Hong Kong Shue Yan University

Department of English Language & Literature

1st term, 2017-2018

**Course Title**: Oral English I

**Course Code**: ENG 181

**Year of Study**: 1st

**Number of Credits**: 1

**Duration in Weeks**: 14-15 Weeks

**Contact Hours Per Week**: 1 Hour per Week

**Pre-requisite(s):** None

**Instructor**: Abigail Watkins

**Course Description**

Oral English I is a course designed for first year university students for whom English is not a first language. The course focuses on building conversation, pronunciation, and oral comprehension skills through class discussions and various communicative activities. The course topics, including current events, professional situations and foreign cultures, are intended to focus on the relationship between oral English usage and personal relationships.

**Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):**

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| --- | --- |
| ILO 1 | Students will be able to verbally express their thoughts and opinions in English confidently and in a coherent manner. |
| ILO 2 | Students will be able to construct, present and justify a persuasive argument in English. |
| ILO 3 | Students will be able to use context-appropriate vocabulary and differentiate formal and informal English. |
| ILO 4 | Students will be able to demonstrate enhanced listening comprehension skills. |
| ILO 5 | Students will be able to hold a conversation on a wide range of current topics in English. |

**Teaching/Learning Activities (TLAs):**

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| TLA1 | **Self-Reflection**: Students will be assigned a weekly reference (article, video clip, etc.) Students will prepare a reflection speech to be presented at the beginning of class and three questions regarding the reference. The topic will then be covered during class, followed by a class discussion where students can pose their questions. |
| TLA2 | **Think/Pair/Share**: The lecturer gives the class a question or prompt, and students are first given time to think about the topic on their own, and write down some thoughts. Afterwards, students are paired to compare notes, and prepare as a pair to share with the rest of the class. |
| TLA3 | **Information Gap**: Students are put in pairs and given two different sets of worksheets with missing information. In order to complete the worksheet, the students need to collaborate, asking each other a series of questions until each has filled the sheet with the correct answers. |
| TLA4 | **Hot Seat**: A student volunteer or one chosen at random will hold a Q&A session in front of the class, where they are asked personal questions generated by their classmates. The instructor will provide the opening question for each student, and the “audience “will ask follow up questions which will be graded along with the student’s answers. Each student will be in the “hot seat” at least once in the semester. |
| TLA5 | **Cocktail Conversation**: In this activity, multiple discussion prompts are handed out to the class to be discussed at the same time. The class is dispersed across the room in small clusters, much like in cocktail parties. The instructor walks from group to group, checking on the progress of the conversation. To conclude, each group presents the highlights of their discussion to the rest of the class. |
| TLA6 | **Speed Dating/Peer Survey**: The class will be seated in two rows facing each other, and handed short surveys. Students must fill out the survey by asking questions to the person across from them, and move on every few minutes, speed dating style. The students must therefore speak and write quickly. Students will be asked to share findings at the end of the activity. |
| TLA7 | **Role Play/Improvisational Drama**: The lecturer will provide a situation or scenario and assign students roles to play. Depending on the amount of details provided, the students must quickly come up with logically sequenced dialogues. |
| TLA8 | **Devil’s Advocate**: The class will be divided in groups of three, and given a case to study. One student will be the plaintiff, another the devil’s advocate. The third student is the judge who poses questions to the plaintiff and Devil’s Advocate who answer and must explain his or her reasoning to the rest of the class. The rest of the class serves as the jury, asking follow up questions and deciding upon a victor. Students will be graded on their contribution to the group discussion as a part of the midterm. |
| TLA9 | **Casual Talk**: Students will be asked to share English slang they are familiar with, and to use it in the correct context. The lecturer will provide a list of the most popular idioms. |
| TLA10 | **Spotlight**: Students will be asked to present a 1-2 minute speech on a random topic with only 45 seconds of preparation time. The class will brainstorm a list of topics and the student will randomly choose one of the topics to speak on by picking it from a hat. |
| TLA11 | **Workplace Presentation**: Workplace Presentations will be held at the end of the semester. Each student will choose a professional field/position he or she is interested in, and present a PowerPoint and oral report to the class regarding the professional field. The student will explain their personal and workplace skills and experience and how this makes them a suitable candidate to work in the field. Students will be asked follow-up questions by their peers and lecturer, as well as provided with written feedback. The workplace presentation will be graded as a major project. |
| TLA13 | **Final Speaking Exam**: For the final examination, the lecturer will test the student’s fluency by holding a conversation one-on-one on a previously determined list of topics. |

**Assessment Tasks (ATs):**

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| --- | --- |
| AT 1 | **Self-Reflection**: Students will share their thoughts orally on a specific theme to spark the classroom discussion as well as providing oral closing statements regarding a theme/discussion to check for listening comprehension. Students will also meet with the professor once in person to discuss their personal self-reflections regarding the class, their progress, and their room to grow. |
| AT 2 | **Classroom Participation**: Students willingness and improvement over the semester in participating and consistently contributing to class discussions and activities will serve as a basis of the assessment. |
| AT 3 | **Role Play**: For the first part of the midterm grade, students work in small groups to create a script, and perform it in front of the class. The students will have to demonstrate both their oral and listening skills, as they will have to provide feedback to the performers. Both the feedback and the performance will be factored into the final grade. |
| AT 4 | **Devil’s Advocate**: For the second part of the midterm, the class will be divided in groups of three, and given a case to study. One student will be the judge, one the devil’s advocate, and the other will defend the plaintiff. Each student must explain his or her reasoning. Students will be graded on their ability to coherently support their arguments. |
| AT 5 | **Workplace Presentation/Professional Development Project**: Students will give a short presentation about a professional field or position they are interested in and their most marketable professional skills related to this field or position. The students will have succinctly explain the field and provide a persuasive argument as to why the class should “hire” them. |
| AT 6 | **Final Individual Oral Exam**: A one-on-one speaking exam with the instructor held at the end of the semester. |

**Summary:**

The Intended Learning Objectives, Teaching Learning Activities and the Assessment Tasks are intended to provide a framework and promote student learning in the following manner:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Teaching/Learning Objective | Teaching/Learning Activity | Assessment Task |
| ILO 1 | TLA 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 | AT 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| ILO 2 | TLA 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13 | AT 2, 3, 5, 6 |
| ILO 3 | TLA 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 | AT 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| ILO 4 | TLA 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 | AT 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| ILO 5 | TLA 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12 | AT 1, 2, 3, 6 |

**Course Overview**:

- Students will explore various discussion topics on a weekly basis, with the added challenge of incorporating new vocabulary and in depth analysis of subject topics.

-Students will be required to support their assertions and comments with real life examples, applications, and evidence.

-On occasion, students will take turns being the “teacher” where they will be responsible for prompting and facilitating class discussion.

-Classroom participation is required and will factor into students’ final grade. ONLY ENGLISH is to be spoken in the classroom.

**Example schedule** [I withhold the right to change the syllabus at any time]

Every week before class, students will receive an email from the professor with links to articles, video clips, audio recording, and/or pictures. Additionally, vocabulary lists may be included for guidance. “Homework” and reflection will be assigned in these emails and is to be completed prior to the next class session. Homework may include citing three interesting points from the posted article and posing three discussion questions, or writing a brief self-reflection speech to be read at the beginning of class. Please make a habit of checking your email and feel free to reach out to the professor with any questions.

**Week 1: Course Outline & Ice Breakers/ “Getting to Know You” Games**

The instructor will give an overview of the semester, answer any questions, and lead students through icebreakers and games to get to know each other.

**Week 2: Desires and Goals**

Students will be asked to reflect on their ideal life. Students will discuss what steps they can take to get to those goals and what barriers they may face, as well as how they decided on those goals.

Challenge Reading:

*The Guardian*, “Millennials want purpose over paychecks. So why can't we find it at work?”

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/sep/14/millennials-work-purpose-linkedin-survey>

**Week 3: Relationships**

Students will be asked to brainstorm and discuss different types of relationships and the different ways people communicate based on the type of relationship. Students will be asked to explain what it means to be “friends,” “co-workers,” “colleagues,” etc.

Challenge Reading:

*The New York Times*, “The Modern Love College Contest”

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/05/27/style/modern-love-essay-contest-winners.html>

**Week 4: Social Media**

Students will be asked to discuss how social media affects their interactions with peers, bosses, family, brands, etc. Does social media make us closer or does it create more isolation?

Challenge Reading:  
*The Atlantic,* “Has the Smartphone Destroyed a Generation?” <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/>

*Go-Globe*, “Social Media Usage in Hong Kong—Statistics and Trends”

<https://www.go-globe.hk/blog/social-media-hong-kong/>

**Week 5: Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is rarely discussed in an academic setting. Students will have to analyze and deconstruct the term from an institutional versus personal point of view. Students will think/pair/share their views. Students will reflect upon the reasons why people forgive in some instances and do not in others. Students will hold several cocktail conversations in small groups on the topic.

Challenge Reading:

*The New York Times,* “Sometimes It’s Not Good To Forgive”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/23/your-money/why-its-not-always-good-to-forgive.html>

**Week 6: Midterm Preparation**

The instructor will share expectations for midterm performance, and provide exemplars, after which the students will practice using their improvisational skills.

**Week 7: Midterm I: Role Play**

Students will present their “play” to the class.

**Week 8: Emotional Intelligence**

The instructor will ask students discuss what constitutes emotional intelligence, and how it plays out in day-to-day life. Students will then be asked to solve various dispute scenarios using their emotional intelligence, and hold their own discussion and Q&A sessions on the scenarios.

Challenge Reading:

*The Irish Times,* “Emotional Intelligence: Why EI can be more important than IQ”

<https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/emotional-intelligence-why-ei-can-be-more-important-than-iq-1.2953573>

**Week 9: Midterm II: Devil’s Advocate**

Students will present their midterms to the class.

**Week 10: The News and Current Events**

Students will be asked to explain the different ways news is delivered and consumed and how news/current events impacts their daily lives. Students will discuss what constitutes a news story and the important factors for both content and delivery of a news story.

Challenge Reading:

*Pew Research Center,* “How social media is reshaping news”

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/09/24/how-social-media-is-reshaping-news/>

**Week 11: Interpersonal Skills in the Digital Age**

This class will be asked to compile what they believe are the most fundamental interpersonal skills, in a world where face-to-face interactions have been steadily decreasing, giving way to digital communication. A review of slang used in communications will be included in this session.

**Week 12: Final Oral Presentation I**

**Week 13: Final Oral Presentation II**

**Week 14: Final Exam Review**

**Week 15: Final Exam**

Students will meet with the instructor one-on-one for a brief assessment of acquired oral skills.

**Grading Scale**

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| --- | --- |
| **Homework:**  Weekly assignment and preparation are designed to help students participate in class discussion; it is therefore essential for all emailed assignments to be completed in a timely manner. Assignments should be completed prior to the start of class. | 10% |
| **Participation:**  Student participation is heavily accounted for in the final grade due to the conversational nature of the class. Students who do not regularly attend classes, or consistently contribute to class discussions will receive a failing participation grade. Students who are present and attentive but rarely contribute to discussions will receive a passing grade. To receive full marks for participation, students must continuously offer insights during class, and be receptive to classmates’ perspectives. | 20% |
| **Mid-Term Exam:** | 20% |
| **Class Presentation:**  Students will give an individual oral presentation on a topic of their choice. Each presentation must showcase the student’s ability to gather information, structure a sound presentation. Students will also be assessed on answering follow-up questions. | 15% |
| **Final Exam:**  The lecturer will spend one-on-one time with each student for the final examination, during which students will demonstrate their ability to verbally express their thoughts and opinions in English. | 35% |

**Assessment Rubric for Midterm and Final Presentation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Unsatisfactory (0/1pt) | Acceptable  (2pts) | Good  (3pts) | Excellent  (4pts) |
| Organization | There is no organization of information.  It is almost impossible to understand what the presenter is talking about. | The sequencing of information is poor.  It is difficult to follow what the presenter is talking about. | Presenter presents information in logical sequence.  It is easy to follow what the presenter is talking about. | Presenter presents information in logical and interesting sequence.  It an enjoyment to listen to the presentation. |
| Subject Knowledge/ Preparation | Presenter does not seem to understand the subject s/he is presenting and cannot answer questions about subject. | Presenter is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions. | Presenter demonstrates adequate subject knowledge and can answer all questions, but fails to elaborate. | Presenter demonstrates very good understanding of the subject and can answer all questions with explanations and elaboration. |
| Amount of Information & Relevance | Information is inadequate and irrelevant to the topic of presentation. | Content can be enriched.  Some of the information is irrelevant to the topic of presentation. | Information is adequate and basically relevant to the topic of presentation. | Presenter provides adequate and relevant information with elaboration. |
| Visual Aid (audio-visual materials, props etc) | Presenter uses poorly prepared visual aid or no visual aid | Presenter occasionally uses visual aid that rarely supports the presentation. | Presenter uses relevant graphics and texts. | Presenter uses relevant and interesting graphics and texts. |
| Grammar & Spelling | Presenter has made more than 10 misspelling and/or grammatical errors. | Presenter has made less than 10 misspellings and/or grammatical errors. | Presenter has made only a few misspellings and/or grammatical errors. | Presenter has made less than 2 misspellings or grammatical errors. |
| Eye Contact | Presenter reads all of report with no eye contact. | Presenter occasionally uses eye contact, but still reads most of report. | Presenter maintains eye contact most of the time but frequently returns to notes. | Presenter maintains eye contact with audience, seldom returning to notes. |
| Fluency & Clarity | Presenter mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms and speaks too quietly.  There are too many pauses.  Presenter uses monotone. | Presenter incorrectly pronounces many of the terms.  There are too many pauses.  Presenter uses monotone. | Presenter's voice is clear.  Presenter pronounces most words correctly.  Speech rate is appropriate. | Presenter uses a clear voice and pronounces terms correctly and precisely.  Presenter delivers the message in a confident and enthusiastic fashion.  The volume and rate varies to add emphasis and interest. |
| Length of Presentation | The presentation is either too long or too short (10 or more minutes above or below the allotted time). | The presentation is within 5 minutes of allotted time. | The presentation is within 3 minutes of allotted time. | The presenter has excellent time control. |
|  |  |  | Total Points (8 criteria): | /32 |

**Final Oral Exam Assessment Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | Structure | Vocabulary | Development and Fluency |
| 9-10 | The candidate demonstrates ability to use a variety of structures accurately and consistently. The candidate is confidently in control of the structures used. | The candidate shows enough command of vocabulary to respond with precision. Shades of meaning are achieved and some sophisticated ideas are communicated. | The candidate shows sustained ability to maintain a conversation and to contribute at some length. The candidate can respond to change in direction of the conversation. Pronunciation and intonation are clear. |
| 7-8 | Structures will be generally sound, but will not be used entirely accurately or with consistent confidence. There will be some errors in attempting to use more complex sentences. | The candidate has a sufficient range of vocabulary to convey information and ideas with competence and some confidence. | The candidate responds relevantly and at length which makes frequent prompting unnecessary, resulting in a competent conversation. Pronunciation and intonation are generally clear. |
| 5-6 | The candidate can use simple structures securely but has difficulty venturing beyond them. | Vocabulary conveys simple ideas and information clearly. Errors are noticeable, however, and only partial competence is achieved. | The candidate makes an attempt to respond to questions and prompts. Effort will need to be made to develop the conversation; only partial success will be achieved.  There is some lack of clarity of pronunciation and intonation, but it is unlikely to impede communication. |
| 3-4 | Structures will generally be very simple, limited and with errors, which will restrict communication. | Vocabulary is not wide or varied and there will be difficulty in conveying simple ideas. There is likely to be hesitation, repetition and searching for words. | Responses tend to be brief and widely spaced. The candidate has to be encouraged to go beyond short responses and struggles to develop a conversation. Pronunciation and intonation cause some communication difficulty. |
| 1-2 | Attempts at structured sentences will rarely achieve communication. However, some attempt at a response will be made during the discussion. | Vocabulary will generally be inadequate to convey even simple ideas. | Responses are so brief that little is communicated. The candidate hardly engages in conversation. Pronunciation and intonation patterns cause difficulty for even the more sympathetic listener. |
| 0 | Completely limited/no attempt at a response. | Completely limited/no attempt at a response. | Completely limited/no attempt at a response. |

\* Published on the University of Cambridge International Examinations website as a part of the Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language, 2011 Syllabus. Link: <http://www.cie.org.uk/docs/dynamic/30875.pdf>

**Academic Honesty**

You are expected to do your own work. Dishonesty in fulfilling any assignment undermines the learning process and the integrity of your college degree. Engaging in dishonest or unethical behavior is forbidden and will result in disciplinary action, specifically a failing grade on the assignment with no opportunity for resubmission. A second infraction will result in an F for the course and a report to College officials. Examples of prohibited behavior are:

* Cheating – an act of deception by which a student misleadingly demonstrates that s/he has mastered information on an academic exercise. Examples include:
* Copying or allowing another to copy a test, quiz, paper, or project
* Submitting a paper or major portions of a paper that has been previously submitted for another class without permission of the current instructor
* Turning in written assignments that are not your own work (including homework)
* Plagiarism – the act of representing the work of another as one’s own without giving credit.
  + Failing to give credit for ideas and material taken from others
  + Representing another’s artistic or scholarly work as one’s own
* Fabrication – the intentional use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive

**Course Materials**

1. Newspaper and magazine readings (The New York Times, The New Yorker, and others)

2. TED Talks

3. Presentation Tips <http://step.inpg.fr/GB/docs/Language_of_presentation_v7.pdf>

4. Slang Directory <http://www.manythings.org/slang/> And others