

Miyazaki International College  
Course Syllabus  
(Spring 2018)

Course Title ( Credits )	Academic Writing 1 (AW1-3) (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	Cathrine-Mette (Trine) Mork
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Office/Ext	1-303/ 3722
Office hours	Tuesday afternoons 13:00 ~ 16:00 (posted on office door)

**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.

Types of paragraphs likely to be covered in the course are descriptive paragraphs, narrative paragraphs, compare/contrast paragraphs, opinion paragraphs, and problem-solution paragraphs. In a process approach to writing, students will learn about brainstorming and outlining. Time and level permitting, they may also be introduced to writing basic 5- paragraph essays. Students will also be given the chance to complete fluency based writing activities on topics covered in concurrently taught reading courses, and will be able to further develop their fluency through regular journaling.

**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
- Write about personal and simple academic topics
- 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
- 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 in the class, process writing overview
2	Pre-writing	Choosing and narrowing a topic, brainstorming methods
3	Pre-writing	Editing brainstormed topic(s)
4	Paragraph structure	Paragraph definition and parts
5	Paragraph structure	Identifying and writing topic sentences
6	Paragraph development	Methods of paragraph support and development, writing concluding sentences
7	Paragraph development	Introduction to peer editing
8	Descriptive paragraphs	Organizing and writing descriptive paragraphs using adjectives and prepositions
9	Descriptive paragraphs	Using connecting words and phrases to write a paragraph that describes a process
10	Opinion paragraphs	Distinguishing between fact and opinion, organizing and writing paragraphs expressing opinions and arguments
11	Opinion paragraphs	Using transitional words and phrases to express causality, using modal expressions to make recommendations
12	Compare / contrast paragraphs	Organization methods for compare / contrast paragraphs
13	Compare / contrast paragraphs	Connecting words and phrases used for compare / contrast paragraphs
14	Compare / contrast paragraphs	Writing about advantages and disadvantages of a topic
15	Problem / solution paragraphs	Using conditionals to write about problem / solution paragraphs
16	Problem / solution paragraphs	Writing a two-paragraph paper with linking phrases
17	Essay structure	Formatting an essay
18	Essay structure	Writing thesis statements
19	Essay structure	Writing thesis statements
20	Creating outlines	Types of outlines
21	Creating outlines	Evaluating and creating outlines
22	Introductions and conclusions	Types of information in introductions and techniques for writing them
23	Introductions and conclusions	Types of information in conclusions and techniques for writing them
24	Unity and coherence	Editing an essay for unity
25	Unity and coherence	Creating coherence through cohesive devices - connectors
26	Unity and coherence	Cohesive devices - pronoun reference, and repetition of key nouns or ideas
27	Examination essays	Common instructions of essay tests
28	Examination essays	Techniques for writing timed essays
29	Review Essay	In-class outline and timed essay
30	Exam Review	Preparation for the final writing exam
Exam week	Final Exam	Reading & vocabulary exams

#### Required Materials:

- Textbook as prescribed by the teacher
- MIC Writing Handbook
- A4 writing paper, pens, pencils
- 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

## 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 printed from a computer. Keep backups! Handwritten work might not be accepted.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

### 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)
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.