Academic English for Science Studies
LANG1409
3 credits
Pre-requisites: LANG1402 unless exempt. Students exempt from LANG1402 are those who attained Level 5 (with all papers at or above Level 4) or above in English Language in the HKDSE, or equivalent qualification.
Co-requisites: N/A

Name of Course Leaders: Bruce Ma & Rebecca Farmer
Email of Course Leaders: lcmbruce@ust.hk & lcrebecca@ust.hk
Office Hours of Course Leaders: Available by appointment only. Students should contact their section instructor directly with any questions.

Course Description

LANG1409 is a Common Core course taken by all Science School students.

Course objectives: to develop your ability to communicate accurately and appropriately in science contexts in the university and beyond.

Course content: Through this course, you practice critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, to help enhance your written, spoken and multimodal communication skills and academic literacy skills in science-specific contexts.

Key topics:

- Module 1: principles of collaboration and science communication.
- Module 2: communication skills for speaking. These include audience analysis, language use and communication strategies to engage a general public audience in science topics.
- Module 3: communication skills for writing and academic literacy skills for research. These include finding, evaluating, critiquing and synthesizing sources, and developing coherent, persuasive texts for science-specific contexts.

Methods of instruction: interactive tutorials support active learning through group discussion, collaborative activities, peer learning, input, practice and feedback.

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

1. Identify, evaluate, select, critique, integrate, and cite relevant information from science-related sources to provide evidence-based arguments.
2. Use contextually appropriate written, spoken, visual and non-verbal communication to strengthen message delivery.
3. Use appropriate rhetorical, creative and persuasive strategies to make an impact on the audience or reader.
4. Demonstrate understanding of clear, comprehensive, and coherent ideas.
5. Work collaboratively to achieve common goals.

6. Implement effective learning strategies, using feedback and reflective practices to monitor and improve performance.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided below, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

Assessments:

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
A1: 3-minute talk	35%	Approx. week 6*
A2: scientific blog post and reflection	35%	Approx. week 13*
Checkpoints: a series of tasks to be completed during the course to which contributes to the process of completing the assessments.	20%	spread through course – see course schedule
Password test	10%	Exam period

* Specific due dates are posted on Canvas. Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
A1: 3-minute talk	ILO2, ILO3, ILO4	This task assesses students' ability to explain scientific ideas clearly and coherently (ILO4) with appropriate strategies to impact to a general public audience (ILO3) through appropriate spoken language and non-verbal communication (ILO2).
A2: scientific blog post and reflection	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4	This task assesses students' ability to critique and synthesize information from multiple sources (ILO1) to fully and clearly develop coherent ideas (ILO4) with appropriate strategies to impact a target reader (ILO3) in appropriate written language (ILO2).
Checkpoints: a series of tasks to be completed during the course	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4, ILO 5, ILO6	The checkpoint tasks assess students' ability to apply the skills taught in the course (ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4), and reflect on and evaluate (ILO6) with peers (ILO5) the process of completing the assignments.
Password test	ILO2	The Password test assesses students' ability to identify appropriate linguistic features according to different contexts (ILO2).

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 two weeks 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.