Essay Writing 1.

BBLAN02300 *Angol Esszéírás 1. Practical course for part-time students*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

**Instructor**: Balogh Beatrix

**Time and place**: Three longer class sessions: **February 13, April 17, May 15** **(Saturdays) 13.15-17.15**

Venue: Sop 108/online

**Availability**: via email: Balogh.beatrix@btk.ppke.hu

**Purpose:** to help students develop the technical skills of essay writing with a special emphasis on argumentative essays. By the end of the course students will be familiar with the basic stages of the writing process (brainstorming, pre-writing, drafting, revising, etc.) and the structural features of an argumentative essay (thesis statement, introduction-body-conclusion, topic sentence, paragraph structure etc.), along with a writing tool kit (rhetoric patterns, linking words, etc.) – all of which will enable them to compose argumentative essays successfully.

**Method/description:**

**In class:** We are going to discuss the key differences between formal/informal essay, Hungarian/English argument development, the key components of argumentative essays, structural and language requirements. We will analyze parts of essays, scrutinize student papers and develop self-reflection through reviewing and editing peer papers. We will craft outlines, introductions, thesis statements, topic sentences, and conclusions. We will also complete practical interactive tasks from brainstorming, streamlining pros&cons, re-arranging topic sentences to fit alternative logic, and signposting exercises in pairs and groups. We will attend the requirements of formal academic writing (expressing opinion, word choices, structures, vague language, colloquialism, referring back and forth, linking words, and other challenging language issues) as well as rhetoric devices that are essential to compelling arguments. See below the proposed schedule.

We will begin the term online and thus our class discussions are moved to online platforms. We will try and convene in MS Teams on March 13 and discuss the basics Session 2 of the same day will take place via FB discussion forum (From brainstorming to outlines) and in pair works outside the classroom. April 17 session will also most likely be arranged similarly.

**At home:** you will 1, select a topic of your choice suitable for argumentative essay (begin with ’whether’ and continue with the topic of controversy. Eg. ’whether voting age should be lowered’. If lacking an exciting topic, you may consult “Debate Topics” ProCon.org. <https://www.procon.org/debate-topics.php>, or Melissa Kelly. “High School Debate Topics” ThoughtCo. January 24, 2020. <https://www.thoughtco.com/debate-topics-for-high-school-8252>; and proceed with selecting a good debate topic weighing in interest, argument potential, and availability of data (so that you can prove your points), and formulate an argumentative statement eg “The voting age should be lowered to 16”, and write an introductory paragraph (why is this a topics of interest, what are the main arguments on the two side (just one or two popularly cited reasons), and your suggestion/claim and the reasons why this claim/statement is valid) for the first seminar session **(February 13).**

Do some research and locate proofs for the validity of this claim; and write the entire paper for the second occasion **(April 17, but please submit on April 15)**. Then read the papers assigned to you and provide feedback (April 25 via email). Finally, revise (rewrite) your own paper in line with critical comments and feedback from peers (**May 1 submitted via email).**

**Requirements and Evaluation**: This is a practical and practice-oriented course that requires your in-class input as well as writing and reviewing (editing/commentary) work at home. Each student selects a ‘debate’ topic that they will develop into a 350-word full blown essay during the semester. Apart from working on your own paper you will also be required to review your peers’ passages and drafts providing constructive comments on how to improve the structure, development, and language of the paper. Your course grade will include the following components:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task/work type** | **Scores (relative weight)** | | **Components** |
| Co-authored in-class outline  Your home paper’s 1st draft and revised (final) copy | in-class writing 10 pts  1st draft of home essay 30 points, revision 20 points | Completing a cca 350-word essay on a chosen topic in line with the requirements of academic writing/argumentative essays; Revising the copy in line with the suggestions and critical comments received from peers | |
| Peer Review | (2x10) 20 points | Once the first drafts are submitted each student is required to read two papers written by their class-mates and offer constructive criticism and editing tips. | |
| In-class activity | 20 points – Attendance and input in discussion (Teams and FB, see below) | Active and meaningful participation in group tasks (brainstorming, re-restructuring; prompt feedback, etc); completion of in-class short writing tasks (Crafting intro; Writing topic sentences and linking; etc) | |

Schedule:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **At home** | **In class/Discussion forum** |
| February 13 | Topic/title of your home essay | Session I. Conference call in Teams, the basics of the English essay. Session II. Brainstorming about given topic. Crafting claims and an intro in pairs. Drafting an outline in pairs. Review and discussion in FB group.  Session III. Basic structure for descriptive and argumentative papers  Outline for body paragraphs; Stops on the road: the topic sentence. Organizing supporting evidence.  Academic language and style. |
| April 17 | First Draft of your home essay—submit copy in word format 2 days prior.  Peer-review of 2 essays via email April 25  Submit revised copy by May 1 | Cohesion and coherence. Linking ideas.  Transitions: signposting for your reader on the road.  Punctuations: stops, green lights, slow-downs, and round-abouts, and dead-ends.  Revisit mechanics: spelling, punctuation, word-choice  Syntax problems and temporal shifts—your poor reader gets confused  Degrees of plagiarism.  Layout and format issues—make it easy on your reader. |
| May 15 | -- | Individual consultations (conference calls if still online) |

Individual essays should be submitted in word format (A4, 12 pt Times New Roman, title in center position, paragraphs indented and text justified, 1.5 line spacing but no line spacing between paragraphs, author’s name and neptun code in top right corner, full essays are cca 300-350 words/1 page and organized into five paragraphs. Sources/references are not required in Essay 1 but if your argument relies on data or specific claims, indication of source is advised. Organization, format, layout, and specific referencing issues will also be discussed in class.