

## EFL 2.0 and Intercultural Competence

Mondays 14:30 – 18.30 Lab B in Maldura  
Wednesdays 10.30-12.30 Classroom I in Maldura

The two class meetings will more or less be organized with the following aims:

Monday: Focus on Technology and Written Skills

Wednesday: Focus on Oral Skills

In-class meetings 1<sup>st</sup> semester:

Mondays: 8/10, 15/10, 29/10, 5/11, 12/11, 19/11, 26/11, 3/12, 10/12

Wednesdays: 10/10, 17/10, 31/10, 7/11, 14/11, 21/11, 5/12, 12/12

N.B. The week of 22/10 I will be away for work but you will have online tasks to complete.

Any changes to the calendar will be notified on the course blog.

Credits: 3

Duration: 10 weeks in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, 10 weeks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

Teacher: Sarah Guth

### Course Description

This is an advanced English as a Foreign Language course that aims to improve students' English language skills (all 4) through the use of Web 2.0 tools and social software in order to improve information and participation literacy skills as well. 'Social software' is a term used to speak about a new generation of web-based tools that facilitate human expression, communication, and collaboration. This course will use several different types of social software to help students develop their technological and collaboration skills while at the same time improving their English. The tools we will be using are weblogs (online journals), wikis (systems for collective authoring), distributed classification systems such as del.icio.us, and the use of RSS feeds to distribute information not to mention other fun tools involving video, image, slide and music sharing.

A secondary aim of the course is to develop students' intercultural competence. Culture, both one's own and 'the other', will be the overriding theme of the entire course. Students will be given the opportunity to develop this skill through reading, reflection, writing, speaking, listening, watching and, hopefully, doing exchanges with students in the United States.

### Audience

Students who choose to attend this course are expected to participate actively and, in the end, form part of a dynamic research community. This course is intended for students of the *laurea specialistica* who are able to express themselves well in English, able to autonomously take control over their own learning process as well as work in groups, and who are motivated and curious.

### Course Objectives

1. Students will improve their written fluency in English and their reflective and critical thinking skills by publishing their thoughts, opinions and reactions on a course blog and on a personal blog.
2. Students will improve their written accuracy by contributing to a wiki.
3. Students will improve their spoken fluency and accuracy in English through classroom lessons and exchanges with students in the United States.
4. Students will improve their reading and listening skills by learning how to access effective online resources.
5. Students will develop their practical research skills using online information networks as they look for, find and share online resources.
6. Students will develop competency in the use of blogs, wikis, social bookmarking and web syndication (rss feeds).
7. Students will develop their intercultural competency through reading, reflection, writing and exchanges with students in the United States.

## Required Books and Materials

All of our reading materials will be by online resources made available by the instructor on the course blog or provided by the students themselves as a result of their online searches.

## Course Environments

*Course Blog:* Here you will receive all communications regarding assignments (e-tivities), changes in the program, etc. You will complete some e-tivities here.

*Personal Blogs:* All students will be required to develop and maintain a personal blog. You will complete other e-tivities here. Your blog will be a record of your own personal learning during the course.

*Project Wiki:* In the second part of the semester, the class as a whole will contribute to a public wiki.

*Distributed Research Database (and RSS feed):* This database, maintained in [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us), is where all the online research will be collected and shared. As you surf the web in search of resources for learning English and information about the topics we discuss in class and in the e-tivities, you will bookmark items using the tag `bloggingenglish`. Even if you decide an item is of little interest to you, you should bookmark it if you think it might be of interest to someone else in the class. The aggregated collection of items will be available to the whole class by subscribing to the RSS feed generated by [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us). You will select specific items from this database for your individual analysis, which you will post on your individual blogs (as part of specific e-tivities).

## Grading

This course is graded in continuous assessment, i.e. there will be no final exam but rather you will be graded on what you produce during the course.

1. *Distributed Research* (links posted to [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us)): 10%. Items can be useful online resources for your English language learning (grammar sites, sites with audio and video, etc.), journal and news articles related to our topics, opinion pieces, genre studies, etc. You will post resources that may be of interest to you or others in the course ('sharing' is the key word!).
2. *Individual Analysis*: 40%. You will not be graded on the accuracy of your grammar but rather on the contents (how much and how well you reflect on the topic of the e-tivity) of your posts to your individual blogs and to the course blog when that was requested as part of an e-tivity.
3. *Final project*: 25%. At some point in the course you will be expected to write a final paper and do a final presentation. You will choose the topic for your paper and presentation. Your grade will be divided into 75% for linguistic accuracy (grammar, cohesion, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) and 25% for contents.
4. *Comments to classmates' posts*: 10%. The last part of each e-tivity involves responding to your colleagues. You will also be expected to periodically visit the personal blogs of your classmates and respond. I will consider both the number of comments (i.e. if you responded during each e-tivity) as well as the quality of your comments. Your comments to someone's blog post should provoke further reflection on the part of the blogger, not just show agreement.
5. *Editing the Wiki*: 15%. This is a collective grade, i.e. I will grade the final wiki contributions as a whole and give this grade to everyone in the class. As we will correct the language used on the wiki during class I will also take into consideration the linguistic accuracy of the contents in the final wiki.

## **Important information**

Each week an e-tivity to complete online will be posted to the course blog (<http://bloggingenglish1.blogspot.com/>). These e-tivities include both a task (to be done individually or in groups) and a response (involving reading and commenting to your peers). You will be graded on both aspects (see previous section). You must respect the deadlines. We will at least start each e-tivity during class on Mondays. If you cannot come to class on Monday, you are required to visit this blog and complete the e-tivity on your own. You will also be assigned weekly tasks to prepare for our speaking classes on Wednesdays. You will often only have Monday evening, Tuesday and Wednesday morning to do these tasks so make sure now that you will have time.

The course blog is our place for communication. I am notified any time comments are added so should you have questions, please post them to the blog. Quite often you will find others have the same questions you have and rather than providing the same answer several times, it will be easier for me to do it once on the blog.

Finally, as I'm sure you've come to understand in these years at University, there are simply too many of you for me to follow individually. I will give detailed feedback to different groups each week but will not be able to read and interact with everything you write. Therefore, you must learn to be autonomous and to count on each other. You will be assigned to groups from the beginning of the course. Within your groups you will be asked to do peer correction, peer commenting and collaborative work. You will be expected to develop your ability to identify both language and content problems in your peers' work and to learn how to communicate feedback in a positive, constructive way. At the same time, you will be expected to be mature enough to accept feedback from your peers.

I do not have office hours at Lingue, though I do at Engineering on Tuesdays from 14 to 15. Should you have any problems, do not hesitate to contact me via email ([sarah.guth@unipd.it](mailto:sarah.guth@unipd.it)).