

Miyazaki International College
Course Syllabus
(Spring 2018)

Course Title (Credits)	Academic Writing 1 (AW1-1) (2 credits)
Course Designation for TC	
Content Teacher	
Instructor	N/A
E-mail address	N/A
Office/Ext	N/A
Office hours	N/A
Language Teacher	
Instructor	Rebecca Schmidt
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Office/Ext	1-401 Ext 3726
Office hours	Tuesdays 2:30-4:30, Thursdays 3-4 or by appointment

Course Description:

This first semester writing course for freshmen students aims to provide students with the skills and knowledge base for completing academic writing tasks. It is designed to take students from writing correct simple, compound and complex sentences through to writing cohesive paragraphs. It aims to help students 1) develop writing fluency 2) write clear, focused, and well-organized sentences and paragraphs. Once students arrive at the point where they are writing paragraphs, they will work on developing a topic sentence, supporting their ideas and writing conclusions. The concept of plagiarism will be introduced.

Course Objectives:

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

- Differentiate between academic and non-academic writing styles
- Demonstrate familiarity with basic rhetorical styles
- Develop and use a process approach to writing
- Narrow topics, brainstorm, plan, and organize paragraphs
- Produce well-structured paragraphs that include clear topic sentences; support in the form of examples, details, and explanations; and concluding sentences that either restate the topic sentence or summarize the paragraph
- Arrange support of topic sentences chronologically or according to topic as appropriate
- Show understanding of parts of speech, coordinators and subordinators, compound sentences, adverbial clauses, conjunctive adverbs, and prepositional phrases, and other grammatical structures (as prescribed in the MIC Writing Handbook) by writing original sentences that make use of the structures
- In paragraph format, be able to: describe, narrate a story, support and opinion, compare/contrast, explain a problem/solution.
- Use precise and appropriate vocabulary as well as grammatical forms such as cohesive structures (pronouns, repetition of key nouns, synonyms, etc.) and transitional devices that will create unity in written work at the paragraph level
- Identify relevant as well as irrelevant information in their own writing in order to support topic sentences
- Edit and revise their own work and the work of peers
- Demonstrate increased writing fluency through regular journaling and timed writing activities (in a 10-minute period, students should be able to write at least 200 words on a topic with which they have knowledge or experience without use of a dictionary)

Course Schedule (subject to change)		
Day	Topic	Content/Activities
1	Course introduction	Course outline and objectives, review of syllabus, explanation of tools used, process writing overview
2	Academic writing & free writing	Identifying defining features of various writing genres and styles.
3	Parts of Speech 1	Identifying and giving examples of parts of speech of words in a sentence (verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions). Timed writing.
4	Parts of Speech 1	Identifying and giving examples of parts of speech of words in a sentence (verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions).
5	Sentence Types	Simple sentences, S-V agreement & the BE verb. Timed writing.
6	Sentence Types	Simple sentences. Link verbs. Adverbial phrases of place.
7	Sentence Types	Simple sentences. The HAVE verb. Describing people. Timed writing.
8	Sentence Types	Compound sentences. Produce properly punctuated sentences which use the coordinators <and, but so, or> to connect up to three clauses in a compound sentence.
9	Sentence Types	Compound sentences. Produce properly punctuated sentences which use the coordinators <and, but so, or>. Adjective order. Timed writing.
10	Sentence Types	Complex sentences. Produce properly punctuated, meaningful sentences with the following subordinators: although, because, after, before, when, while.
11	Review	Review. Timed writing.
12	Paragraph pre-writing	Choosing and narrowing a topic, brainstorming methods. Editing brainstormed topic(s).
13	Paragraph structure	Paragraph definition and parts. Paragraph format. Timed writing.
14	Paragraph structure	Identifying and writing a topic sentence, supporting sentences & the concluding sentence.
15	Paragraph development	Methods of paragraph support and development, writing supporting & concluding sentences. Timed writing.
16	Paragraph development	Peer editing.
17	Descriptive paragraphs	Organizing and writing descriptive paragraphs using adjectives and prepositions of location. Timed writing.
18	Descriptive paragraphs	Using connecting words and phrases to write a paragraph that describes a process.
19	Narrative paragraphs	Organizing and writing narrative paragraphs using adjectives, adverbs and time expressions. Timed writing.
20	Narrative paragraphs	Using connecting words and phrases to write a paragraph that tells a story.
21	Opinion paragraphs	Distinguishing between fact and opinion, organizing and writing paragraphs expressing opinions and arguments. Timed writing.
22	Opinion paragraphs	Using transitional words and phrases to express causality, using modal expressions to make recommendations.
23	Opinion paragraphs	Peer editing and revision. Timed writing.
24	Compare/Contrast paragraphs	Organization methods for compare / contrast paragraphs.
25	Compare/Contrast paragraphs	Connecting words and phrases used for compare / contrast paragraphs. Timed writing.
26	Compare/Contrast paragraphs	Writing about advantages and disadvantages of a topic.
27	Problem/solution paragraphs	Using conditionals to write about problem / solution paragraphs. Timed writing.
28	Problem/solution paragraphs	Writing a two-paragraph paper with linking phrases.

29	Problem/solution paragraphs	Peer editing and revision. Timed writing.
30	Exam review	Preparation & practice for final exam.
Exam week	Final Exam	reading & vocabulary exams.

Required Materials:

- Textbook as prescribed by the teacher
- MIC Writing Handbook
- A4 writing paper, pens, pencils / A4 notebook (erasable highlighters and pens recommended)
- 3-Ring binder
- Japanese-English, English Japanese dictionary (if you have a smartphone, download the EIJIRO app; also try <http://www.alc.ac.jp>)
- Handouts provided by teacher/ downloaded by students as necessary
- Tablet or smartphone (recommended but not required)

Course Policies (Attendance, etc.)

Attendance

You will not get any points for attendance because it is expected that you will attend 100% of classes.

Academic Honesty

You are not allowed to use translation software or Internet translation sites in this or any course at MIC.

Plagiarism (cheating) is not tolerated. The following are common examples of plagiarism:

- Getting another students to write your assignment or essay for you. (Getting another student to check your work and give advice is OK.)
- Copying language from a book, newspaper, journal or website without using quotation marks and citing (Citing means giving credit to your sources; telling the reader where you found the information.)
- Paraphrasing (changing to your own words) without citing.

You will likely learn more about citations in this or subsequent classes, but know that if you plagiarize, you will likely fail the assignment. Consult with your teacher if uncertain.

Assignment Submission

- Work you submit to the teacher must be submitted electronically in PDF form. Keep backups! Handwritten work might not be accepted. Journals will be handwritten.
- Be sure to write your full name in English, your student number, the teacher's name, the date, a title, and the page number and exercise of the assignment if appropriate. Please also pay attention to the file name your teacher asks you to submit for each assignment.
- Late assignments (drafts to the teacher) may result in a substantial reduction to your score, so please submit your writing on time.

Class Preparation and Review

- Students are expected to spend two hours preparing, reviewing, and completing coursework for every hour spent in class. This means you should expect to spend six hours each week outside of class time on this course.
- Remember that if you have brainstormed ideas, and organized them into a detailed outline, the actual writing part of your paragraph or essay should not take so long – it is the planning part that takes time.
- “I was absent” is not an excuse for not completing assignments. If you miss a class, be sure to talk with your classmates to find out what you have missed. Contact the teacher after trying to consult with your classmates. It is your responsibility to make up missed class work.
- If you do not understand anything at any time, it is your responsibility to ask questions. If you do not ask questions, the teacher may assume you understand everything.

Grades and Grading Standards

Participation – 10%

Participation refers to being prepared and being active in class.

Journal – 20%

Several times a week you will be required to write a journal entry, choosing from whatever subject you desire, possibly from a list of topics provided. These will be checked several times a semester for quantity, but your entries will be neither graded nor edited. The purpose of the journal is for you to gain fluency in writing; how correctly you write in English is less important. You will also be expected to regularly comment on your peers' work.

Homework and writing assignments – 50%

You will have writing assignments after almost every class. Sometimes these assignments will be peer-edited before submitting to the teacher. The assignments may or may not be edited by the teacher, but you will often be expected to submit drafts and final work (possibly online). From time to time there may also be quizzes, handouts, and Moodle assignments. There may be several more important writing assignments in the semester. Most of these assignments will be peer-edited before submitting to the teacher. You will receive a grade for each of these assignments based on the draft you initially submit to the teacher. The teacher will edit these assignments, and you are expected to submit a final copy with previous edits. (I hope I made this section vague enough so you can do what you want for your course – please let me know asap if you want it changed in some way. This whole section should be consistent for all of us – we can give students more detail in our respective classes.)

Final Exam – 20%

The final exam will take place during exam week. Information on the content of the exam will be given in class.

Methods of Feedback:

Student work will be assessed several times on periodic assignments submitted online and/or on paper. Journal entries will be checked for quantity and frequency of work at least four times in the term. Particularly struggling students will be contacted by email for one-on-one consultations with the teacher. Students will be formatively assessed on class performance by their teacher and by their peers on preliminary written work.

Diploma Policy Objectives:

Work completed in this course helps students achieve the following Diploma Policy objective(s):

1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought)
2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations
3. The ability to identify and solve problems
4. Advanced communicative proficiency in both Japanese and English
5. Proficiency in the use of information technology

Notes:

It is your responsibility to seek help if you need it. Please visit your teacher during office hours if you need specific help or general study advice, and feel free to contact your teacher by email. Depending on the teacher, there may be several online platforms in this course.

Rubric for Academic Writing (focus on paragraph writing)

Score	Content	Organization	Grammar	Lexis
A (90%+)	Ideas presented were very clear, highly relevant, extremely well-supported, and well-developed.	The writing displayed a highly coherent organizational structure enabling the message to be followed effortlessly. The topic sentence clearly and effectively stated the topic with a limiting idea, and the concluding sentence clearly and effectively restated/summarized the main idea(s) of the paragraph.	A wide range of more complex grammar patterns was used accurately.	A wide variety of vocabulary was used with high levels of accuracy and control.
B (80%+)	Ideas presented were clear, relevant, supported, and developed.	The writing displayed a coherent organizational structure enabling the message to be followed. The topic sentence clearly stated the topic with a limiting idea. The concluding sentence restated/summarized the main idea(s) of the paragraph.	A good range of grammar was used accurately.	A good variety of vocabulary was used with accuracy and control.
C (70%+)	Ideas were fairly clear, connected and relevant. They were supported, but the main idea(s) lacked some development.	The writing displayed a sufficient command of organizational structure, which resulted only in some difficulty in following the message. The topic sentence stated the topic but the limiting idea was unclear, and/or the concluding sentence was present but did not clearly restate/summarize the main idea(s) of the paragraph.	A sufficient range of grammar was used, but occasionally accuracy affected reader comprehension.	A sufficient variety of vocabulary was used, but there were some inaccuracies in word choice and word formation.
D (60%+)	The idea(s) were somewhat clear and relevant. The idea(s) required much more development and support.	There was obvious attempt to organize information, though sometimes the lack of coherence created ambiguity. Repetition and rigidity was present. The topic sentence adequately stated the topic, but the limiting idea was unclear, and/or the concluding sentence failed to restate/summarize the main idea(s) of the paragraph.	An adequate range of grammar used, but many inaccuracies were present.	There was adequate variety of vocabulary, but many inaccuracies in word choice and word formation were evident.
F (50%+)	Ideas were unclear, lacked relevance or connection, and were not developed or supported.	Information was disorganized and a lack of coherence created ambiguity. The topic sentence was present but neither clearly nor effectively showed the topic or limiting idea. The content did not relate to the topic. The concluding sentence was ineffective in restating/ summarizing the main idea(s).	An inadequate range of grammar was used repetitively and/or inaccurately.	The writer displayed inadequate vocabulary knowledge, accuracy, and/or control.
FF (50%>)	The writer only supplied a list of sentences with no logical or relevant connection.	No organization or coherence was present. There were unconnected sentences that communicated little. The topic sentence is lacking or unclear, as was the concluding sentence.	Phrases or sentences were produced, but inaccuracies were omnipresent.	The writer demonstrated insufficient lexical knowledge and usage.