Science Communication in English (Ocean Science)
LANG3025
3 credits
Pre-requisites: LANG2010
Co-requisites: N/A

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Course Description

LANG3025 is a required course taken by students studying programs offered by the Department of Ocean Science.

Course objectives: to develop students' ability to communicate ocean science knowledge to the general public through effective writing and speaking skills.

Course content: In writing, students learn the specific skills to produce both narrative and persuasive genres, and reflect on how to explain ocean science concepts in an accessible manner without losing the scientific complexity. In speaking, students learn how to communicate ocean science notions and implications to lay audiences using short videos and oral presentations with appropriate rhetorical and stylistic devices.

Key topics:

Cycle 1 - Science communication and storytelling
• Appreciate the importance of science communication
• Communicate science to the public effectively
• Apply storytelling techniques in science communication
• Identify good features of engaging pop science articles/videos/blogs
• Anchor texts with references in science communication

Cycle 2 - Communicate controversies in the Ocean Science area
• Analyse and explain issues/controversies in the Ocean Science area

Cycle 3 - Present science communication sharply in speaking
• Apply pop science stylistic features and tones to spoken science communication genres such as TED talks and podcasts.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand Ocean Science Content-Related Knowledge	a) formulate a specific message related to Ocean Science to the public; and
	b) retrieve salient points made in popular science articles in the field of ocean science

2. Acquire Academic Skills and Competencies	a) demonstrate knowledge of the features of various spoken and written genres in science communication; b) communicate effectively scientific concepts and knowledge in writing and oral presentations to lay audiences; and c) communicate effectively in a team through involvement in team activities.
3. Gain Vision and Orientation for the Future	a) recognize the need to communicate courteously and appropriately in professional contexts; b) engage in lifelong language learning through intelligent selection and adaptation of various learning resources.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve.

Assessments

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
SA1 - Video podcast on an ocean science issue/debate/innovation/new policy	30%	Approx. week 5/6*
WA - Pop science opinion piece	30%	Approx. week 9/10*
SA2 - TED-style talk on an OCES controversy/issue	30%	Approx. week 12-13*
In-class and out-of-class work	10%	spread through course

* Specific due dates are posted on Canvas.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
SA1 - Video podcast on an ocean science issue/debate/innovation/new policy	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3a, 3b	This speaking assignment assesses students' abilities to: • create pop science spoken communications (2a) in a team (2c), using credible academic materials as support (1b, 3b); and • present expert knowledge (1a) in a way that engages, and interests lay audiences, demonstrating good understanding of the importance of storytelling and personal connection in pop science talks (2b, 3a).
WA - Pop science opinion piece	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b	This writing assignment assesses students' abilities to:

		• present opinions on the selected controversy (2a) by drawing on the current understanding of the ocean science field to the general public (2b, 3a); • provide justifications for your position (1a) by incorporating scientific literature (1b, 3b); and • consider the broader implications of the issue beyond the scientific community (1a).
SA2 - TED-style talk on an OCES controversy/issue	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b	This speaking assignment assesses students' abilities to: • present a pop science talk to public audience based on an ocean science controversy (2a); • provide clear and persuasive arguments (1a) using credible sources (1b, 3b); and • use appropriate pop science spoken communication styles and engaging delivery skills to engage the audience (2b, 3a)
In-class and out-of-class work	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3a, 3b	This task assesses students' completion of a series of tasks which practise learnt skills, self-directed study, active learning from feedback, and peer learning (all ILOs).

Grading Rubrics

Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent Performance	Content: Demonstrates sophisticated synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with skilful coherence. Communication: Uses nuanced language and non-verbal communication with sustained awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
B	Good Performance	Content: Demonstrates synthesis of well-developed ideas from quality sources with effective coherence.

		Communication: Uses effective language and non-verbal communication with very high awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Content: Demonstrates synthesis of relevant ideas from quality sources with mostly clear coherence. Communication: Uses appropriate language and non-verbal communication with some awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose.
D	Marginal Pass	Content: Synthesizes relevant ideas with some analysis, somewhat coherently. Ideas may be superficial, repetitive, missing or inadequate. Communication: Use some appropriate language and non-verbal communication with little awareness of target audience/reader, context, purpose. Communication is often inadequate or awkward.
F	Fail	Content: Does not synthesize, develop or organize ideas sufficiently. Ideas are very superficial, repetitive, irrelevant, inadequate, and/or lacking. Communication: limited awareness of audience, context, purpose; limited control of language.

Course AI Policy

We encourage students to make use of all the tools available that can help them to communicate more effectively in English. We also expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. There is no penalty for using or not using GenAI. However, GenAI and other tools cannot be used as a substitute for a student's own work. Students are expected to write their own assessed assignments and to prepare their presentations themselves.

GenAI tools can be very useful for:

- Brainstorming ideas and suggesting sources BUT the information provided may not be accurate or relevant to your assignment.

- Giving suggestions about improving the organization of your writing BUT GenAI tends to suggest very formulaic patterns of writing which may not fit your requirements.

- Giving suggestions about improving your language BUT GenAI may make suggestions for language changes which are not appropriate for the intended context and audience.

- Suggesting simple ways of expressing complex discipline-specific concepts BUT these explanations may be unfamiliar to your audience.

- Providing summaries of long texts BUT important information may be omitted, particularly if the original text is not well-written.

In short, GenAI provides opportunities to enhance your use of English and contains pitfalls which you need to be aware of.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within ten working days of submission. Feedback on assignments will include strengths and areas for improvement where relevant. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Resubmission Policy

Resubmissions are not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Required Texts and Materials

Course materials and additional resources are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Plagiarism

In CLE assignments, students should not copy from others nor submit the same work for multiple courses. Source materials must be explicitly acknowledged.

Assignments with evidence of plagiarism may score a zero and be followed up with your department's Dean. To demonstrate academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, you are expected to:

• paraphrase, summarize, reference and synthesize ideas from sources

• refrain from copying expressions and ideas directly from any source (e.g. from another student, or from a video, or from an article, etc.) without proper acknowledgement