

NCEL 437: BASIC COMPOSITION SKILLS

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	0
Hours:	5 lecture per week (60 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Appropriate placement through Foothill College's placement model (i.e., guided self-placement) or successful completion of two Level 3 courses, credit and/or noncredit: ESLL 226 or NCEL 426 AND ESLL 227 or NCEL 427; concurrent enrollment in ESLL 236 or NCEL 436 recommended; intended for students whose native language is not English; completion of noncredit ESL sequence or previous ESL coursework at Adult School is recommended.
Degree & Credit Status:	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course Basic Skills, 2 Levels Below Transfer
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	None
Grade Type:	Pass/No Pass Only
Repeatability:	Unlimited Repeatability

Student Learning Outcomes

- Discuss social, cultural, and historical relevance of authors' ideas.
- Respond to reading selections in writing or orally by making connections to personal experiences and observations.
- Write multi-paragraph thesis-driven essays using focused, organized, and appropriately developed paragraphs.

Description

A basic noncredit course for non-native speakers focusing on college-level reading and writing skills. Development of readings skills through analysis of assigned readings. Production of short multi-paragraph compositions that develop focused main ideas using a variety of standard English sentences. Lecture, discussion, and individualized instruction. Does not meet the graduation requirement in composition.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Analyze the rhetorical features of authentic reading selections.
2. Respond to readings by making connections to personal schema.
3. Write multi-paragraph compositions with a clear purpose and audience using focused, organized, and appropriately developed paragraphs.

4. Use a variety of grammatically correct sentence structures appropriate to meaningful expression within the context of essay development.
5. Revise and edit writing assignments.
6. Write and edit a complete essay in class.

Course Content

1. Analyze the rhetorical features of authentic reading selections
 - a. Identify main ideas, both explicit and implied
 - b. Identify audience and purpose
 - c. Determine organizational patterns
 - d. Analyze the rhetorical functions of introductions and conclusions
 - e. Identify types and effectiveness of supporting detail
 - f. Recognize cohesive devices
 - g. Distinguish between fact and opinion
2. Respond to reading selections in writing or orally
 - a. Make connections to personal experiences and observations
 - b. Discuss social, personal, and historical importance of authors' ideas
3. Write focused multi-paragraph compositions
 - a. Generate ideas for writing
 - i. Brainstorming
 - ii. Freewriting
 - iii. Journal response
 - b. Determine a main idea, purpose, and audience for each composition
 - c. Express a controlling idea for each paragraph in a topic sentence
 - d. Use supporting details as appropriate
 - i. Examples
 - ii. Anecdotes
 - iii. Comparisons
 - iv. Descriptions
 - v. Cause/effect
 - e. Analyze/explain the meaning of supporting detail
 - i. Show cause/effect
 - ii. Make predictions
 - iii. Describe compare/contrast relationships
 - f. Organize ideas using specific strategies
 - i. Blocking
 - ii. Outlining
 - iii. Clustering
 - g. Show relationships between and among ideas using a variety of coherence structures
 - i. Lexical repetition
 - ii. Transition words and phrases
 - iii. Pronoun reference
 - iv. Subordinators
 - v. Conjunctions
4. Use a variety of grammatically correct sentence structures as appropriate to meaningful expression within the context of essay development
 - a. Simple, compound and complex sentences
 - b. Adverb clauses
 - c. Adjective clauses

- d. Correct verb tense and form
 - e. Properly punctuated sentence boundaries
5. Revise and edit writing assignments
- a. Make substantial changes in content (i.e., delete, add, or rearrange ideas) based on feedback from instructor, peers, and English tutors at the Teaching and Learning Center
 - b. Edit for correctness
 - i. Sentence structure/word order
 - ii. Subject-verb agreement
 - iii. Verb tense
 - iv. Pronoun reference
 - v. Word form
 - vi. Word choice
 - vii. Punctuation of dialogue
 - viii. Fragments
 - ix. Run-on sentences
6. Write a complete essay in class in 80 minutes. When the in-class essay is given as the final exam, the allotted time will be 120 minutes

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught online, ongoing access to internet connection, email software and hardware, and a working email address are required.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Written responses to assigned reading selections

Journal assignments

At least three revised essay assignments of approximately 500 words demonstrating academic essay structure. Essays must not be completely descriptive in nature but must also contain an analytical component. No quoting of outside materials is expected

1. The first essay should explain the significance of a personal experience or the reasoning behind a personal opinion. Personal narrative or description may be used, but only to support controlling ideas. (Sample topics: "My Favorite Strategies for Learning English" or "Why I chose Foothill College")

2. The second essay should be on a more general topic. In addition to developing examples based on general observations, student writers may still use some personal examples for support. (Sample topics: "Characteristics of a Good Teacher" or "The Biggest Problems in My Hometown")

3. The third essay deals with a contrast, e.g., comparing a certain cultural aspect of the student's home country to one in the U.S., or discussing a change in cultural values. (Sample topic: "Traditional Family Values")

At least two in-class compositions without advance notice of the prompt
Exercises and quizzes

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture

Discussion

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Oshima, Alice, and Ann Hogue. Longman Academic Writing Series 3: Paragraphs to Essays, 4th ed.. 2021.

Carlock, Janine, et al.. The ESL Writer's Handbook, 2nd ed.. 2017.

Boardman, Cynthia A., and Jia Frydenberg. Writing to Communicate 2: Paragraphs and Essays, 3rd ed.. 2008.

Mlynarczyk, Rebecca, and Steven Haber. In Our Own Words: A Guide with Readings for Student Writers, 3rd ed.. 2005.

Smoke, Trudy. A Writer's Workbook, 4th ed.. 2005.

Although some of the representative texts for this course are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal texts in this area of study.

Instructors must choose a textbook from the "Representative Texts" list above. If, however, a faculty member would prefer to use a textbook not on the list, they must contact a full-time faculty member who regularly teaches the course to explain how the adoption would serve to achieve the learning outcomes specified in the course outline of record.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Readings from the text and other sources.
2. Three revised writing assignments and two in-class essays of approximately 500 words each.

Discipline(s)

English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Second Language (ESL): Noncredit