

ENGLISH CONVERSATION FRESHMAN CLASS

Fall 2018

Instructor: Rob Whyte BA, M.Sc Office: D570

Office hours: TBA

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the conversation class. I hope you find your time here enjoyable and useful.

This class has three main goals. The first is to improve your speaking skills. When I say "improve," I mean that you learn to speak a little faster and a little more carefully. That's called fluency and accuracy.

Helping you become a better listener is the second goal. Understanding what you hear just might be the hardest language skill to learn, and the most important.

Building up your knowledge of words is the third goal. We will do a number of activities throughout the semester to learn and remember essential words.

OBJECTIVES

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

- 1) Improve fluency by completing regular practice and speaking drills;
- 2) Demonstrate an ability to have a conversation about ideas by completing book discussion exercises;
- 3) Expand vocabulary by at least 300 words by completing assignments, quizzes, and class work;
- 4) Demonstrate a good understanding of basic grammar items, like nouns, verbs and adjectives, through class reading and speaking tasks.
- 5) Demonstrate cross cultural differences by using polite phrases in formal and informal discussions.

METHODS

A variety of learning techniques will be used in the class. These include pair work and small group discussions, assignments in the textbook and other materials provided by the teacher. In class, students will be expected to work, learn and speak. This is not a lecture class where the students sit quietly and listen. You will be active.

In addition to class work, each student will be required to read 2 graded readers during the semester; one book before the midterm exam and one before the final exam. The aim here is to read for enjoyment because it's a great way to learn the language.

TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

Touchstone student book Level 3 (2nd edition), Cambridge University Press. The workbook is not required. We will look at chapters 7 to 12. We won't complete every exercise in the textbook. Be sure to bring a notebook which can be used to build a list of new vocabulary.

GRADES AND ASSESSMENT

There will be a final exam, midterm exam and two quizzes.

attendance 10%

midterm 20% (speaking test)

final 20% (speaking test)

quizzes 20% (2 x 10%)

2 book reports 20% (2 x 10%, 1-2 pages each)

listening homework 5%

consultation 5%

OTHER THINGS

At the end of the semester, please do not ask me to change your grade because you have a special situation. You need a scholarship? You want to get a job? You want to go to graduate school? These are all good things. If you need a high score in this class, work hard, study hard and come to every class on time ready to learn. Unless I made a calculation error, I will not change your final score.

Each student will book a consultation with me by week 13. It will be an informal 5-10 minute chat. You can come with a partner if you wish (two people would be 10-20 minutes). The consultation will be 5% of total grade.

Every class you need 5 things: the textbook, a notebook, pencil-pens, a dictionary and a smartphone with power to complete some of the quizzes and listening homework. Your smartphone must be able to read English language websites. Students who regularly fail to bring all four learning tools to class may be marked absent.

Please come to class on time. Frequent lates can hurt your final grade.

This syllabus may change by the teacher depending on the nature of the class. I reserve the right to supplement this syllabus at any time during the semester with additional guidelines, rules of conduct, and changes to the course calendar to meet the needs of the class.