# City University of Hong Kong
# Course Syllabus

## offered by Department of English
## with effect from Semester A 2016 / 17

---

### Part I    Course Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| **Course Title:** | Professional and Corporate Discourse |
| **Course Code**: | EN4527 |
| **Course Duration:** | One semester |
| **Credit Units**: | 3 |
| **Level**: | B4 |
| **Proposed Area:** *(for GE courses only)* | ☐ Arts and Humanities<br>☐ Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations<br>☐ Science and Technology |
| **Medium of Instruction:** | English |
| **Medium of Assessment:** | English |
| **Prerequisites**: *(Course Code and Title)* | Nil |
| **Precursors**: *(Course Code and Title)* | Nil |
| **Equivalent Courses**: *(Course Code and Title)* | Nil |
| **Exclusive Courses**: *(Course Code and Title)* | Nil |

## Part II    Course Details

### 1.    Abstract
*(A 150-word description about the course)*

This course aims to equip students with analytical tools that can be applied to the examination of organizational communication, thereby enabling them to understand the nature of corporate and professional discourse, especially the contextual and cultural constraints operating on communication in these settings. Students will be provided with of a variety of discourse analytical frameworks to analyse and understand some of the discursive practices of different professions. Through application of these it is intended that they will develop an understanding of how corporate and professional discourses (both spoken and written) are constructed, interpreted and used in specific settings. In tandem with this they will examine the ways in which members of professional groups and corporations express their identities through their discourses. These objectives will be achieved by introducing students to key concepts and frameworks used in the field of professional and corporate discourse analysis. An understanding of the nature of text construction should serve as a useful tool that can be applied by students when writing in their own workplace contexts.

### 2.    Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
*(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)*

| No. | CILOs | Weighting* (if applicable) | Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *A1* | *A2* | *A3* |
| 1. | Analyse professional and corporate texts in terms of their purposes and key features, with a view to producing similar texts, applying course-acquired knowledge both for the analysis and production of texts | | √ | √ | √ |
| 2. | Account for the ways in which texts are constructed, applying concepts from the course | | √ | √ | |
| 3. | Explain important concepts relating to the construction of texts in workplace settings | | √ | | |

*\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.*    | 100% |

A1:    *Attitude*
    *Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*
A2:    *Ability*
    *Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*
A3:    *Accomplishments*
    *Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

## 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

*(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)*

| TLA | Brief Description | CILO No. | | | Hours/week (if applicable) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| 1. | Lectures and readings<br>- lecture notes and readings explain how different theories and analytical approaches are applied to workplace texts, and provide students with opportunities to recognise and make connections between theory and practice, and text, context and purpose<br>- these look at a range of text samples and explain their structure in relation to the various factors that influence how they are shaped<br>- lecture notes and readings introduce students to key concepts and theories relating to the study and analysis of professional and corporate communication | √ | √ | √ | |
| 2. | Text analysis and discussion<br>- application of analytical approaches enables students to understand how texts are constructed and how they can be broken down into constituent moves (functions)<br>- application of analytical approaches enables students to understand the contextual factors which influence the structure of discourse | √ | √ | | |
| 3. | Writing tasks<br>- these allow students to apply their understanding of how texts are constructed to the creation of their own texts | √ | | | |
| 4. | Roleplays<br>- in taking part in roleplays students are able to understand how various contextual factors and constraints | √ | | | |

| | influence the way in which spoken genres are constructed, and to make connections between context and practice | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

## 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

*(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)*

| Assessment Tasks/Activities | CILO No. | | | Weighting* | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | | |
| Continuous Assessment : 60% | | | | | |
| In-class text analysis assignment<br>- Will assess students' ability to analyse a text and break it down into its constituent moves (functions), through application of ideas acquired during the course | √ | | | 20% | Individual work |
| Text analysis project<br>- Will assess students' ability to identify a set of authentic texts with similar purposes and explain why they are structured in their particular way<br>- Will assess students' ability to analyse a text in a critically sound manner and break it down into its constituent moves (functions<br>- Will assess students' understanding of the main issues relating to the construction and analysis of workplace discourse | √ | √ | √ | 40% | Group work |
| Examination: 40% (duration: 2 hours) | | | | | |

| End of course examination | √ | √ | √ | 40% | Individual work |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| - The text analysis section will assess students' ability to analyse a text and break it down into its constituent moves (functions)<br>- It will also assess their understanding of why texts are structured in their particular way<br>- The multiple choice section of this will assess students' understanding of key issues and concepts<br>- The final section will assess their ability to explain key concepts relating to the construction of workplace discourse<br>- Overall the examination will assess students' ability to recognise and explain the relationships between real-world contexts and discursive practices | | | | | |

*The weightings should add up to 100%*      100%

**5. Assessment Rubrics**

*(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)*

**Assessment Task: In-class text analysis (20%)**

With reference to each item to be assessed, circle the marks in the appropriate column, add up the total and convert into a grade using the mark-grade conversion guidelines.

| Criterion | Excellent (A+, A, A-) | Good (B+, B, B-) | Adequate (C+, C, C-) | Marginal (D) | Failure (F) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Analysis | ♦ The text is comprehensively analyzed and explained<br>♦ All key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows full understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is soundly analyzed and explained<br>♦ Most key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows sound understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is adequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Sufficient key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows adequate understanding of purpose of text<br><br>. | ♦ The text is inadequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Insufficient key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows inadequate understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is barely analyzed/The analysis is not at all comprehensible<br>♦ Few key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows little understanding of purpose of text |

**Assessment Task: Text analysis project (40%)**

| Criterion | Excellent (A+, A, A-) | Good (B+, B, B-) | Adequate (C+, C, C-) | Marginal (D) | Failure (F) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Choice of text | ♦ Shows full understanding of purpose of texts | ♦ Shows sound understanding of purpose of texts | ♦ Shows adequate understanding of purpose of texts | ♦ Shows inadequate understanding of purpose of texts | ♦ Shows little understanding of purpose of texts |
| Analysis | ♦ The texts are comprehensively analyzed and explained<br>♦ All key features of the texts are identified | ♦ The texts are soundly analyzed and explained<br>♦ Most key features of the texts are identified | ♦ The texts are adequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Sufficient key features of the texts are identified | ♦ The texts are inadequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Insufficient key features of the texts are identified | ♦ The texts are barely analyzed/The analysis is not at all comprehensible<br>♦ Few key features of the texts are identified |
| Explanation of text construction | ♦ Shows full understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides comprehensive explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows sound understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides sound explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows adequate understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides sufficient explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows inadequate understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides inadequate comprehensive explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows little understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides little explanation of relationship between text and context |

**Assessment form: End of course examination (40%)**

With reference to each item to be assessed, circle the marks in the appropriate column, add up the total and convert into a grade using the mark-grade conversion guidelines.

| Items to be assessed | Excellent (A+, A, A-) | Good (B+, B, B-) | Adequate (C+, C, C-) | Marginal (D) | Failure (F) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Understanding of key concepts | ♦ Shows full understanding of main concepts and their application<br>♦ All relevant information is included in explanation of concepts | ♦ Shows sound understanding of main concepts and their application<br>♦ Most relevant information is included in explanation of concepts | ♦ Shows adequate understanding of main concepts and their application<br>♦ Sufficient information is included in explanation of concepts | ♦ Shows inadequate understanding of main concepts and their application<br>♦ Insufficient information is included in explanation of concepts | ♦ Shows little understanding of main concepts and their application<br>♦ Very limited information is included in explanation of concepts |
| Analysis | ♦ The text is comprehensively analyzed and explained<br>♦ All key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows full understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is soundly analyzed and explained<br>♦ Most key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows sound understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is adequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Sufficient key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows adequate understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is inadequately analyzed and explained<br>♦ Insufficient key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows inadequate understanding of purpose of text | ♦ The text is barely analyzed/The analysis is not at all comprehensible<br>♦ Few key features of text are identified<br>♦ Shows little understanding of purpose of tex |

| Explanation of text construction | ♦ Shows full understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides comprehensive explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows sound understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides sound explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows adequate understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides sufficient explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows inadequate understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides inadequate comprehensive explanation of relationship between text and context | ♦ Shows little understanding of factors affecting text structure<br>♦ Provides little explanation of relationship between text and context |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**Part III   Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. **Keyword Syllabus**
   *(An indication of the key topics of the course.)*

   workplace communication
   written communication
   spoken communication
   professional discourse
   discourse analysis
   genre analysis
   genre theory
   genre sets & systems of genres
   intertextuality
   communities of practice
   construction of discourse
   social constructionism
   cultural influences
   communication and identity
   power and politeness
   face systems
   collaborative writing

2. **Reading List**

2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
   *(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)*

| 1. | Bhatia, V. (1993). *Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings*. New York: Longman |
|----|----|
| 2. | Bremner, S. (2006). Power, politeness and activity systems: Written requests and multiple audiences in an institutional setting. *Written Communication, 23*(4), 397-423. |
| 3. | Bremner, S. (2008). Intertextuality and business communication textbooks: Why students need more textual support. *English for Specific Purposes, 27*(3), 306-321. |
| 4. | Flowerdew, J. (1993). An educational, or process, approach to the teaching of professional genres. *ELT Journal, Vol. 47*(4), 305-316. |

2.2 **Additional Readings**
   *(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)*

| 1. | Bargiela-Chiappini, F., & Nickerson, C. (Eds.) (1999). *Writing Business: Genres, media and language*. London: Longman. |
|----|----|
| 2. | Bhatia, V. (2004). *Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view*. London: Continuum. |
| 3. | Devitt, A. (1991). Intertextuality in tax accounting: Generic, referential, and functional. In C. Bazerman & J. Paradis (Eds.), *Textual dynamics of the professions: Historical and contemporary studies of writing in professional communities* (pp. 336-357). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. |
| 4. | Flowerdew, J., & Wan, A. (2006). Genre analysis of tax computation letters: how and why tax accountants write the way they do. *English for Specific Purposes, 25(2)*, 133-153. |

| 5. | Freedman, A., & Adam, C. (1996). Learning to write professionally: "Situated learning "and the transition from university to professional discourse. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 10*(4), 395-427. |
|---|---|
| 6. | Gollin, S. (1999). 'Why? I thought we'd talked about it before': Collaborative writing in a professional workplace setting. In C. Candlin & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Writing: Texts, processes and practices* (pp. 267-290). London: Longman. |
| 7. | Kong, K. (1998). Are simple business requests really simple? A comparison of Chinese and English business request letters. *Text 18*(1), 103-141. |
| 8. | Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2002). The fly's perspective: Discourse in the daily routine of a business manager. *English for Specific Purposes, 21*, 211-231. |
| 9. | Pan, Y., Scollon, S., & Scollon, R. (2002). *Professional Communication in International Settings.* Oxford: Blackwell. |
| 10. | Yeung, L. (1997). Polite requests in English and Chinese business correspondence in Hong Kong. *Journal of Pragmatics 27*, 505-522. |