

Greta Goetz, Lecturer

Academic Writing

2 semesters

Type of course: practical exercises

Meets twice a week

ESPB: 9

Course goals and content:

This course will focus on critical thinking, literary techniques and rhetorical devices. Emphasis will be placed on how to apply abstract ideas to concrete situations. In-class exercises will address elements of essay writing such as organization techniques and the kinds of questions useful in prewriting. Reading assignments will be set to encourage an understanding of what constitutes an academic text and to assist in the articulation of academic ideas. Students will be exposed to a wide range of subject matter in order to improve their vocabulary and fluency.

Texts used:

The texts consulted for this course will include extracts by renowned writers, thinkers, politicians, artists and scientists. These include: Walter Benjamin, Aristotle, Roland Barthes, Montaigne, Winston Churchill, Junichiro Tanizaki, Francis Ford Coppola, Carl Sagan, Daniel Boorstin...

Texts will also be chosen from an array of prestigious magazines, websites and newspapers, including: *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, *the London Review of Books*, *The TLS*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, *Times Higher Education*...

Grading:

The course is assessed, after several practice exams, in one final exam per semester. The practice exams and regular class attendance are mandatory prerequisites for taking the final exam. The exams consist of a 300-350 word essay: the first, a response to one of three questions that deal with subjects addressed in class, and the second, a summary of and analytical response to a short extract. Students will be required in these essays to demonstrate an understanding if not mastery of the material taught in class: grammar skills, proficient vocabulary, composition skills and critical thinking.

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2 semesters

Type of course: practical exercises

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ESPB: 9

Course goals and content:

This course will focus on critical thinking and rhetorical devices. In-class exercises will comprise instruction and practice of the elements of formal speaking, such as: the kinds of questions used to discover intelligent things to say about a given subject, organization techniques and the three modes of persuasion. Reading assignments will be set as models of style and content to assist in the articulation of academic ideas *entertaining but useful*. Students will be exposed to a wide a range of subject matter in order to improve their vocabulary and fluency. By the end of the year, students will be asked to speak effectively about the various aspects of given problems, be able to make civil concessions to views with which they might not agree, and have begun to develop their own formal speaking style.

Texts used:

The texts consulted for this course will include diverse extracts by renowned writers, thinkers, politicians, artists and scientists. These include: Cicero, Horace, Baldassare Castiglione, Thomas Jefferson, Feng Guifen, Gertrude Bell, Leon Wieseltier...

Grading:

The course is assessed throughout the year, culminating in one final exam per semester. Class attendance is a mandatory prerequisite for taking the exams. Students will be required in the exams to demonstrate an understanding if not mastery of the material taught in class: grammar, logic, figures of speech and thought, rhythm, style, persuasiveness and coherence. The concluding exam will assess each student's ability to successfully apply specific themes to pragmatic concerns and engage in debate.