

Words that Matter: Academic Writing in Practice

Course Syllabus

Course information

Professor Estogildo Gledson Batista (DLM / UEM).

Course title Words that Matter: Academic Writing in Practice.

Total hours 45h

- 30h synchronous – Mondays 2p.m. to 6 p.m.
- 15h asynchronous.
- 3 credits.

Target audience: Graduate students from all fields and areas of study.

Modality: Hybrid – Face-to-face (UEM students) and remote lessons.

Course overview

This course focuses on developing the comprehension and written production of academic texts, including essays, research proposals / reports and scientific articles, with emphasis on cohesion, coherence, accuracy, and communicative-discursive competence.

Learning objectives and learner outcomes

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

- Read and understand academic texts, from a range of genres and sources, that discuss opinions, viewpoints, and research data.
- Identify the different parts / elements that constitute summary and response essays, research reports and scientific articles.
- Analyze the conventions and the features (the rhetorical moves) of the genres personal essays, summary and response essays, research reports and scientific articles.
- Identify and produce academic texts that are original and free from plagiarism.
- Use elements of process writing – organize ideas, draft, revise, edit – to write their own academic texts.
- Plan and produce clear, well-structured academic texts that follow the conventions of their respective genres and demonstrate advanced lexical and grammatical accuracy.
- Develop and articulate their ideas through critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and argumentation.

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Methodology

- Synchronous lessons: interactive sessions with lectures, discussions, analysis of sample texts, guided writing exercises, and peer review activities.
- Asynchronous activities: individual exercises reinforcing concepts introduced during synchronous lessons; short writing tasks; reading, analysis, and reflection assignments.
- Feedback: professor provides written and/or oral feedback on asynchronous submissions to guide improvement and learning.
- Portfolio: by the end of the course, students will compile a portfolio including a summary/response essay, a research report, and a scientific article draft.

Course Schedule

Unit 1 – Foundations of Academic Writing & Response Essays		
Lesson	Synchronous (5h/a)	Asynchronous Activities
1 13/04/26	Introduction to Academic Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Course overview. - Characteristics of academic writing (cohesion, coherence, clarity, precision). - Diagnostic activity: short free-write on research interests. Summarizing Academic Texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies for identifying thesis, main ideas, paraphrasing, and avoiding plagiarism by using direct and indirect references. - Practice with short excerpts. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Asynchronous Activity 1 (2h/a)</p> Read a short academic article and highlight features of academic style (formal vocabulary, hedging, referencing). Write a 150-200-word summary of a provided article.
20/03/26	<i>Recess - Tiradentes Holiday</i>	
2 27/03/26	Writing Response Essays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moving from summary to response (critical stance, agreeing/disagreeing, supporting with evidence). - Analyze models. - Practice with the short summary written for Asynchronous Activity 1. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Asynchronous Activity 2 (2h/a)</p> Write a 300-word summary + response essay to a selected reading.

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Unit 2 – Research Proposals & Research Reports		
Lesson	Synchronous (5h/a)	Asynchronous Activities
3 04/05/26	<p>Structure of a Research Proposal / Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purpose, sections, audience. Compare report vs. article. <p>Introduction and Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing clear research questions/objectives; contextualizing the study. 	
4 11/05/26	<p>Methods and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describing methodology (past tense, passive voice, precision). <p>Results and Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presenting findings (tables/figures + text); linking to research questions. <p>Conclusion and Report Revision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing conclusions, implications, and limitations. Peer review of drafts. <p>For the following lesson: Find and bring one article from your research area.</p>	<p>Asynchronous Activity 3 (3 h/a)</p> <p>Submit a complete draft of the research proposal / report (2–3 pages).</p>

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Unit 3 – Scientific Articles		
Lesson	Synchronous (5h/a)	Asynchronous Activities
5 18/05/26	<p>The IMRAD Structure of Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyze model articles in students' fields. <p>Writing Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The “funnel” model: establishing territory, gap, and purpose. <p>Theoretical framework</p> <p>Methods Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasizing reproducibility, detail, and conciseness. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Asynchronous Activity 4 (4h/a)</p> <p>Write a draft of the introduction, theoretical framework and methods for your article.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i></p> <p>Analyze the introduction, theoretical framework and methods section of an article you have already written.</p>
6 25/05/26	<p>Results and Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crafting a narrative around findings; integrating citations; discussing implications. <p>Conclusion, References, and Academic Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing conclusions; - Managing references (APA/MLA/ABNT); - Avoiding plagiarism. <p>Writing Effective Abstracts and Titles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abstract types (structured vs. unstructured); - Characteristics of strong titles. <p>Peer review of scientific articles; Group feedback and reflection on progress.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Asynchronous Activity 5 (4h/a)</p> <p>Write a draft of results + discussion, and conclusion for your article, including the references.</p> <p>Draft title + abstract for your article.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>OR</i></p> <p>Analyze the results + discussion, conclusion, title and abstract of an article you have already written.</p> <p><u><i>Optional:</i></u></p> <p>Finalize and submit portfolio with (I) summary/response essay, (II) research report, (III) scientific article draft.</p>

- Note: this course schedule can be modified according to the group's needs.

By the end, students will have a portfolio of three key academic genres:

- I. A summary/response essay.
- II. A research proposal / report.
- III. A draft of a scientific article.

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Course Assessment:

Course approval is dependent upon attendance (75% of attendance), in-class participation and involvement in the asynchronous activities.

For the possible tasks produced in the asynchronous activities (response essay, research project/report, scientific article) the assessment will be carried out formatively, that is to say, after each submission, students will be given feedback and, according to it, the chance of resubmitting their assignment, therefore improving their performance. Each of the three academic texts produced will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Content	<p>This refers to the quality, appropriateness and relevance of the content presented in the academic text, which allows the text to achieve its communicative purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The content of the academic text is appropriate and relevant according to the instructions of each assessment task.
Genre features	<p>This refers to the expected features of the genre of each academic text, their rhetorical moves and how the conventions of the genre are used to convey the expected information and achieve the communicative purpose of the academic text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The features of the genre and the rhetorical moves are present and appropriately used.
Organization	<p>This refers to the sequencing of ideas and how they are articulated in each academic text as well as , which allows the text to achieve its communicative purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paragraphing is appropriate. ● Ideas follow a logical sequence. ● Ideas are cohesively articulated and linked with the use of a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers, so they are easy to follow.
Language	<p>This refers to lexical and grammatical resources employed in each academic text, which allows them to achieve their communicative purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Range of lexical resources used appropriately according to the genre and theme of the academic text. ● Range of grammatical forms and structures used accurately. ● Problems with lexis, grammar, and mechanics are minimal and do not distract the reader.
Process Writing & Punctuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rewrite the text based on analytical activities (peer assessment, self assessment, teacher feedback) related to the genre in question. ● Submit the assignment within the stipulated deadline.

Participation in the synchronous lessons include the following criteria:

- Completion of requested activities;
- Preparation in advance for classroom activities.
- Providing requested materials for class;
- Taking part in class discussions and relevant contributions to the class topics.

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Course policies

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions and activities. You must have 75% of attendance, so if you need to be absent from class, please let your professor know in advance by email. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis for emergencies, accidents, or serious illnesses.

Assignment Submission: All assignments must be submitted by the due date in our Google Classroom. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis for emergencies, accidents, or serious illnesses.

Academic Integrity: Submission of original work, as well as ethical and responsible use of sources, appropriate citation, is expected.

Revision Policy: Students are encouraged to revise their work based on feedback. Drafts submitted for peer review can be revised and resubmitted for a higher grade by the specified deadline.

Technology Use: Laptops and tablets may be used for note-taking and research during class.

Accommodations: Students requiring accommodations due to a disability should notify the professor as soon as possible to arrange necessary support in accordance with university policy.

Peer Review: In order to develop autonomy, students are encouraged to participate in peer review sessions and provide constructive feedback to classmates.

Classroom Conduct: Respectful behavior is expected at all times. Disruptive behavior, including talking during lessons or using devices inappropriately, is discouraged.

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Course references:

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DARTMOUTH Writing Program. Material for Students Writing the Academic Paper. Available on: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/ac_paper/what.shtml

GILLETT, Andy. Using English for Academic Purpose: A guide for students in higher education. UEFAP Available on: <http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.htm>

MACHADO, Anna Rachel; LOUSADA, E; ABREU TARDELLI, L. S. Planejar Gêneros Acadêmicos. Parábola, São Paulo, 2005.

SWALES, J.M. & Feak, C. Academic Writing for Graduate Students, 3rd Edition: Essential Skills and Tasks. Michigan ELT, 2012.

SWALES, John M., FEAK Christine B. English in Today's Research World. A writing guide. The University of Michigan Press: 2005.

SWALES, John M., FEAK, Christine B. Telling a Research Story. Writing a Literature Review. Volume 2 of the Revised and Expanded Edition of English in Today's Research World The Michigan Series in English for Academic and Professional Purposes. The University of Michigan Press: 2009