

# Academic Writing I: Reviewing the Literature

**Instructor:** Gordon Myskow (PhD)

**Email:** myskow-g@kanda.kuis.ac.jp

## Course Overview

This non-credit course is designed to support students who want to improve their academic writing, especially as it relates to assignments in the MA TESOL Program. Of particular focus in this course is the ability to integrate sources to review or ‘synthesize’ the literature. By the end of the course, students will produce a (mini) literature review of 750-1000 words that makes a central argument or ‘point’ about a pedagogical issue of interest to them. This assignment is referred to in the course as ‘Make a Point about the Literature’ (MAPAL) to emphasize that an effective literature review does not simply report what others have said about a topic; rather, it takes a position toward it—that is, it makes some kind of *point* about it. We will prepare to write this assignment in several ways. **First**, throughout the course we will analyze sample essays for their informational structuring (e.g., exposition, discussion, challenge) and their lexico-grammatical resources. The emphasis throughout will not be on simply imitating rigid text templates, but rather on understanding their meaning and use—and importantly, how writers can draw on various linguistic and rhetorical patterns to achieve their own particular writing goals. **Second**, we will form a supportive community of writers where we can give constructive feedback to our classmates. **Finally**, students will work to become more autonomous learners by developing the habit of genre analysis and ‘reading to write’ so that they can continue to develop their academic writing on their own.

## Course Schedule\*

Session	Date	Topic
1.	4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Options for patterning information in literature reviews (exposition, discussion, challenge) and their meaning and use.</li><li>● Options for outlining the essay and tips for library research.</li></ul>
2.	6/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Key discourse and language features I</li><li>● Revising</li></ul>
3.	7/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Key discourse and language features I</li><li>● Editing and proofreading</li></ul>

※ As Academic Writing I is designed to develop general academic abilities, it is not tailored specifically to the needs of those writing the MA research project. However, students will find the emphasis of the course (synthesizing the literature) of much use when they write the literature review sections of the MA Project. Therefore, they are strongly encouraged to take this course before enrolling in Academic Writing II.

## **Course Objectives**

### **Terminal Objective**

*Students will be able to*

Produce a well-organized academic essay of 750-1000 words that integrates multiple sources to make an argument about a pedagogical issue.

### **Enabling Objective**

*Students will be able to*

- 1) Provide supportive and constructive feedback to others in our community of writers.
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to independently analyze academic genres and identify key linguistic and rhetorical features.
- 3) Identify and select appropriate organizational patterns for different rhetorical goals.
- 4) Make appropriate use of genre-specific discourse features including concessions, boosters/ hedges, reported speech formulations, logical connectors.
- 5) Accurately use APA conventions including citation and referencing practices.

### **Required textbook**

None. Instructor will provide all handouts and materials.

### **Pre-course Reading**

There may be some short pre-course readings of sample essays. The instructor will notify course participants 1-2 weeks prior to class and post them to Google Classroom.

### **Instructor Bio**

Gordon Myskow (PhD) is Associate Professor and Assistant Director of the MA TESOL Program at Kanda University of International Studies. He has taught courses at the secondary school and university levels in Japan since 2000 and teacher education courses for over a decade. His current research interests are in functional linguistics and subject-matter instruction (e.g., CLIL). His work has appeared in *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *Linguistics and Education*, *ELT Journal*, *Writing & Pedagogy*, *Functions of Language* and *Functional Linguistics*. He is an advisor to the United Nations Test of English (UNATE).