ESLA1901 - Academic Language Skills for International Student Course Outline

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Semester
Semester 1-2006

Unit Weighting
10

Teaching Methods
Lecture, Tutorial

Brief Course Description
Designed for international students who are native speakers of languages other than English. The course focuses on the further development of students' academic English skills in writing, speaking, listening and reading. Lectures, tutorials and some videos are presented on an appropriate range of topics and will help students to develop a high language proficiency that will be of benefit to them at all levels of their University studies. During both lectures and tutorials, students will be encouraged to participate actively in order to practise their increasing spoken-language skills. Problem based learning, discussions and individual talks presented in class will help students efficiently to absorb the material that is being taught.

Course Outline issued and correct as at Semester 1, 2006
CTS Download 14 February 2006
Contact Hours
Two lecture hours and one tutorial hour per week with an additional learning support hour.

Learning Materials/Texts

Course Objectives
The course aims at assisting international and exchange students in developing further their English language skills in an academic environment. The course is concerned with the development of a number of particular aspects of academic English. Completion of this course will improve the proficiency of students in the following skills, with the degree and direction of improvement depending upon the varied individual proficiencies from which the students begin:

1. Writing skills, including academic essay writing, answering questions in an examination, taking notes from lectures and reading materials, structuring a piece of academic writing, arranging information in an understandable sequence, the correct use of quotations and referencing, and general skills of expression involving correct use of grammar and syntax.
2. Listening skills, including listening to lectures and talks and understanding the content of selected programs shown on videotapes.
3. Reading skills, including researching documentation, reading strategies: scanning and skimming.
4. Speaking skills, including speaking in an academic setting, encouraging rhetorical consciousness, answering questions and discussing topics confidently.

Course Content
The course is concerned with the development of a number of particular aspects of academic English. Its content is designed to improve the proficiency of students in the following skills: 1. Writing skills, including academic essay writing, answering questions in an examination, taking notes from lectures and reading materials, structuring a piece of academic writing, arranging information in an understandable sequence, the correct use of quotations and referencing, and general skills of expression involving correct use of grammar and syntax. 2. Listening skills, including listening to lectures and talks and understanding the content of selected programs shown on videotapes. 3. Reading skills, including researching documentation, reading strategies: scanning and skimming. 4. Speaking skills, including speaking in an academic setting, encouraging rhetorical consciousness, answering questions and discussing topics confidently.

Assessment Items
10 weekly assignments 60%  
One oral seminar presentation 20%  
Essay (500 words, extended version of the topic chosen for oral presentation) 20%

Assumed Knowledge
No assumed knowledge.
**Callaghan Campus Timetable**  
**ESLA1901**  
**LANGUAGE SKILLS INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**  
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science  
Semester 1 - 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>14:00 - 15:00</td>
<td>W238</td>
<td>WITH ESLA2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Lecture</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>90:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>MCG28C</td>
<td>WITH ESLA2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Tutorial</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>15:00 - 16:00</td>
<td>W238</td>
<td>Commencing Week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>10:00 - 11:00</td>
<td>MCG28C</td>
<td>Commencing Week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Tutorial</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>11:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>MCG28C</td>
<td>Learning Support Hour - Commencing Wk 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plagiarism**

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another’s ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -  

The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Written Assessment Items**

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.
**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment: or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.


**Changing your Enrolment**

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2006

For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2006

For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2006

For Trimester 2 courses: 10 June 2006


Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html)
Contact Details

Faculty Student Service Offices
The Faculty of Education and Arts
Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)
Phone: 0249 215 314

The Dean of Students
Dr Jennifer Archer
Phone: 492 15806  Fax: 492 17151
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49 21 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at:
www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.
Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)
- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box:**
  - Callaghan students: School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127

- **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments:** All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted **more than ten days** after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

**Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications**

Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUBS.

**No Assignment Re-submission**

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

**Remarks**

Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf)

**Return of Assignments**

Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.
Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source: the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:


Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Fail (FF)</th>
<th>Pass (P)</th>
<th>Credit (C)</th>
<th>Distinction (D)</th>
<th>High Distinction (HD)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
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ESLA1901 Assessment Semester 2, 2005

Progressive assessment:

**TEN** weekly written assignments on academic topics ........... **60%** of the total mark

**ONE** tutorial presentation .............................................................. **20%** of the total mark

and a

**FINAL SHORT ESSAY** .......................................................... **20%** of the total mark

All written assignments should be handed in to me personally at the **beginning of the tutorial by the due date**. They will consist of essay type questions relating to the topics dealt with in class. You will always be encouraged to write about topics that are relevant in your own field of study. I will correct your assignments and comment on them in order to help you to improve your writing.

**Tutorial presentation**

The **time** of the delivery of your talk is limited to **15 minutes**.

**Topic:**

(a) You may talk about any topic in your own (or in a related) academic subject area

(b) **or** a topic in which you are especially interested that is suitable to be discussed in a university environment

**Possible dates for the seminar presentations are:**

**Fridays: 17, 24, 31 March; 17 April; 5, 12 May**

**Assignments and seminar presentations** will be discussed in more detail during the tutorials.

**Grades:**

The grades you receive for your assignments are a reflection of

* the difficulty of the topic treated (abstract ideas)
* academic (formal) expression
* coherence and style
Abbreviation of grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HD</td>
<td>High Distinction</td>
<td>85-100% (17-20 out of 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>75-84% (15-16.8 out of 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>65-74% (13-14.8 out of 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>50-64% (10-12.8 out of 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>less than 50% (less than 10 out of 20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
I am available for student consultation on
Wednesdays 9.00 am - 10.00 am
and
Fridays 12.00 pm - 1.00 pm
Room: MCG 37
Tel.: Office School of language and Media. 4921 5155
Email: Helene.Clark@newcastle.edu.au
ESLA 1901 Academic Language Skills for International Students

COURSE OUTLINE SEMESTER 1 2006

WEEKS ONE TO THREE (Monday 20th February to Friday 10th March)

Characteristic features of academic writing
   Structure
   Introduction and conclusion
   Connectives (linking words and phrases)
   Writing paragraphs, topic sentences (Chapter 3)
   Developing a written argument (organising your ideas)
   Textbook: Chapter 7: Language Skills

Description of a process and procedure and expressing sequence
Description (physical)
Vocabulary improvement
Narration
Textbook: Chapter 1: Essay topics

WEEKS FOUR TO SEVEN (Monday 14th March to Fri. 7th April)

Textbook: Chapter 2: Preparing an essay outline
   Chapter 12: Reading textbooks efficiently

Vocabulary improvement-tutorial
Abstract expressions
Prepositions-tutorial
Academic writing style
Generalisation, qualification and caution

Quotations, referencing, plagiarism
   Paraphrasing and summarising
   Reporting verbs
   Textbook Chapter 9: Punctuation

*************************************************************************************
**********
Semester recess Friday 14th April 26 September to Friday 28th October 2006
*************************************************************************************
WEEKS EIGHT TO TEN (Monday 1st May to Fri. 19th May)

Vocabulary improvement
Abstract expressions
Prepositions (Chapter 9)
Comparison and contrast
Cause and effect
Definitions

Discussion
argumentative essays
thesis statements
language of evaluation

Textbook
Chapters 5, 10, 11

Semester recess Monday 26 September to Friday 7 October 2005

WEEKS ELEVEN TO THIRTEEN (Monday, 22nd May to Fri. 9th June)

Vocabulary improvement
Abstract expressions
Prepositions
Introductions and conclusions
Research vocabulary
Exemplification and Classification
Examinations, instructional words
Interpretation of data
Chapter 13 – Principles of report writing

Revision: Academic writing

Examination period: Monday 7 November to Friday 25 November 2005
How to submit and present written assignments:

Attach an **ESLA 2001/1901 Assignment Cover Sheet** to the front of your assignments and essays. Collect these from the front of the Language and Media Office in the wooden boxes.

On this you will record:
- the **number** of the assignment (A1)
- your **first and surname**
- your **tutorial group**
- **Your signature ensuring that this work is not plagiarised.**

Hand in all written assignments to me at the beginning of the tutorial **by the due date.**

**Important:** Leave enough space for my corrections. If you are writing by hand, **leave a wide margin and write on every second line.** If you are word processing, **use double spacing.**

**References:** All references must be from **appropriate academic journals and books.** No Internet sources are to be used unless they are refereed academic journals.
ESLA 1901 - WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT 1

Due date: 24th February

Word length: 150 words

Task: A1 - Writing a summary

Write a summary of the author (self) presentation that you have given to your tutorial group. Group the information into paragraphs and remember to include in each paragraph:

- Topic sentence;
- Supporting sentences
  using appropriate transition signals;
- Concluding sentence.

Write in a formal style.
Task: A2 - Paragraph writing

Write approximately two paragraphs on a topic of your own choice.

You should:

* provide an outline of the paragraphs as well as the finished work,
* underline the topic sentences,
* give your assignment a title,
* use transition signals.
* You must reference your work from appropriate academic journals and books.

Sample outline: for each paragraph

**Topic:** Domestic animals

**Controlling idea:** beneficial to health

**Topic Sentence:** Keeping domestic pets such as dogs or cats is beneficial for one’s health.

**Supporting sentences:**
- Supporting point 1 - regular exercise
- Supporting details - dogs - walking/jogging and playing
- Supporting point 2 - companionship - mental health
- Supporting details - small pets - beneficial for elderly

**Concluding sentence:** For these reasons, it is obvious that owning a pet can improve one’s physical and mental health.
Task: A3 - Writing a Description

Write a description of the procedure shown in the video— firstly, introduce the topic in one paragraph; secondly, in the body of the essay, describe the process of transplantation; finally, write a conclusion which gives your opinion about this process and organ transplantation in general.

OR

Write a description of your country, using the guide on the handout of ‘Physical Description’. Your essay must contain an introduction, body and conclusion.

Remember that in this style of writing you should use simple present active and simple present passive voice, and transition signals are very important.

You must reference your work from appropriate academic journals and books.
Task: A4 - Graph description

Select a suitable graph or table from those given, or select your own from another source. Describe the information represented in the graph or table, and *don't omit key information*. Remember to restate the title of the graph or table in your introduction, and in your conclusion you should comment on the wider implications of this information. As this is a summary, you should adhere closely to the *word limit*.

You must reference your work from *appropriate academic journals and books including any graphs you use.*
Task: A5 - Write an argumentative essay in which you discuss two or more viewpoints relating to a specific topic. You may choose a topic from your field of study or choose one of the statements given below.

You must formulate a **thesis statement and make your position clear.**
- You should explore the **strengths and weaknesses of different viewpoints**
- You should give reasons for your views and if possible find some **evidence** to support them.
- You must reference your work from **appropriate academic journals and books.**

Task: A6 - Present your argument in a small tutorial group.

In your presentation, you must state an opinion about a particular topic. The statement could be controversial, which would promote discussion and debate in your group. As in the essay, you must be prepared to support your opinion with reasons and if possible, evidence.

**Examples of statements:**

Freedom of speech is the greatest freedom of all.

Male Brains and female brains are extremely dissimilar.

All the health issues of the 21st Century can be attributed to lifestyle choices.

Children should be educated from as early as birth to enable them to achieve success later in life.
Task: A7 - Cause and Effect
You may choose a topic from your field of study or an appropriate academic issue.
You must reference your work from appropriate academic journals and books.
ESLA 1901 - WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT 8

Due date: 5th May

Word length: 250 words

Task: A8 - Comparison and contrast
You may choose your topic from your field of study OR from an area of academic interest.
You must reference your work from appropriate academic journals and books.
Task: A9 - Note-taking and summary writing

First, take notes of the main points and the key supporting information. Then, using these notes, write a summary of no longer than 150 words. Remember that paraphrasing is an essential tool for summary writing.

You must reference your work from the reading.
ESLA 1901 - WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT 10

To be written in class on Friday 19th May

Word length: 250-300 words

Task: A10 - Write an argumentative essay presenting a position on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction – including the thesis statement, well-developed body paragraphs and a clear conclusion.

Topics:

There should be no education of children younger than ten years of age.

Democratic countries really only have an illusion of freedom.

Most diseases are genetic in origin.

Females and male brains are very similar.
Task: Book Review

Your essay is a review of the novel by an Australian author that you have been reading throughout the semester.

You should discuss the background of the author, in addition to the following:

- **theme;**
- **plot;**
- **characters and character development;**
- **setting;**

Together with recommended **reader profile**, and your own **critical reflection** on the novel as a whole.