

Academic Communication English (Spring 2023)

Course Website: <http://staff.ustc.edu.cn/~acadcom>

PURPOSE: This course is designed to help students develop the skills necessary to present research papers well using English at an international scientific conference.

TEACHER: Dr. Murray Sherk (msherk@ustc.edu.cn)

Office hours by appointment – arrange a time by email or by talking with your teacher after any lesson.

TEXTBOOK: None. We will use handouts. Keep all handouts for later use and reference. Handouts are given in class but can also be downloaded from the course website.

FOCUS: The course will focus on presentation skills such as organization, delivery, visual aids, and professionalism. Basic language skills like pronunciation and grammar will be mentioned only rarely in class time.

CLASS POLICIES:

- Attendance is required. **Students who miss more than two lessons (4 classroom hours) will not be allowed to take the final exam. Being late to class by up to 10 minutes counts as missing half a lesson (1 classroom hour); being more than 10 minutes late counts as a full lesson absence.**
- You must attend with the class section in which you are registered, but in some cases (with a good excuse for the absence), you may make up for a missed lesson by attending that lesson with another class section. Contact your teacher for further information.
- International conference standards of behavior will be expected in class. In particular, students should be on time for classes; students should listen politely and quietly whenever another student or the teacher is presenting material; and cell phones should be silent during class time (although phones and tablets may be used as dictionaries).

EVALUATION: To get credit for this course, each student needs to do the following things:

- Attend at least 7 of the 9 classroom lessons. This rule applies even if you start the course in Lesson 2 or 3.
- Get a grade of at least 75%. 90% of the grade is for presenting a paper in a simulated conference session after the classroom Lesson 9. Each student in a session will present a paper in their research area for 9 minutes and then answer questions from the audience for 3-4 minutes. The other 10% is for the student's presentation transcript, to be handed in on paper at the end of his/her presentation session.
- Complete a self-paced learning component of this course. Ms. 陈澄 will contact the students with further information. Ms. Chen will email to students using the student address you put in the teaching platform (研究生信息平台). You can check it March 6 - 13 to obtain information. Contact Ms. Chen at echoce@ustc.edu.cn if you do not receive text messages or email. Completing this part of the course is also required to get credit for the entire course.**

COURSE SCHEDULE: Dates may change due to holidays or other factors. In particular, Wednesday classes will be a week later starting with Lesson 4, and Tuesday classes will be a week later starting with Lesson 8.

Lesson	Week of...	Content
1	Monday, March 6	Course introduction / types of scientific presentations / preparation for a conference
2	Monday, March 13	Strategy and checklist to prepare a presentation / patterns of organization / professional terminology
3	Monday, March 20	Bring to class: A print-out or photocopy of the paper you will present for your exam. Analysis of paper / summaries / presentation timing / working outlines
4	Monday, April 3	Due before class by email to teacher: Working outline (in the format discussed in Lesson 3) Introductions and conclusions / PowerPoint slides and visual aids / example presentation by teacher <i>(Due to the April 5 holiday, Wednesday classes are one week behind starting this week.)</i>
5	Monday, April 10	Effective explanations / developing a good conclusion section / preparing an introduction section / argument strategies
6	Monday, April 17	Bring to class: A printed-out or written-out copy of your conclusion section Listening to conclusions / transcripts / predictions and degrees of belief (genetic engineering) / useful sentence patterns for past events
7	Monday, April 24	Careful descriptions / pronouncing mathematical and chemical terms / O-I-L for presenting figures (pictures, diagrams, graphs, tables) / explaining with the help of graphs
8	Monday, May 1	Due to May 1-3 holidays, Tuesday classes are one week behind starting this week. Wednesday May 3 is a holiday but the Wednesday class should be made up on Saturday, May 6. Due in class: A print-out of your transcript (at least a preliminary version) showing for each slide: (1) an image of the slide, (2) the length of time you will spend on that slide, (3) the exact words you will say for that slide. Your transcript will be evaluated by another student using a transcript checklist to help you improve it. Sign up for your final exam session / practice presentations / partners evaluate each other's presentations using a transcript checklist
9	Monday, May 8	Final preparations for a presentation / slide timing sheet / volume / speed / eye contact / handling nervousness / preparing for questions / final exam grading sheet.
Exam Sessions	May 19 to June 21	Each student will be scheduled in one exam session. Most sessions will have 6 students. Students must hand in their transcripts at the end of their session (worth 10% of course grade). Most sessions will be at the time/place when/where students attended class, but some sessions may be outside of the normal class time.