From Proposal to Applause: Navigating the Academic Conference Journey
LANG2071
3 credits
Pre-requisites: EITHER LANG 1406 / 1407 / 1408 / 1409 OR LANG 1403 / 1404
Co-requisites: N/A

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Office Hours of Course Coordinators: Available by appointment only.

Course Description

LANG2071 is an Advanced Communication course open to all university undergraduates, especially suitable for students interested in research. This course highlights experiential learning, Generative AI use for research purposes, and audience-centered academic communication skills. By viewing writing and presenting as iterative processes, students will confidently disseminate their research, bridging the gap between producing knowledge and sharing knowledge with academic audiences.

Key topics:

- **Module 1: Introduction to the course and communicating research**
  This module will give students a preview of the key concepts that this course will teach.
- **Module 2: Conducting a mini-research project**
  These include brainstorming research topics and developing research questions, conducting a literature review and ethical use of GenAI, developing research methods, collecting data, organizing, analyzing and interpreting data.
- **Module 3: Writing conference abstracts**
  Student will analyze effective conference abstracts; structure, write and peer review conference abstracts.
- **Module 4: Planning and implementing a mini-conference**
  Student will analyze authentic conference materials and go through all the necessary steps in organizing an academic conference.
- **Module 5: Designing and delivering presentations**
  These include audience engagement techniques and Q & A strategies, rehearsals and feedback, mini-conference presentations.

Methods of instruction: input from lectures; practice and feedback; consultations; active learning through group discussion; collaborative activities; peer learning.

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

1. Compose clear and engaging texts and presentations for research communication and academic conferences using rhetorical strategies appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.
2. Critically synthesize and integrate literature using appropriate citation practices
3. Organize and present research logically and coherently to effectively communicate ideas and findings
4. Apply appropriate language and style in written and spoken communication for academic conferences
5. Demonstrate effective presentation skills with appropriate body language, voice, visual aids, and effective responses to questions
6. Moderate conference sessions effectively by introducing speakers, managing time, facilitating audience participation, and ensuring productive discussion
7. Collaborate effectively to plan, organize, and present at an academic conference

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
1: Mini research project (Individual)	30%	15 Mar 6pm
2: Conference abstract (Individual)	15%	29 Mar 6pm
3: Mini-Conference Presentation (Individual)	30%	Week 13 in class
4. Organizing the Mini-Conference (Group)	10%	Holistic evaluation
5. Peer evaluation (Individual)	10%	Holistic evaluation
6. Engagement (Individual)	5%	Holistic evaluation

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
1: Mini research project (Individual)	ILO-1, ILO-2, ILO-3, ILO-4	Students submit a 1000-word research summary that demonstrates critical engagement with their chosen topic, including literature review, methodology, and findings.
2: Conference abstract (Individual)	ILO-1, ILO-2, ILO-3, ILO-4	Students write a 300-400-word conference abstract tailored to the mini-conference theme.
3: Mini-Conference Presentation (Individual)	ILO-1, ILO-2, ILO-3, ILO-4, ILO-5	Students give a 3-minute-thesis presentation followed by Q & A with their peers for an academic audience.
4. Organizing the Mini-Conference (Group)	ILO-1, ILO-4	Students will work collaboratively to organize a mini-conference. Students will work in teams with specific tasks. The group submission for this task includes, for example, a finalized conference program

		with schedule, promotional materials (e.g. e-poster).
5. Peer evaluation (Individual)	ILO-7	This peer evaluation assesses students' contributions to organizing the mini-conference.
6. Engagement (Individual)	ILO-1, ILO-2, ILO-3, ILO-4, ILO-5, ILO-6, ILO-7	This component assesses students' overall engagement, including active participation and contributions in class and out of class.

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	Outstanding performance on all intended learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to sophisticatedly synthesize and apply the concepts or skills learned in the course. Demonstrates the ability to skilfully communicate research in academic contexts with sustained awareness of audience, context and purpose.
B	Good Performance	Substantial performance on all intended learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to sufficiently synthesize and apply the concepts or skills learned in the course. Demonstrates the ability to effectively communicate research in academic contexts with sustained awareness of audience, context and purpose.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Satisfactory performance on the majority of intended learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially synthesize and apply the concepts or skills learned in the course. Demonstrates the ability to appropriately communicate research in academic contexts with some awareness of audience, context and purpose.
D	Marginal Pass	Barely satisfactory performance on very few intended learning outcomes. Demonstrates limited ability to synthesize and apply the concepts or skills learned in the course. Inadequately or awkwardly communicates research in academic contexts with little awareness of audience, context and purpose.
F	Fail	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of intended learning outcomes. Fails to synthesize and apply the concepts or skills learned in the course.

		Fails to communicate research in academic contexts with awareness of audience, context and purpose.

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