

American University of Beirut  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Department of English

**English 203-27: Academic English (3 credits)**

**Fall 2018**

Mon/Wed/Fri, 4:00 – 4:50pm  
Emile Bustani Hall (Physics Building), Room 329

Instructor: Emily Yuko Cousins

Office / Office Hours: Reynolds Building, Rm 433, Tuesdays 12:30pm – 3:30pm (or by appointment)

Email: ec15@aub.edu.lb

**Course Description:** English 203 is a sophomore level academic writing course designed specifically for the AUB student who will think, read, and write critically about contemporary themes and texts provided in its custom reader, *Pages Apart*, edited by AUB Instructors for the Anglophone Middle Eastern student. Throughout the semester, students explore the various stages of the writing process, learn how to invent and develop ideas, write multiple drafts, review peers' essays, and evaluate and reflect on their own writing, which should demonstrate the use of key rhetorical devices and rich content that are inherent in effective writing.

This course seeks to develop students' intellectual viewpoints and a writing voice through open class discussions; self-reflection developed through regular journaling; and reflective pieces on their writing. Combining a stronger self-knowledge with the understanding of the conventions of academic writing, students will produce approximately 40 pages of both formal and informal writing that ask questions and investigate possible answers through reflection, analysis, and synthesis.

**General Instructional Objectives and their respective Course Learning Outcomes**

By the end of English 203, students will

1. Use active and critical reading strategies to learn, assess, and apply rhetorical strategies such as structure, diction, tone, audience, and purpose, as demonstrated through the reading selections.
2. Actively respond to and discuss assigned themes and texts in class and online discussions and in writing.
3. Apply knowledge of the phases of the writing process – invention, drafting, and revising – toward a well-organized, structured, and documented exploratory essay.
4. Find, evaluate, and ethically incorporate Internet and library sources, along with course texts, into documented writing.
5. Develop knowledge of classmates' and one's own writing progress through participation in writing workshops, peer review sessions, writing conferences, and reflective assignments.
6. Gain the basic skills of oral communication to persuade and inform the audience.
7. Learn how to communicate and present writing through various and alternative mediums.
8. Collaborate with peers on written and oral communication.

**Required Texts and Materials**

Communication Skills Policy on Original Books: The Communication Skills Program requires all students to purchase original copies of the textbooks for this course. Purchasing a photocopy of course textbooks is not allowed.

Kirszner, Laurie G. and Stephen R. Mandell. *The Wadsworth Handbook. International Edition. 10<sup>th</sup> ed.* Australia: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. 2014.

Ward A., Hodeib H., Lincoln K., Moghabghab E., Rantisi R., Sinno Z. (Eds). *Pages Apart: A Reader for Academic Writing.* Educart (Middle East) Publishing: Beirut, 2018.

Other supplementary readings will be provided in class or via Moodle.

### Course Requirements

**Formal Writing:** Throughout the semester, you will write “Reading Response” papers in which you will summarize main arguments and synthesize across readings. These responses do not need to be as formal as your final essay (need not be thesis-driven or necessarily evidence-based) but should contain evidence of careful, critical reading and thinking. When responding to readings, you should cite by referring to the author and page numbers. Successful responses will critically analyze arguments made in the articles we read, raise questions, and offer different perspectives and interpretations for your classmates to consider. I may share anonymous excerpts from response papers with which to prompt class discussion.

You will also pick a topic of your choice and compose a 5-6 page “exploratory” research paper, which will be due at the end of the semester. This essay should develop an argument while drawing from scholarly sources. However, it will be exploratory in the sense that this will be an opportunity for you to dive into a topic you want to know more about. Your drafts, participation in peer review and conferences, and revisions of drafts will all count towards your grade.

**Informal Writing:** Free-writing and other informal writing activities will be a routine component of this class. This is a writing class, so expect our classroom to be a space where you will be writing. Informal writing activities will not be graded in terms of content. The aim of informal writing exercises is primarily to encourage reflection and development of ideas; therefore, try not to allow concerns about sentence-level “correctness” to hinder your writing process.

**Oral Presentation:** You will present main arguments and findings from your exploratory essay during the final week of class in the form of a conference-style oral presentation. The presentation should aim to translate your final essay from academic prose to an oral presentation that conveys your ideas in a clear and accessible manner to a broad audience.

**Participation:** This class depends on the creation of a community of writers in which we are invested in helping each other engage with new perspectives and ideas. Therefore, both your physical and mental attendance are essential to our success as a whole. Class participation will be evaluated not only based on what you say, but your active listening skills (listening attentively to what others are saying, taking notes, etc.). Participation will also take form of comments and questions you raise during class, attending writing workshops, your response papers, in-class writing, and final projects.

### General Grade Distribution:

**Formal Writing (50%)**

- Exploratory Essay: 25%
- Reading Responses: 25%

**Informal Writing/Writing Process (25%)**

- Free-writes & reflections: 15%
- Peer review: 10%

**Oral presentation (10%)**

- Presentation of final paper

**Participation (10%)**

- Conferences, attendance, engagement

### Late Work Policy

Late work cannot be accepted. Your drafts are due on the assigned date. Unless you talk to your instructor before submitting your work and get approval for a late submission, you will not receive points. You do have the option of requesting an extension on an assignment if extenuating circumstances will prevent you from turning it in on time. You

must contact your instructor at least 72 hours prior to the date and time the assignment is due to ask for an extension, and extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM POLICIES

### Participation Policy:

The Communication Skills program defines participation in the writing process as: completing all assignments; participating in all in-class activities (including completion of free-writing assignments, participation in writing workshops, and participation in peer review sessions); participating in student-teacher conferences; and showing evidence of progress.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is required in all Communication Skills Program courses. The table below illustrates the maximum number of permitted absences:

Classes	Before Week 10	Total
M/W/F	6	9
T/R	4	6

**Automatic Withdrawals and Failures Due to Absences:** If a student is enrolled in more than 12 credit hours for the semester and misses more than the allowed number of absences by Week 10, the instructor will automatically request that the student be withdrawn from the course. If a student is only enrolled for 12 credit hours but has missed more than the allowed number of absences by Week 10, he/she will automatically earn a failing grade of 40 for the course. If a student misses more than the total number of allowed absences in a given semester, he/she will automatically earn a failing grade of 40 for the course.

**Excused Absences:** If you must miss class due to an illness and wish to be excused, you must provide your instructor with a medical report and/or professional opinion issued by a qualified AUB employee, AUBMC doctor, or University Health Services. Students who seek excused absences for university-sanctioned events must provide an official letter from the sponsoring organization notifying your instructor of the absence at least one week before the event. Students are expected to complete assignments on time, actively participate in other class sessions, and to make up missed work as agreed with the faculty member.

**Schedule Conflicts:** Note that no mandatory university exams, labs, or meetings are to be scheduled that conflict with students enrolled in this class. You are responsible for communicating with all parties involved prior to the date of the conflict. Please note that any student who misses this class to take an exam or attend a lab is not excused from this class and is responsible for arranging for makeup work, should the instructor allow it.

Students are allowed to register for a Communication Skills course a maximum of three times, the third requiring permission of the student's advisor and the Department of English. Students withdrawn will be counted as having registered for the course one time.

**Presence/Tardiness Policy:** You will be counted absent if you sleep in class, use your phone or laptop for non-class related tasks, or if you are more than 10 minutes late for a class. 3 tardies equal one absence.

### Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy:

In all writing, ideas, and words taken from elsewhere should be documented. Failure to credit ideas or material taken from any source constitutes plagiarism which is a violation of the University's academic regulations and subject to disciplinary action. Please, view section 1.1 of AUB Student Code of Conduct. Course policy is that credible evidence of cheating will result in course failure.

**All writing you do for this course must be your own and must be exclusively for this course**, unless the instructor stipulates differently. Please pay special attention to the quotes, paraphrases, and documentation practices you use in your papers. (Note: if you are referring to work previously submitted for this course, then you must cite yourself.)

Students in Communication Skills courses are required to apply the following standards to **all submitted work**:

- Documenting all information that is taken from other sources, including books, articles, websites, lectures, interviews, television, radio, etc.
- Putting quotation marks around the words that were originally written or spoken by someone other than you.
- Clearly indicating your use of ideas by other authors, even if they are paraphrased (written in your own words) or summarized.

**Plagiarism:** Engaging in any of the following activities constitutes plagiarism:

- Submitting a paper written by another student
- Requesting or paying someone to complete an assignment for you
- Taking material from secondary sources without proper documentation.
- Copying, word for word, someone else's writing without putting that passage in quotation marks and identifying the source
- Taking someone else's writing, changing some of the words, and not identifying the source
- Taking someone else's ideas or organization of ideas, putting them into your own words, and not identifying the source
- Having someone else change your writing – a tutor, friend, or relative, for instance – and creating the impression that this writing is your own work.
- Purchasing or downloading papers or passages from the Web.
- Using **facts, data, graphs, charts, photographs, or other information** without acknowledging the source with a footnote, caption, or bibliography entry. Borrowed facts or information obtained in one's research or reading must be acknowledged unless they are "common knowledge." Students should check with their teachers regarding what can be viewed as "common knowledge" within a specific field or assignment, but often the student will have to make the final judgment. When in doubt, footnotes or references should be used.

**Disciplinary Action:** When confronting plagiarism, all instructors in the Communication Skills Program abide by the guidelines stipulated in [AUB's Student Code of Conduct](#), which states:

It is the responsibility of the faculty to uphold university policies. Thus, the immediate responsibility for dealing with instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic violations rests with the faculty member. If a faculty member has good reason to believe that a student has violated academic standards, it is his or her responsibility to discipline the student expeditiously. A faculty member who has good reason to believe that a student has violated academic standards must give a grade of zero on the exam or assignment where the violation occurred. When the instructor has taken the initial disciplinary action, he or she should send a letter to the office of the Dean of the Faculty or School, in which the incident occurred, informing him/her of the incident and the initial action he/she has taken. A copy of the letter will be placed in the student's file, and another copy forwarded to the student's advisor for follow-up. (10)

**Turnitin:** Turnitin is an online plagiarism-detection tool accessible via Moodle that many faculty at AUB use. Once your work is uploaded, it will be compared with an extensive database of student and publicly accessible writing. When you upload an assignment to Moodle, your assignment may also automatically be scanned through Turnitin. If your instructor has authorized Turnitin to scan the assignment Moodle, you must comply or risk losing credit for the assignment. If you have questions about how the software works or how the Turnitin report will be (or has been) used, please ask your instructor.

**Grievance Procedure:** If at any time during the semester you have concerns about the course, an assignment, or assessment, please set up a meeting to talk with your instructor about it. If you have met with your instructor and are unable to resolve the issue, you may request a meeting with the Director of Communication Skills by sending an email to [commskills@aub.edu.lb](mailto:commskills@aub.edu.lb). The goal of any meeting with the Director will be to improve communication between the student and course instructor, and to resolve the issue in such a way that course learning outcomes are achieved. **Please**

**note that the instructor for the course is the final decision-maker for any issues that arise, and the Director does not override the instructor's decisions or policies.**

### RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center offers free, 30-minute or 1-hour consultations about your writing. The Wrc is located on the 2nd floor balcony of Ada Dodge Hall and in Room 336 of West Hall. To meet the tutors and find writing resources, go to <https://aub.edu.lb/writingcenter>. To make an appointment, go to <https://aub.mywconline.com/> or just stop by during opening hours: M-W 9:00-7:00, Th 9:00-5:00, and F 9:00-3:00.

**Library Information Services:** Reference librarians and information specialists in the AUB libraries can support you individually with finding academic sources for your research. Jafet information librarians can be contacted in person in their office in the Jafet Library lobby, by email at [libinfo@aub.edu.lb](mailto:libinfo@aub.edu.lb), or by phone, extension 2629.

**Counseling Center, Student Affairs:** The center offers counsel and help to students with a range of academic and non-academic problems. If anything happening in your life is causing you distress and influencing your academic performance, and you feel you could benefit from professional help, contact Dr. Antoine Khabbaz (Ext. 3178, [ak28@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ak28@aub.edu.lb)), Ms. Nay Khatcherian (Ext. 3152, [nk63@aub.edu.lb](mailto:nk63@aub.edu.lb)), Ms Ola Ataya. (ext. 3158, [oa03@aub.edu.lb](mailto:oa03@aub.edu.lb)) or visit West Hall, room 210.

**Accessible Education Office:** AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform me immediately so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: [accessibility@aub.edu.lb](mailto:accessibility@aub.edu.lb); +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

**Title IX Coordinator:** AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at [www.aub.edu.lb/titleix](http://www.aub.edu.lb/titleix). To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator Trudi Hodges at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or [titleix@aub.edu.lb](mailto:titleix@aub.edu.lb). An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at [www.aub.ethicspoint.com](http://www.aub.ethicspoint.com)