

AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

English Language and American Studies – Course Descriptions

English I: Listening & English II: Speaking (Spring)

Students develop listening comprehension skills useful in university contexts. Intensive listening practice exposes students to everyday academic language used in a variety of topics and situations. Class guests, sample university lectures, use of audio and videotapes, and observations and interviews outside of classroom support the development of listening comprehension and academic note-taking skills.

Students develop speaking skills appropriate in university contexts. Examples of such skills are: holding extended conversations, asking and answering questions in class, giving oral summaries, giving presentations and speeches, participating in discussions and debates, and having conferences with professors. This course includes activities and assignments outside of the classroom that enable students to further practice what they have learned in class.

English III: Academic Writing & English IV: Academic Reading and Discussion (Spring)

Using an integrated workshop approach, with reading centered around themes from American culture and society, students increase reading comprehension and speed in English and build skills in drawing conclusions, making inferences, using context clues, separating fact from opinion and analyzing articles. They also develop general academic vocabulary as well as vocabulary related to specific subject areas.

Writing assignments are based on reading and discussions, focusing on summarization, explanation, analysis, and argumentation. In addition, students may write journal entries, paragraphs, summaries, and essays.

Students further develop reading, writing, and vocabulary, as well as computer skills through regular use of the computer lab facilities.

English V: Grammar (Spring)

Students develop and improve accuracy and fluency in understanding and using grammar appropriately in academic study. These courses introduce and give students practice in form, meaning, and use of grammatical elements in meaningful contexts. Students practice targeted structures to gain proficiency in using grammar accurately in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, target grammar and reading strategies necessary for the TOEIC Reading parts 5, 6, and 7 will be introduced and practiced using TOEIC preparation texts and handouts. Students will take practice TOEIC exams and work on TOEIC test-taking strategies.

English VI: Language and Culture (Spring, Summer)

This course is designed to increase student fluency through both skill-based courses and content-themed courses. Students may use all skills in this course, but the emphasis is on further development of listening, speaking, pronunciation and TOEIC preparation skills. Students have opportunities to lead and participate in discussions, to give speeches, practice test-taking and listen to film and music clips. Various topics or themes are offered each year.

Applied English (Summer and Fall)

The main focus of Applied English is the development of English language and academic skills to facilitate content subject learning. The course is closely coordinated with a specific ASP liberal arts elective course. For example: American Society, Human Resource Management, American Politics and American Studies. Students will use all skills in this course: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Discussions, presentations, listening activities, and reading/writing assignments will focus on the content of the ASP liberal arts elective course.

English VII: Language and Culture (Fall)

This course is designed to increase student fluency through both skill-based courses and content-themed courses. Students may use all skills in this course, but the emphasis is on further development of reading, speaking, business English, vocabulary and TOEIC preparation skills. Students have opportunities to read about current events, participate in discussions, practice test-taking give speeches, and practice business English conversations. Various topics or themes are offered each year.

College Life Orientation (Spring and Fall) (non-credit orientation class)

College Life Orientation facilitates student adjustment to life at Willamette University and in the Salem community.

In spring semester, College Life Orientation guides students in learning “how to” skills and information needed to function in an American university setting. Spring semester classes encourage student exploration of important cultural differences that may lead to difficulties and misunderstandings and promotes intercultural awareness and problem solving. The goals are to help students adjust as smoothly and as quickly as possible in all aspects of their university life and to give students the opportunity to develop the adjustment skills and knowledge they need to have comfortable and successful lives while living and studying in the United States. Spring semester College Life Orientation allows students an opportunity to use all of the language skills they are learning in their language courses.

By fall semester, students have acquired a deeper understanding of themselves and how to succeed in an American university setting. Therefore, the focus of College Life Orientation changes and the goals are twofold: (1) help students focus on self-reflection so they can see what they have gained from their experiences in the United States; and (2) guide students to develop the adjustment skills and knowledge they will need to re-enter Japanese university life.

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