

Academic Writing Center (AWC)

English is the language of international communication and research. Competency in English has become critically important for researchers and professionals around the globe. The mission of the Academic Writing Center (AWC) is to help students become competent users of English in order to succeed in their graduate study at GRIPS and in future careers. We offer a range of instruction in fundamental areas of academic and professional English including reading and listening comprehension, vocabulary building, presentation and discussion skills, and graduate-level writing.

Courses

Academic Presentation Skills

This course teaches the four elements of a good academic presentation: organization, language, delivery, and power point slides. Students learn how to organize an academic presentation that does not bore the audience and how to prepare slides that help, rather than hurt, the presentation. Students also learn how to deliver a presentation clearly and persuasively and receive guidance on the effective use of verbal and non-verbal skills. They practice presenting in groups and in front of the whole class.

Academic Writing for the Social Sciences

The goal of this course is to help students improve their academic writing. Students learn the fundamental concepts of positioning, flow, and cohesion; common patterns of English expository prose; the rhetorical conventions of academic English; and the elements of a research paper. Students will receive individualized help formulating arguments, organizing paragraphs, summarizing, paraphrasing, using appropriate vocabulary, and editing for grammar and style.

English for Academic Purposes

This course teaches academic English in a graduate-study context. Students learn general academic vocabulary, read academic texts, practice paragraph-level writing, and improve listening comprehension and grammar. Students are assessed in each of these areas using a variety of speaking, listening, and writing assignments. Enrollment is by

permission only.

Listening and Speaking

This course focuses on oral communication skills with an emphasis on fluency. Each class has a listening and vocabulary component and provides grammatical patterns and speaking techniques to practice in mainly spoken tasks. Students are expected to fully participate in class discussions and group work activities.

Understanding Academic Readings

This course familiarizes students with the conventional structures of academic writing: the problem, existing literature, study design, results, and how such results improve understanding. Students will learn to find the writer's claim (argument) and discuss why it is distinctive and how it is supported. Before each meeting, students are required to read a paper to be discussed in class.

Note on Courses

Courses meet weekly. Fifteen-week courses carry two credits and 7-week courses carry one credit. Courses offered may vary.

Workshops

Academic Writing for Graduate Study at GRIPS

The writing workshop series is offered in conjunction with individual degree programs. Students learn how to formulate appropriate paper topics for their degree program, evaluate and utilize online sources, avoid plagiarism through accurate summarizing and citing of sources, and use general conventions of academic and professional writing.

Writing Tutorials

Tutorials are one-on-one meetings with an AWC instructor that are tailored to a student's individual writing needs. Students may seek assistance at any stage of writing, including the development of a paper

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topic, research question, or research design. The tutoring process is particularly helpful to those needing to improve grammar, sentence construction, and paragraph organization. Writing instructors do not correct student papers, but teach students to recognize and fix their own mistakes, including persistent grammar problems. Writing tutorials are available throughout the year.

Office Hours and Appointments

The Academic Writing Center, located in C507, holds regular office hours at least 3 times a week for walk-in consultations and writing tutorials, and appointments are available with AWC faculty upon request.

AWC Faculty

- Donna J. Amoroso, Ph.D. (Associate Professor)
- Katerina Petchko, Ed.D. (Assistant Professor)
- Miyuki Nakatsugawa, M.Ed. (Instructor)
- Blair Thomson, M.A. (Instructor)