

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**  
**Faculty of Arts and Sciences**  
**Department of English**

**English 204 (3-credit hours)**  
**Advanced Academic English**

## **1. Course Learning Outcomes**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

English 204 is designed to provide rigorous training in advanced reading skills, critiquing, synthesis, and research skills. It builds on skills introduced in English 203 in text analysis and logical argumentation while encouraging more advanced independent research, writing and discussion of a variety of issues across the curriculum. Intensive reading in English 204 involves the close analysis of sophomore texts, while extensive reading is carried out while preparing research syntheses. In terms of writing skills, the course emphasizes the process approach to writing and focuses on different methods of writing development appropriate for critiques, explanatory syntheses and argument syntheses, as well as the formalities of documentation. Students are required to consult and adequately credit a variety of sources in their research, including electronic sources. Finally, students deliver formal oral presentations based on their research.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Critique arguments/texts across the curriculum and in newspaper articles.
2. Write well-documented explanatory and argumentative research syntheses, using information from a broad range of sources.
3. Prepare and deliver formal oral presentations based on research.

### **A DETAILED LISTING OF OBJECTIVES BY SKILL**

#### **Reading/Writing**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. read, evaluate and respond critically to texts/evidence.
2. write critiques and syntheses, focusing on:
  - facts and opinions
  - deductive and inductive reasoning
  - appeals
  - counter-arguments and refutations/concessions
  - common logical fallacies.

#### **Research**

Students will be required to research topics using relevant information from a broad range of sources. By the end of the semester, students will be able to limit a given topic, establish a focus, synthesize information from a variety of sources, and fully develop a thesis statement utilizing various rhetorical skills including argument and refutation. Emphasis will be placed on the process, including:

- outlining
- note-taking (including summary, paraphrase, and quotation)
- writing thesis statements
- using various methods of development and support
- evaluating sources: assessing the value of information and its appropriateness for the research required
- documentation (within and at the end of the text)
- information literacy: retrieving information in all formats, based on the understanding of systematic arrangement of collections in libraries.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH WORK**

**For each research assignment, you will be required to submit the following:**

- A topic proposal (one paragraph describing the topic you have in mind)
- A preliminary outline (including working thesis statement)
- A rough draft of the paper with a photocopy of each source used, with relevant sections underlined or highlighted.

Specific deadlines for each of the above assignments will be set.

**The final product of each research assignment should consist of the following parts:**

- Title page: The title of the paper, student's name, instructor's name, title and section of course, and date.
- Outline page: The thesis statement and a formal outline of the paper with headings of parallel form and equivalent value.
- Content pages: Double-space the text and use Times New Roman 12 pt font; follow MLA or APA style in-text citations in synthesizing information from sources.
- Works Cited/References Page: MLA or APA style.
- Appendix/Appendices (if applicable)

You will have the opportunity to orally present your research work in class.

## **2. Resources Available to Students**

### **TEXTBOOK**

Behrens, Lawrence and Leonard J. Rosen. *Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman, 2003.

## **3. Grading Criteria**

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

One critique/synthesis

15%

Two research syntheses:	
1. Explanatory synthesis:	15%
Process: Topic proposal, outlines, rough draft	
Product: 600-800 words, using a minimum of 4 sources	
2. Argument synthesis:	20%
Process: Topic proposal, outlines, rough draft	
Product: 800-1000 words, using a minimum of 5 sources	
Two oral presentations	15%
Class participation	5%
Final exam (critique/synthesis)	30%

#### 4. Schedule

Week	Topic	Activities	Assignments
1	Introduction to the course, course policy, and attendance regulations	lecture/questions	
2	Writers and their sources	Reading/Lecture <b>Writing: Practice summary</b>	Ch. 1: Summary, Paraphrase, and Quotation
3	The research process	<b>Using the library's electronic search facilities (Training in Fisk Hall, Room 204)</b> Lecture/ Demonstration	Ch. 6: Research
4	Beginnings and closings	Lecture/discussion	Ch 3: Introductions, Theses, and Conclusions <b><i>Deadline for handing in proposed research topic for the explanatory synthesis, with photocopies of sources</i></b>
5	Writing syntheses: Explanatory synthesis (versus argument synthesis)	Lecture/discussion	Ch. 4: Explanatory Synthesis
6	Writing syntheses: Argument synthesis	Lecture/discussion	Ch. 5: Argument Synthesis <b><i>Deadline for handing in explanatory synthesis outline</i></b>

7	Writing critiques	Lecture/discussion	Ch. 2: Critiques <i>Deadline for handing in a writing sample from the explanatory synthesis</i>
8	Writing critiques (Continued)	Lecture/discussion <b>Writing: Practice critique</b>	<b>Deadline for submitting first research synthesis</b>
9	Research presentation topics	Oral presentations on explanatory syntheses	
10	Research presentation topics (Continued)	Oral presentations (Continued)	<i>Deadline for handing in proposed research topic for the argument synthesis, with photocopies of sources</i>
11	Discussion theme 1: Cyberspace and Identity	Discussion	Selected readings from Ch. 7 <i>Deadline for handing in argument synthesis outline</i>
12	Discussion theme 2: Obedience to Authority	Discussion	Selected readings from Ch. 8 <i>Deadline for handing in a writing sample from the argument synthesis</i>
13	Discussion theme 3: Weight Debate	Discussion <b>Writing: Graded critique</b>	Selected readings from Ch. 10
14	Research presentation topics	Oral presentations on argument syntheses	<b>Deadline for submitting second research synthesis</b>
15	Research presentation topics	Oral presentations on argument syntheses	
16	General feedback and review	Review	

## 5. Course Policy

### COURSE REGULATIONS

- **60 is the minimum passing grade.**
- **Students are required to submit all assignments on time.**

- **Students must take all scheduled tests.** Make-up tests are given only at the instructor's discretion if the student presents a valid excuse for his/her absence from the test within one week of that test.
- **Attendance regulations:**
  - Students are required to attend all classes and bring the assigned textbook. **Students who miss more than one fifth (1/5) of the total number of class hours will be automatically withdrawn (i.e. dropped) from the course.** No exception to this rule will be made.
  - **Students are allowed to register for a Communication Skills course a maximum of three times**, the third requiring permission of the student's advisor and the English department. Students withdrawn for excessive absences will be counted as having registered for the course one time.
  - According to university regulations, **students are not permitted to withdraw from Communication Skills courses themselves.**

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to submit their **own** work. In all assignments, ideas and words taken from any source should be documented. Failure to credit ideas or material taken from secondary sources constitutes plagiarism, a violation of the University's academic regulations, and is subject to disciplinary action. (Please refer to the AUB Student Handbook, "Academic Integrity" section, p. 33).