

**VB037: Writing in English**  
**Fall 2017, Wednesday 14:00 – 15:50, A318**  
**Mgr. Antonín Zita, M.A., PhD. zita@fi.muni.cz**

**Course description:**

This course is designed to teach students the necessary skills that will enable them to proceed from sentence construction and paragraph writing to essay writing. The students will be familiarized with the writing of topic sentences, thesis statements, and different types of paragraphs and essays. The students will practice these steps of the writing process via in-class writing, text analysis, peer assessment, editing, and writing of a draft of the final essay. While some grammatical aspects of English used in the academia will be touched upon in the class, the students are expected to study individually in case they find their levels of knowledge not sufficient for class purposes.

**Course assessment:**

Students write one shorter essay during the writing week which constitutes 20 percent of the final grade (600 – 1200 words) and an expanded version of the essay at the end of the course. The grade for the final essay, which is to have between 1200 – 2000 words, constitutes 40 percent of the overall grade and is split between two parts – the quality of the essay and the quality of peer-review feedback to other students' essays. The deadline for the final essay will be set sometime during the semester.

Active participation is expected and it constitutes 15 percent of the final grade.

Finally, timely submission of short written assignments makes up for the last 25 percent of the class. These assignments are divided into two groups: minor and major assignments. Minor assignments, taking place mostly at the beginning of the semester, are rated on a submitted/not submitted scale, while major assignments have a more comprehensive rating. Each assignment specifies whether it is a minor or a major assignment.

**Course policy:**

Students are allowed not to attend two classes.

**Syllabus**

**Week 1**

Introductory class: course policies and assignments, introduction to academic English, academic register and style.

Go to <http://www.englishvocabularyexercises.com/AWL/index.htm> and practice academic vocabulary.

**Week 2**

Paragraphs – functions of paragraphs, writing and revising paragraphs, topic sentence

**Week 3**

Paragraph coherence: noun repetition, parallel structures, transitional expressions, developing paragraphs.

**Week 4**

Developing skills – more practice in paragraph writing, contrasting paragraphs

**Week 5**

Planning and organizing + writing introductions and conclusions, forming a thesis statement

**Week 6**

Working with sources: evaluating sources, citing and paraphrasing.

**Week 7**

**No class.** During this week students write the first draft of their essays. Students meet with the instructor to consult their ideas for drafts.

**Week 8**

Peer feedback on the first draft.

**Week 9**

**No class.** Individual feedback from the instructor

**Week 10**

The mechanics and clarity of writing I: Misplaced and dangling modifiers; the passive voice.

**Week 11**

The mechanics and clarity of writing II: Capital letters, commas, periods, semicolons, quotation marks.

**Week 12**

Writing effectively; Academic English and Computer Science I

**Week 13**

Academic English and Computer Science II; revision of the course