

**UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA BOLIVARIANA  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY  
SPECIALIST'S PROGRAM IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

**Academic Reading and Writing (Introductory Course)  
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**Schedule: Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (On-site Sessions) 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.  
(Autonomous/Virtual Sessions)**

**Course Overview**

Learning to read and write academically is a different intellectual exercise from reading literary texts or writing everyday forms of texts. It is also different from some forms of reading and writing that teachers usually engage in, such as lesson plans and reports. Unlike reading and writing for mere pleasure, the process of academic literacy is not innate. Therefore, graduate students need to be formally introduced to the nuances and intricacies of reading scientific texts and writing reports and research papers. It is a process that requires time and practice in order to fully master the academic discourse.

This course should then be understood as an introduction to understand the process of learning how to think, read, and write in a scholarly fashion. This course and its instructor operate under the assumption that today's teachers can no longer think of themselves as mere practitioners or technicians, as the needs and requirements of today's education demand more than said role. Teachers need to think of themselves as **scholars** in their own right, as members of a larger academic knowledge community, to which they are supposed to contribute.

However, we cannot forget that we are in the context of a graduate program in EFL and that students in the program are interested in improving their own practice as teachers. Therefore, a constant reflexivity (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Mora, 2011) about how to apply these contents and ideas to our work with students in the local contexts of Antioquia and Colombia will be a constant feature throughout the course.

## Course objectives

1. To introduce graduate students to basic elements of academic literacy and academic discourse as a key element in their preparation as scholars.
2. To create a space of reflexivity for graduate students to consider ways to incorporate these elements of academic literacy and academic discourse within their own teaching for their students' own benefit and growth.

## Assignments

There are three assignments related to academic literacy that students have to comply with during the semester:

**Scientific article critical review.** In pairs, students have to select an article from one of the major journals on ELT in Colombia (e.g. HOW, PROFILE, CALJ, Íkala) or from any Open-Access journals in education, pedagogy, or ELT available online (you will find a list of links at the end of the syllabus). They will read the article and write a short critical review of the article they selected. (20% of the grade).

**Workshops.** In the second and third week, during the autonomous/virtual sessions, you will work on a writing exercise, where you will have to apply critical thinking skills, basic reading skills, and principles of academic writing. Each exercise is intended to last about 4 hours and you are supposed to e-mail a report to the instructor at the end of the session. You will use Moodle as a supporting tool for your exercise. (20% each workshops = 40% of the grade)

**Philosophy Statement.** Students are to choose between two possible statements, as follows (20% of the grade):

***Philosophy of Teaching and Education.*** Part of the reflexivity process that guides this course includes thinking of where we stand as educators and scholars and the beliefs and practices that guide our work. We will work on how to create a philosophy statement so that students can prepare their own philosophies of teaching and education.

***Philosophy of Research.*** Since this is a graduate program, research becomes one of the pillars of all the work we do in the different courses and projects. Students in this course are expected to write their very first draft about how they understand research and how they see themselves as researchers.

**Forums.** Given the bimodal nature of this seminar, having forums for discussion is an important part of the discussion. I will post 4 forum topics related to reading and writing, one on Sundays and one on Wednesdays. Your job is to access Moodle and respond at least twice. I will use the ideas in the forums as one part of the class discussions during the on-site segment. (20% of the grade)

## Expectations

**Classwork.** I expect all students to be on time every week. If, for some reason, you cannot be in class, please notify me as soon as possible. Make sure to talk to either your other classmates or me to make up for the work. No assignments will be accepted after the due date without a proper excuse. The deadlines are set well in advance so check your personal or work schedules and check there are not any conflicts. If you foresee a conflict, talk to me immediately so we can make proper arrangements. All work is to be submitted electronically via e-mail at raul.mora@upb.edu.co. Please include the letters ARW in the subject line so I know this is a classroom assignment.

**Participation.** I expect all students to be prepared to participate in every class. This includes reading the assigned readings and documents and bringing all required resources at all times. All of you should be prepared to raise questions and issues as the result of your reading and the interactions with your instructor and each other. Since you are all teachers and this is a graduate-level course, I expect a high degree of professionalism and ethical behavior from all of you. If you disagree with any ideas in class, feel free to say so in a proper manner. To me, the classroom is a community of learners and scholars. Respectful interactions are important for the success of the academic exercises in which we will engage.

**Methodology.** Students will engage in classwork for 4 hours on Saturday mornings and will work on readings and assignments on Saturday afternoons. In addition, you might need at least another 4 hours a week to work on the readings and assignments for the course on your own.

**Ethical guidelines.** All assignments are to be original work. As a scholar, I abide by the highest standards of academic integrity, including strong stances against cheating and plagiarism. Guidelines against cheating and plagiarism in this course will follow any internal guidelines that UPB has set in place for academic integrity, as well as existing Colombian copyright legislation, such as Ley 23 de 1986, specifically Article 31 (<http://www.cerlalc.org/documentos/colo23.htm>) and Ley 1032 de 2006 ([http://www.unal.edu.co/dib/cip/pi\\_ley\\_1032\\_2006.html](http://www.unal.edu.co/dib/cip/pi_ley_1032_2006.html)). Please make sure to get yourselves acquainted with these laws.

## Resources

All classroom resources are available online on the Moodle site the instructor has set up for this course. Your instructor will e-mail you the instructions on how to access the site. It is your responsibility to either download (or, in the case of the Scientific Reading assignment, upload) the resources for every week. In addition to online resources, you are supposed to have a notebook/journal with you at all times. We will do extensive note-taking during the course. For some assignments, showing evidence that you took notes as part of the preparation process will be a pre-requisite.

## Technology

If you happen to have a laptop, you can bring it to class as well. It is advisable to download the readings to your hard drives before the class. In case that you cannot bring your own laptop, please make sure to print the readings (I encourage you print on both sides of the sheet, print 2 pages per side of the sheet, or use scrap paper. Regarding the use of cell phones and smartphones, I have a **no-phoning, no-texting** policy in class. We only meet for four hours every Saturday, so unless we are talking about life-or-death situations in your lives (which may happen), I expect not to see any communication devices in your hands.

### Class Schedule

Week	Topics	Assigned Readings (all available on Moodle site)
1 August 20 (On-Site)	Introduction to the course and the assignments Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	Alvermann, et al., 1996 Ghent, 2010 Holbrook & Rannikmae, 2009 Snow, 2010
	The structure of an academic text	Connell, 2010 Mora, 2006 Pretorius, 2006 Webster & Watson, 2002
1 August 20 (Aut/Vir)	Writing: Foundations of Grammar within Academic Writing	
	Writing: APA Style	Trexler Library, Muhlenberg College (n.d.)
	Writing Styles Applied to Academic Texts	Michalsky, et al., 2009
2 August 27 (On-Site)	Reading Styles Applied to Academic Texts	Lamott, 1995 Brand, 1998
	The Process of Writing	Morgan, 1999
2 August 27 (Aut/Vir)	Workshop #1	
3 September 3 (On-Site)	Avoiding Writer's Block	Badke, 2010
	Plagiarism in Academic Reading and Writing	Bellack, 2008
	Writing for Research	Sikes, 2009
3 September 3 (Aut/Vir)	Workshop #3	

## Online Resources

- Center for Writing Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA): <http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/>
- Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University (USA): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- Academic writing advice – University of Toronto (Canada): <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>
- Language and Learning Online – Monash University (Australia): <http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/lonline/index.xml>
- Reference information about APA Style: <http://apastyle.org>
- I also post information about Academic Reading and Writing, literacy, and ELT on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/literaciesinelt>