NCEL 460: ESL FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	0
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Intended for students with an intermediate to advanced level of ESL.
Degree & Credit Status:	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	None
Grade Type:	Non-Credit Course (Receives no Grade)
Repeatability:	Unlimited Repeatability

Student Learning Outcomes

- Respond appropriately to common customer service requests in emails and phone conversations.
- Use vocabulary typical to customer service interactions in both written and verbal responses.

Description

This course focuses on developing professional English skills within the context of customer service. Students will strengthen oral and written communication skills typically used in customer or client interactions.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Understand and respond appropriately to typical customer service requests.
2. Use appropriate writing conventions for business communication.
3. Use vocabulary typical to customer service interactions.

Course Content

1. Understand and respond appropriately to typical customer service requests
   a. Communications concerning questions, orders, and complaints
      i. Clarification strategies
         1. Restate complaints
         2. Restate requests
      ii. Apologize for mistakes
      iii. Offer to correct mistake
   b. Linguistic structures for conflict resolution, de-escalation, and negotiation
   c. Degrees of politeness
      i. Direct vs. indirect language
      ii. Cultural competence (e.g., "The customer is always right.")
2. Use appropriate writing conventions for business communication

   a. Client facing business letters and emails
      i. Openers
      ii. Signing off
   b. Tone
   c. Style
   d. Summarizing
      i. Complaints
      ii. Questions
      iii. Concerns
      iv. Resolutions
3. Use vocabulary typical to customer service interactions
   a. Related to returns and exchanges
      i. Refund
      ii. Credit
   b. Related to shipping
   c. Related to complaints
   d. Industry specific vocabulary
      i. Hospitality
      ii. Food service
      iii. Retail
      iv. Healthcare
      v. Personal care services
      vi. Recreation
      vii. Transportation

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:

Multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank exercises
Role-plays
Quizzes
Emails/Business letters
Responding to common customer concerns/complaints

Method(s) of Instruction

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

Lecture
Discussion/Seminar

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Bradley Amidei, Kathleen. At Your Service: English As a Second Language for Success in Customer Service. 2023.

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

1. Dialogues
2. Emails
3. Role-plays

Discipline(s)

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