**LC-1310 Academic Communication for MSc Students (o,w) (3 ECTS)**

*This course fulfills the university foreign language requirement (written and oral).*

**Group H04 Mondays** 12:30-15:45 (M134)\*

**Teacher:** Maurice Forget **Email:** maurice.forget@aalto.fi

**Periods I-II:** 14.09.2016-7.12.2016

**Web site:** <https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=14113>

\*You must dedicate these hours, 12:30-15:45, to this course for the entire semester. See the updated schedule on the course site for classroom meeting times (These times will vary throughout the course).

**Prerequisites:**

CEFR-startling level: B2

**Learning outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

* Recognize the strategies and elements that enhance clarity and audience-friendliness in both oral and written academic communication
* Apply these strategies and elements in oral presentations and writing related to their field of study
* Distinguish between formal and informal styles of communication
* Apply a process approach to the development of oral and written work
* Document sources properly and select strategies to avoid plagiarism

**Content:**

The course is intended for students in master’s programs who are not yet in the process of writing their master’s theses. It introduces written and oral communication principles and strategies that are applicable to academic and research purposes. Students begin by writing on a topic from their own field of study based on previous (BSc) or ongoing (MSc) research. To enhance readability of the texts, students apply organizational patterns, such as problem-solution, as well as other writing principles. Based on their written work, students deliver an oral presentation videoed for self- and teacher-evaluation. As part of the learning process, students analyze presentations to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, as well as practice organizing and presenting information clearly to a non-expert, but academic audience. Throughout this course, students work individually, in pairs and in small groups to develop their presentation and writing skills. Moreover, students give and receive constructive feedback on their work and revise it accordingly.

**Course materials:**

1. Course site: <https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=14113>
2. In-class handouts
3. Online exercises: <http://sana.aalto.fi/awe>

**Course requirements: Evaluation:**

1. Course work: 20% 5 93-100%
2. Written assignment: 30% 4 85-92%
3. Learning Journals: 20% 3 77-84%
4. Oral presentation: 30% 2 69-76%

**Total: 100%** 1 61-68%

See the file labeled **Grading Criteria** on the course site for a complete breakdown.

**Written assignments:**

* Must be completed on time. Late submission reduces the assignment grade by 50%. Also, the teacher may not provide feedback on late submissions. **If you are ill on a due date,** you need to send an email to me along with the attached paper on the due date for it to be considered “on time.”
* May not be replaced with make-up work.
* Must be submitted on MyCourses through Turnitin and thereby checked for plagiarism.

The teacher will provide feedback on the first draft of the Recommendation Report via Turnitin.

**Additional Class Grading Policies:**

Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and participation are expected as minimum standards of satisfactory performance in this course. Lack of cooperation in these areas will cause your final course grade to be lowered. Specifically:

* **Attendance** is extremely important in an academic communication class, as a great deal of the learning is done in a workshop atmosphere. You may miss two classes for any reason, no excuse or explanation necessary.
* **Working Groups:** You will be working in assigned working groups on a variety of tasks, and your cooperation and active participation is expected.
* **Revision:** (substantial rethinking and rewriting) is a critical part of the writing process. During each step of writing the Recommendation Report, you should demonstrate effective revision in order to receive full credit.

**Getting Assistance:**

**Your Instructor:** I am here to help you. Communicating academically in any language, especially in a second language, is challenging and requires a lot of time and effort to develop. If you have questions or need help, please ask questions in class; I am sure that your classmates may have the same question. Please do not wait until it is too late to do anything about a problem or concern.

**Classmates:**

You should also consider your classmates as part of your support group for success in this class. You will all be doing the same sorts of tasks at the same time and should be able to give each other feedback and ideas. You will also be working regularly in assigned working groups and should exchange contact information as soon as possible.

**Course Schedule (Tentative) LC-1310 Academic Communication for MSc Students (o,w) (3 ECTS) H04, Mondays, 12:30-15:45, M134**

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| **Sessions** | **Topics** | **Assignments** |
| 19.09  (12:30-15:00) | Course introduction  Principles of communication  Finding a topic for the article review | Online Module: Given-New Principle  Deadline: 25.09 |
|  |  | Assignment 1: Finding Your Topic  Think of an interesting area of research in your field you would like to explore. You will write a “review article” on this topic and also present about it, so choose your topic wisely. The topic can be based on what you did for your bachelor’s, a current course focus or your future master’s thesis topic. Submit a short paragraph of your preliminary topic ideaand be prepared to discuss your idea in class.  Deadline: 3.10  Online Module: Form and Style  Deadline: 02.10 |
| 10.10  (12:30-15:45) | Review Article ~~(patterns)~~  Avoiding plagiarism  Topic sentences  Finding reputable sources  ~~Diagnostic~~ | Online Module: Light-Before-Heavy Principle  Deadline: 09.10 |
| 17.10  (12:30-15:00) | Peer review of Assignment 2  Reflection Portfolio  Paraphrasing and Quoting  Summarizing  Adding Your Voice  Reporting verbs | Assignment 2: Outline and preliminary Introduction  Deadline: 19.10 |
| 24.10  (12:30-15:00) | Cohesive Devices  Synthesizing  Lexical Choices  Punctuation  Other Language Considerations | Online Module: Avoiding Weak Verbs  Deadline: 23.10 |
| 31.10 | **NO CLASS** | Learning Journal 2  Deadline: 31.10 |
| 07.11  (12:30-15:00) | Effective Presentations 1: Organization | Assignment 3: Presentation Outline (full text of opening and closing)  Deadline: 14.11 |
| 14.11 | **NO CLASS** | Assignment 4: First draft of review article  Deadline: 14.11 |
| 21.11 | Group workshops (Review Article)  Groups A 12:30-14:00  Groups B 14:15-15:45 |  |
| 28.11  (12:30-15:00) | Effective Presentations 2: Guiding your listeners  Effective Presentations 3: Effective visuals  Group practice | Assignment 5: Presentation Outline with metalanguage  Deadline: 28.11 |
| 05.12 | Rehearsal Group A  (12:30-14:00)  Rehearsal Group B  (14:15-15:45) | Learning Journal 3  Deadline: 05.12  Assignment 6: Self-evaluation after watching your rehearsal video  Deadline: 09.12 on course site |
| 12.12 | Final Presentations (A and B)  All students attend | Assignment 7: Final draft of Review Article  Deadline: 12.12 |