



香港中文大學  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Department of English  
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Shatin, NT, Hong Kong

## ENGE 1310 Communications for English Majors I

**First Term** September to December 2020

**Tuesdays**

**Professor** Ron Darvin | ron.darvin@cuhk.edu.hk | 3943.7020

Consultations FKH325 by appointment

This course provides you with the communication skills necessary to perform various academic and non-academic tasks in both online and offline contexts. It demonstrates how differences in audience, communicative purpose and medium shape the content and structure of various written and spoken genres. It also discusses different patterns of development such as narration, description, exemplification, and persuasion, and the importance of thesis statements and topic sentences in organizing ideas. To help you develop an awareness of the structural and stylistic differences of various genres, you will produce a personal reflective essay, a literary analysis paper, and a persuasive presentation, that will be presented in various print, face-to-face and digital formats, using both linguistic and multimodal resources. Through a process-oriented approach, you will be producing outlines and drafts of these writing tasks, get feedback, and learn writing strategies such as using sensory details, choosing active, specific verbs, and employing cohesive devices. Recognizing how technology shapes communication practices in diverse ways, this course also draws attention to the affordances and constraints of digital tools such as WordPress, Blackboard, Zoom, and social media platforms.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Write a personal reflective essay that uses elements of description and narration
2. Construct a literary analysis paper that examines a short story
3. Conduct a brief presentation that persuades audiences to adopt a specific action
4. Recognize the structures and conventions of various spoken and written genres  
e.g. advertisements, social media, public talk  
Understand how differences in audience, purpose, medium of communication shape the register, style, and organization of texts.

### Key Topics

To achieve the abovementioned learning outcomes, this course will cover the following major concepts and topics:

1. **Genres:** the short story as a literary genre; digital genres such as online ads, social media profiles; the public talk as a spoken genre
2. **Medium and context:**
  - Identifying audience and purpose
  - Understanding the affordances and constraints of different media
  - Choosing appropriate register and style
  - Using multimodal resources
3. **Content and structure**
  - Recognizing patterns of development: narration, description, exemplification, persuasion
  - Organizing ideas in an outline: introduction, body, conclusion
  - Formulating thesis statements and topic sentences
  - Building supporting evidence: textual evidence, concrete and specific examples
4. **Language focus**
  - Using sensory details
  - Choosing active, specific verbs
  - Employing cohesive devices
5. **Tools**
  - Blogging platforms (e.g. WordPress)
  - Learning management systems (e.g. Blackboard)
  - Online learning platforms (e.g. Zoom)
  - Presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint)
6. **Citation style:** MLA

### Format of Class Meetings

Lectures: 2 hours / week

Tutorials: 1 hour / week

### Learning activities

Apart from the presentation and discussion of course content, lectures will involve interactive tasks where you will engage with various digital platforms. Tutorials will involve answering discussion questions and evaluating the designs of these platforms. To perform these activities, you are expected to bring either a laptop, mobile phone, or tablet to class. You may be required to download some apps before class.

Lecture	Tutorial	Online discussion	Reading + Technology use	Preparing assessment tasks
In class	In class	Out class	Out class	Out class

2 hrs	1 hr	1 hr	2 hrs	3 hrs
M	M	O	O	O

*M = Mandatory O = Optional (but highly recommended)*

**eLearning:** We will be using **Zoom** and **Blackboard** in this course to facilitate online discussions, share course resources (PDFs, videos, website links, etc.), make announcements, and submit course assignments.

### Required Readings

*There is no required textbook for this course. Assigned readings and worksheets will be made available through Blackboard.*

### Assessment

Requirement	Weight
Class and Online Participation	10%
Personal Reflective Essay	30%
Literary Analysis Paper	30%
Persuasive Presentation	30%

*Late submissions will be penalized.*

### Grade Descriptors

**Grade A / Excellent / 4.0:** Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The 'A' is reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority

**Grade A- / Very Good / 3.7:** Generally outstanding performance on ALMOST ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

**Grade B+ / Good (Plus) / 3.3:** HIGH performance on all learning outcomes, OR HIGH performance on some learning outcomes which compensates WELL for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply WELL the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level WELL.

**Grade B / Good / 3.0:** SUBSTANTIAL performance on all learning outcomes, OR SUBSTANTIAL performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a MORE COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

**Grade B- / Good (Minus) / 2.7:** GOOD performance on all learning outcomes, OR GOOD performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

**Grade C+ / Adequate (Plus) / 2.3:** VERY ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a SOMEWHAT SUSTAINED manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

**Grade C / Adequate / 2.0:** ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

**Grade C- / Adequate (Minus) / 1.7:** SOMEWHAT ADEQUATE performance on A NUMBER OF learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to SOMEWHAT apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the BARE basic requirement at this level.

**Grade D+ / Pass (Plus) / 1.3:** BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on A FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

**Grade D / Pass / 1.0:** ALMOST BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on VERY FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in very few areas while responding very minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

**Grade F / Failure / 0.0:** Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.

### **Schedule**

*A more detailed schedule will be provided at the start of the course.*

### **Course Feedback and Evaluation**

At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete Course Evaluations for both the lectures and tutorials. This information is highly valued and is used to revise teaching methods, tasks, and content. During the term, you are also strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the course via email or meetings with the professor or tutors. Midway through the term, you will also be asked to provide feedback via a brief questionnaire on the course content, teaching methods, and tasks in order to determine if adjustments need to be made for the remainder of the term.

### Academic honesty

Each student is responsible for his or her conduct as it affects the university community. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is ultimately destructive of the values of the CUHK and is unfair and discouraging to the majority of students who pursue their studies honestly. Scholarly integrity is required of all members of the university. Details regarding CUHK policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations can be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. Text-based assignments will need to be submitted to Veriguide, and the statement in the form of the receipt will be issued by the system.

#### STATEMENT

I declare that the assignment here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged. I also acknowledge that I am aware of University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the website <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

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Signature

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Date

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Name

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Student ID

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Course code

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Course title