout the course, as well as the final course grade, are EARNED NOT GIVEN. All work will be evaluated based on clearly defined criteria; your strengths and weaknesses will be clear delineated – 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 work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include 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 communicate 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 honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail 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 schedule may be altered as needed at the discretion of the instructor.

Week	Topic(s)	Assignments
1	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine Theses (in-class)• Introductory essay (in-class)• Student questionnaire (in-class)
2	Citations	Citation Exercise
3	Outlining & Argumentative Writing	Article Outline Assignment (in-class) Citation assignment due
4	Summarizing	Article summarizing Exercise (in-class)
5	Position Paper	Article summarizing (in-class) Article summary due
6	Critical Thinking; Presentations	In-class presentation of position paper. Argumentative position paper due

4. Miscellaneous

Becoming competent to write in any language cannot be learned by sitting in class and listening to a lecture. Writing must be learned through a continual process of practice, constructive feedback, and improvement. Therefore, there will be minimal lecture time in this course; students will engage in the process of writing in almost every class, which makes class attendance especially important.