EIL 422 studies modern English grammar to meet the needs of the ESL/EFL teacher, with special emphasis on the development of principled knowledge and skills that can be used in the analysis of the syntax, lexis and pragmatics of English. The course provides practical experience in grammar tutoring of ESL students at the UIUC campus.

EIL 422 offers three credit hours for undergraduate students and four credit hours for graduate students. The workload and expectations are identical for graduate and undergraduate students. Undergraduate students who need an additional credit hour may enroll via my undergraduate independent study number – please talk to me about this if you are interested in doing so.

Typically, there is a wide range of prior experience as English teachers amongst the students of EIL 422. We take advantage of this through peer techniques. For example, our initial tutorials can have two tutors: one experienced and one who is new(er) to teaching.

Work load:

(1) Prompt class attendance and full participation in all class activities.

(2) Prompt completion of the assigned reading. The entire class will read chapters 1 through 13 inclusive and chapters 15, 21 and 22 of the Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman textbook (referenced below), as

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1 ‘EIL’ is the main rubric for the course, which is also cross-listed as English 404. The course will be referenced as “EIL” in all class materials and discussions.

2 This syllabus is also available at my website, for which the web address is given above.

3 Here are some special notes concerning my office hours:
   (1) I hold office hours only between the scheduled start and end dates for instruction for this semester, inclusive of those dates, if relevant. Regular UIUC holidays are excluded. I do not hold office hours during finals week.
   (2) Office hours may be canceled due to travel. If so, I will always try to post a note on my office door.
   (3) Office hours are drop-in: first-come, first-served. I do not schedule appointments during office hours.
   (4) If office hours are not convenient, or if you wish to see me outside of the semester instruction dates, contact me to schedule an appointment.
   (5) I have a mailbox inside 4080 FLB. You may also safely leave things for me in the doorbin at my office: 3040 FLB.
recommended by the authors at page v, at the rate of one to three chapters per week, commencing immediately upon the start of the semester.

(3) In addition to the Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman text, we will also read various published articles and study other materials on specific topics in grammar and on issues in grammar pedagogy. These readings will most likely commence after our study of Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman has ended.

(4) Full participation as a tutor in our English grammar tutorial system (the EGC, described below). You are expected to tutor at least six separate times, where “one” tutorial is counted as at least one academic hour (fifty minutes).

(5) Three tasks, two graded and one required but ungraded:

   a. Two graded take-home mini-papers. The first will be a critical reaction to the Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman textbook. The second will be an analysis of the student(s) whom you tutor. Further details on each paper will be discussed in class.

   b. An ungraded two-part task, comprised of: (a) a brief presentation in class, and (b) a written contribution based on that presentation (typically, this is a copy of the powerpoint slide file and/or the handouts). The objective of this task is to contribute sound ESL grammar pedagogical advice to your classmates, based on your experience with the student(s) whom you tutor in the EGC. Usually, this is done in pairs or small groups. It can be done individually.

(6) Final course evaluation is done by portfolio, stored on the instructor’s computer. If you wish to add things to this electronic portfolio, they must be received by or before 9 AM, Thurs 15 May 2014. Your final course grade and some summary comments will be communicated to you by email. Effectively, this date is the wrap-up of the class, because all graded assignments will be fully completed and graded before then.

The ESL Grammar Center (EGC)

We will staff a drop-in English grammar help facility, called the ESL Grammar Center, or EGC. The purpose of the EGC is twofold: (1) it provides you a focused opportunity to work with the evolving English grammar of an ESL student and thus train your skills as an ESL teacher, and (2) it provides that student a chance for additional practice and study. This will be available to ESL students at UIUC. It will last about six weeks starting by or before mid-term. Once the EGC is underway, much of our class discussion will involve diagnosis and analysis of the students who visit the EGC. We will work out all the logistics of the EGC well after the semester starts and enrollment in 422 is settled. Typically, the EGC gets going about week four of the semester.

Required Textbook:


Recommended Textbook:

Moodle website and Other materials:

This class has an online website through the UIUC Moodle system. You should be automatically enrolled in that website once you are registered for this class. You will need to download materials from the Moodle website, other than the two textbooks referenced above.

Comprehensive Examinations:

For UIUC MATESL students, this course is one area assessed in our comprehensive examinations. If you are graduating this semester, there will be two firm deadlines (to be announced and posted on Moodle later): one to negotiate the 422 comps task with me and the other to submit it. If you are not graduating this semester and wish me to evaluate your 422 comp, then you must (a) negotiate the 422 comp task with me before the end of this semester’s Finals week, and (b) submit it by or before 01 Nov 2014; otherwise, a subsequent 422 prof will handle your comp. Further details on these requirements will be explained after our course is underway.

Course Schedule:

The weekly schedule for this course is given on Moodle. In general terms, this schedule is stable two weeks out and subject to change thereafter.

Record-keeping:

After any course product has been graded, commented upon, and returned to you, keep it in a portfolio (I do this also). My evaluation will emphasize evaluation of all of your work using the criteria below. Please also submit to this portfolio any other work which you feel may enhance your evaluation. In particular, be sure to include adjudicated rewrites (if any).

Method of grading:

The method of grading in this course is criterion-referenced. The criterial levels of performance are as follows. This is also known as a 'performance scale' and each paragraph below is a 'descriptor':

These grading policies are standard in my courses. References to a 'final project' may not apply in all of my classes. In some classes, there is no final project. If there is not, there is always a 'last-scheduled task', meaning the last graded activity of the semester. In courses with last-scheduled graded tasks (in lieu of a project), that task is typically due when the portfolio is submitted.

Grade of A:
Work at the A-level displays accurate understanding of claims by class sources (reading, lectures, class discussions). Virtually no content accuracy errors are expected at the A-level. Furthermore, A-level work uses those claims (facts, quasi-facts, opinions, beliefs, values, etc.) in an identifiable, organized, balanced and coherent manner to support stances on issues. Additionally, A-level work displays synthesis and insight. It is not necessary for you to come to conclusions or proposals that nobody else has thought of, but rather to lead your reader to those conclusions in a fresh, insightful and argumentatively successful manner. Note: a 'successful' argument is one in which the general contention(s) is/are in fact upheld.

Grade of B:
Work at the B-level also displays accurate understanding of the claims made by class sources, though some very minor misunderstandings are possible. It uses those claims to support stances on issues. B-level work displays clear reconstruction of argumentative streams presented in class materials. That is, work at this level often paraphrases closely the readings and class discussions on which the course is based. The argument of B-level is also successful.
Grade of C:
Work at the C-level displays understanding of the majority of the claims made by class sources. Misunderstandings of those class sources may be present in a noticeable quantity. C-level work uses those claims to construct an argument, though the structure of the argument is probably not successful for reasons such as the following: (1) the argument may benefit from further tightening, or (2) the structure of the argument may be difficult to identify. C-level work probably also re-creates or paraphrases discussion streams presented in class. The streams may not be successful, possibly due to the misunderstandings noted above or possibly due to failure to completely re-create them.

Grades below C:
Intentionally, no description of work below C is given. If I feel that work is not reaching at least the C-level, then it is my responsibility to contact you individually and negotiate a resolution to the situation.

Plus and Minus:
In general, a 'plus' grade indicates that you have displayed the criteria of the grade to which it is attached "plus" a few criteria (or one important criterion) of the level immediately above. A 'minus' grade generally indicates that you have achieved the criteria of the grade level to which it is attached, "minus" a few criteria (or one important criterion) of that level.

Aggregation:
End-of-term aggregation of grades involves application of the above criteria descriptors to the overall trends in your work. Progress is noted most keenly. All of your course work will be returned to you. Evaluation is based on your entire portfolio, including the final project or last-scheduled task.

Incompletes (also known as an 'ex' grade):
Incompletes (i.e. 'ex' grades) will only be granted under the most exceptional circumstances. No automatic 'ex' grades will be granted simply because you turn in your final portfolio late. You must see me regarding any 'ex', and I have been forced to become very strict. It is very likely that I will refuse to grant an 'ex'. If you do not turn in your portfolio (all previous work and the final project) by the deadline, and if you have not gotten an approved 'ex' from me, I will give you a failing grade for the course. Be warned.

Negotiated Revision for Regrading:
Every piece of work you do during this class can be revised for re-grading, which is often called a 'rewrite'. Re-grading will never lower your grade. All proposed revision must be negotiated with the instructor. Rewrites for re-grading are magnificent way to learn. A rewrite is complete (i.e. 'adjudicated') when you and I have agreed that it is: when the grade has gone up to a level we agree, or when we agree to stop working on it, or when you stop working on it. No rewrite is possible on any last-scheduled task. It is possible to turn in drafts of some or all of that work in lieu of a rewrite.

Alternate evidence:
For any assignment, you may submit something different and innovative, provided that you negotiate this substitution with the instructor. Alternate and additional evidence of your learning is always acceptable but must be approved before you undertake it. If you'd like to do something slightly different -- e.g. a new assignment instead of a rewrite, please take into consideration the timeframe of the course. Thank you.

Commenting:
It is my responsibility to comment your work adequately. This is important for two reasons: (1) it is necessary to justify the criterion-referenced grade awarded to the work, and (2) commenting enhances positive backwash of assessment.