

# Descriptions of Target Student Abilities: Oral Communication Courses

## English for Foreign Students Program Objectives, 2017

English for Foreign Students (EFS) offers specialized courses to international graduate students in English as a second language (ESL). The EFS oral communication sequence focuses on developing interpersonal communication within academic settings. EFSLANG 690A (Interacting in English) focuses on common social and transactional discourse with an introduction to discussion skills. EFSLANG 690B (Academic Discussion) develops interactional and spontaneous presentational skills in small groups. EFSLANG 690C (Advanced Interacting in English) promotes the development of oral proficiency at the ACTFL advanced and superior levels with particular attention to rich description, narration and argumentation. Students should complete any required lower-level course (per the EFS Placement Exam) before enrolling in a higher-level one.

| ORAL COMMUNICATION COURSES   | EFSLANG 690A<br>(Interacting in English)   | EFSLANG 690B<br>(Academic Discussion)   | EFSLANG 690C<br>(Advanced Interacting In English)   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>These courses focus on academic forms of interpersonal communication with increasing attention to developing spontaneous presentational language as the sequence advances.</p> <p><b>INTERPERSONAL ABILITIES</b></p> <p>All courses involve interpersonal interaction across a range of discourse types from casual speech, small talk, and transactional talk to formal discussion and debate.</p> | <p>This course focuses primarily on interactions with individuals or within small groups in the context of course work and research at the university, along with social and transactional communication in surrounding community settings.</p> <p>Students develop their ability to communicate and respond to opinions, preferences, and needs in social and transactional situations both within and outside the classroom. They interact through role plays, simulations, and discussions.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate effectively while interacting in both formal and informal settings, for example,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Use accepted forms of address.</li> <li>◦ Conduct common transactions in person and on the phone.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use English more confidently in spontaneous interactions, i.e.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Use and recognize conversational gambits.</li> <li>◦ Develop strategies for handling unexpected situations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>This course focuses on effective communication in small group settings within the academic context, such as class discussions, research lab meetings, and collaborative class projects.</p> <p>Students develop their abilities to present information and supported opinion, take and yield the floor in culturally appropriate ways, and connect their positions to others' in collaborative discourse.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate with increasing effectiveness in group discussions in academic courses, seminars, and group project settings, i.e.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Get the floor.</li> <li>◦ Yield the floor.</li> <li>◦ Use hedges and intensifiers.</li> <li>◦ Return to a previous topic.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>This course focuses on the production of longer, more accurate, and more linguistically elaborate spontaneous speech within both social and academic settings, emphasizing description, narration, and argumentation.</p> <p>Students work on developing facility and accuracy in extended descriptions and narratives while responding rapidly and appropriately to others' speech. They also provide richer persuasive support for their positions, organized around the norms of academic discourse.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate effectively in group discussions in academic courses, seminars, and group project settings.</li> <li>• Describe objects, places, and processes vividly.</li> <li>• Tell relevant stories in a variety of contexts, such as interviews, professional encounters, etc.</li> <li>• Support their positions coherently in extended discourse.</li> </ul> |

# Descriptions of Target Student Abilities: Oral Communication Courses

## English for Foreign Students Program Objectives, 2017

| ORAL COMMUNICATION COURSES  | EFSLANG 690A<br>(Interacting in English)  | EFSLANG 690B<br>(Academic Discussion)  | EFSLANG 690C<br>(Advanced Interacting In English)   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>INTERPRETIVE ABILITIES</b></p> <p>Prior to presenting positions in paired and small group discussions, students read or listen to material and analyze it critically in order to form opinions. They also learn to interpret the content and arguments provided orally by other participants.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe their academic work.</li> <li>• Narrate past events.</li> <li>• Use appropriate functional language to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Give and receive compliments.</li> <li>◦ Express likes and dislikes.</li> <li>◦ Accept and reject invitations.</li> <li>◦ Give and ask for advice.</li> <li>◦ Ask for assistance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ask questions and contribute ideas and opinions in social settings, e.g.,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Use questions for various functions: suggesting, clarifying, etc.</li> <li>◦ Use forms for hedging and intensifying.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Show improvement in linguistic elements affecting communication, such as pronunciation, grammar, and pragmatics.</li> </ul> <p>Students interpret texts for discussion collaboratively with classmates and with assistance from the instructor. They learn the fundamentals of active listening to assist in the interpretive process.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use effective functional language in small group settings to e.g.,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Persuade.</li> <li>◦ Provide evidence to support one’s own or another’s position.</li> <li>◦ Agree and disagree.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use cohesive devices to link their contribution to that of others.</li> <li>• Lead a group discussion, including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Introduce a topic.</li> <li>◦ Elicit contributions.</li> <li>◦ Maintain group focus.</li> <li>◦ Summarize results/ consensus.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Demonstrate active listening by means of recasting, interjecting, asking for clarification, etc.</li> <li>• Use a range of question types to engage discussion participants, e.g. rhetorical questions, requests for clarification or examples, tag questions, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Students extend their ability to interpret oral and written texts for discussion in order to develop and support opinions. They also develop their ability to interpret other participants’ positions in order to offer agreement, disagreement, or expansion.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a variety of context-specific negotiating strategies to achieve objectives</li> <li>• Use strategies such as repetition, transitions, and other forms of meta-discourse to maintain cohesion.</li> <li>• Express empathy and solidarity.</li> <li>• Use transitions, repetition, and other forms of meta-discourse to maintain cohesion and coherence.</li> <li>• Ask a wide range of questions to effectively elicit targeted responses.</li> </ul> <p>Students further extend their ability to interpret oral and written texts for discussion in order to develop and support opinions.</p> |

# Descriptions of Target Student Abilities: Oral Communication Courses

## English for Foreign Students Program Objectives, 2017

| ORAL COMMUNICATION COURSES  | EFSLANG 690A<br>(Interacting in English)  | EFSLANG 690B<br>(Academic Discussion)   | EFSLANG 690C<br>(Advanced Interacting In English)   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>PRESENTATIONAL ABILITIES</b></p> <p>Students prepare material to present as an opening to further discussion. They also use spontaneous presentational language in reaction to content and arguments provided by other discussants.</p> | <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze examples of interactive discourse for language elements.</li> <li>Analyze examples of interactive discourse for cultural similarities and differences.</li> <li>Distinguish literal from intended meaning in common interactions (e.g., making requests, offering advice, etc.).</li> </ul> <p>Students use presentational language occasionally in the context of conversational interactions.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insert short segments of prepared and rehearsed material into recurrent situations such as self-introductions.</li> <li>Begin using spontaneous presentational language in some group discussions.</li> </ul> | <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extract information from participants' contributions to discussions.</li> <li>Recognize the discourse functions of words and phrases typically used by speakers in academic discussions.</li> <li>Recognize the meaning of common academic hedges and intensifiers.</li> </ul> <p>Students use prepared presentational material in introducing group projects and in discussion leading. They expand their use of spontaneous presentational language in group work.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform short presentations to introduce group projects or positions for an ensuing discussion.</li> <li>Introduce a discussion topic effectively through a prepared presentation.</li> <li>Use spontaneous presentational language to summarize others' contributions during and at the end of a discussion.</li> </ul> | <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze recorded texts to identify discourse markers, patterns and strategies used by accomplished speakers.</li> <li>Critically interpret other participants' positions in order to offer agreement, disagreement, or expansion.</li> <li>Identify and interpret communicative functions of various extra-linguistic features, such as voice tone, gesture, and facial expression.</li> </ul> <p>Students produce longer conversational turns in interactions that often have the character of monologues or spontaneous presentations.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a range of presentational discourse markers, patterns and strategies in spontaneous speech.</li> <li>Strategically incorporate sophisticated, previously prepared and practiced oral texts into longer, unrehearsed discourse.</li> <li>Appropriately incorporate communicative functions of various extra-linguistic features, such as voice tone, gesture, and facial expression.</li> </ul> |