

## Foundations of Academic Literacy: FAL X99

### Students' information: Fall 2016

Welcome to the Foundations of Academic Literacy course (FAL X99).

The Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL X99) is offered by the Faculty of Education. FAL X99 has been carefully designed to meet your needs as a learner, to prepare you for your studies at SFU, and specifically to help you succeed in the Writing-Intensive (W) courses that you will take as part of your studies.

Please read the following sections to familiarize yourself with the course.

Steve Marshall, FAL X99 Course Supervisor  
Faculty of Education, SFU

#### 1. AIMS

The course aims to provide students with a variety of opportunities to practise, develop, improve, and apply in context, different forms of academic literacy (reading, writing, and oral communication).

#### 2. TEACHING

The course is designed around the 4 units of study set out in the syllabus. A variety of presentation methods will be used, including free writing activities. The aim of these activities is to give you an opportunity to gain confidence and learn through writing, without the pressure of having the written work assessed. When your instructor reads and marks free writing or other FAL writing activities, the emphasis will be on feedback that will help you to develop your academic literacy skills.

#### 3. ASSESSMENT & ADDITIVE CREDIT

FAL X99 is for “additive credit.” This means that you take the course in addition to the normal 120 credits needed to graduate from SFU. The grade that you get for FAL X99 counts toward your overall GPA/CGPA.

In order to obtain FAL credit and to go on to take a W (Writing Intensive) course, students are required to pass the course overall with a minimum C grade.

All FAL X99 grading follows SFU’s “Standard Grade System” letter/numerical equivalents below:

<b>SFU STANDARD GRADE SYSTEM</b> (SFU Grading Systems and Policies: <a href="https://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2016/spring/fees-and-regulations/admission/grading-systems-and-policies.html#standard-grade">https://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2016/spring/fees-and-regulations/admission/grading-systems-and-policies.html#standard-grade</a> )											
Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
Definition	Excellent			Good			Satisfactory		Marginal		Fail
Numerical Equivalent	4.33	4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.00	0.00

### The assessment in FAL X99 are as follows:

1. Assessed In-class Writing 1: Summary (30%)
2. Assessed In-class Writing 2: Critique (30%)
3. Assessed In-Class Writing 3: Essay (30%)
4. Active Learning (10%) - Consisting of the following:
  - Improvement: Updating and adding research to Assessed In-Class Writing, APA citation style
  - Engagement: Attendance, punctuality, engagement in class, giving helpful peer feedback, homework completion, quizzes (as applicable)

***\*NB: All students are encouraged to review university policies pertaining to academic integrity available on SFU's Policies and Procedures website (see "Code of Academic Integrity and Good Conduct", SFU Policy Number S10.01 here: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html>). Please note: All drafts and revisions produced in FAL X99 will also be subject to SFU's Academic Integrity Requirements.***

### 4. ATTENDANCE

100% attendance is expected in this course. A class register is taken each class, marking absences and late attendance. If you are going to be late or absent due to unavoidable circumstances, **you must inform your instructor by telephone or email before the class.** If you have a regular commitment where you will be required to be off campus or away, make sure that your FAL class is not on this day as this absence will impact your grades for the course. If you are absent or late for any classes without a valid reason, this will affect your active learning score. If you are absent for more than 5 classes (20%) without a valid reason, you will not obtain a FAL credit for the course.

Before each Assessed In-class Writing Assignment, you will write a practice version and do peer review. As part of this writing process, you are required to attend each class and participate actively in peer-review. Active participation in the peer review process involves providing feedback to your peers on their assignment drafts as well as you receiving and responding to feedback provided to you by your peers. **Failure to attend or participate actively in the peer review process of any given writing assignment will affect your grades.**

If you miss an Assessed In-class Writing Assignment without a justifiable/documented reason, you will receive an N ("incomplete") grade for that assignment and, therefore, an N grade (which is numerically equivalent to an F grade) for the FAL X99 course overall.

### 5. REQUIRED TEXTS

Marshall, S. (2012). *Academic writing: Making the transition*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Pearson Education.

Since publication of the textbook, a total of \$4,000 from the proceeds of sales of the FAL X99 textbook has been donated to "Friends of Simon." You can read more about this award-winning SFU Faculty of Education initiative here: <https://www.sfu.ca/education/fostutor.html>

## 6. EXPECTATIONS & ACTIVE LEARNING

Active learning involves engaging with material being taught, with your instructor, and with fellow students in an active, respectful, and inclusive way. The FAL X99 classroom is made up of learners who come from a wide range of backgrounds and who study many different subjects. Please be respectful of all of your fellow students. Please do not use cell phones, laptop computers, or other devices during class, unless you are using them for learning purposes. Using a device for social networking, texting, etc., during class will have a negative effect on your active learning grade.

## 7. STUDENT LEARNING COMMONS WORKSHOPS

The Student Learning Commons (<http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc>) offers workshops that will help you to consolidate what you learn in FAL X99. You can also meet a peer educator at the Student Learning Commons for one-to-one advice on your learning. You are encouraged to make use of this facility.

## 8. GETTING HELP

If you need any additional help during the FAL X99 course, there are a number of people who can help.

- Questions about learning: you should ask your instructor
- Administrative issues: you should contact Rob Manery, the Course Coordinator (email: [rmanery@sfu.ca](mailto:rmanery@sfu.ca))
- Any other questions: you may also contact Steve Marshall, the Course Supervisor (email: [stevem@sfu.ca](mailto:stevem@sfu.ca))

## 9. FAL X99 SYLLABUS & ASSESSMENT

The following syllabus is an explanation of the 4 units of study that you will follow. Please note that your instructor may change the activities or the order of activities.

### ***UNIT 1: NARRATIVE WRITING***

**In this unit, students will study the following:**

- ✓ Write about life experience
- ✓ Develop personal & narrative voice
- ✓ Sentence structure

### **Class 1: Narrative writing 1 – My story**

- Course introduction
- A major event in my life

### **Class 2: Sentence structure 1**

- Independent and dependent clauses
- Complex and compound sentences

## **UNIT 2: READING AND SUMMARIZING**

**In this unit, students will study the following:**

- ✓ Audience, genre, and context
- ✓ Active and critical reading: Why they are important
- ✓ Assessing reliable sources
- ✓ Reading around the text
- ✓ Skimming and scanning
- ✓ Annotating text
- ✓ Locating different voices and opinions as you read
- ✓ Reading between the lines: Inference
- ✓ Focusing on what is not said
- ✓ Common features of summary writing
- ✓ Paraphrasing and avoiding patchwriting
- ✓ Searching for sources
- ✓ In-Class Assessed Assignment 1: Summary

### **Class 3: Active and critical reading 1**

- Audience, genre, and context
- Active and critical reading: Why they are important
- Assessing reliable sources
- Reading around the text
- Skimming and scanning

### **Class 4: Active and critical reading 2**

- Annotating text
- Locating different voices and opinions as you read
- Reading between the lines: Inference
- Focusing on what is not said

### **Class 5: Writing about others' ideas**

- Plagiarism
- Avoiding patchwriting
- Paraphrasing strategies
- Language of attribution & reporting verbs
- APA citation style

### **Class 6: Writing summaries**

- Common features of summary writing
- Writing a practice summary

### **Class 7: Peer review and text analysis**

- Peer review of complete draft of the practice summary
- Analysis of effective summary writing

### **Class 8: Improving style in academic writing**

- Using formal verbs
- Using the personal 'I'
- Personal and impersonal writing
- Common examples of weak style

**Class 9: Assessed In-Class Writing 1: Summary (30%)**

- Write an assessed summary in class

***UNIT 3: THINKING AND WRITING CRITICALLY***

**In this unit, students will study the following:**

- ✓ Understanding critical thinking
- ✓ Stating arguments
- ✓ Avoiding logical fallacies
- ✓ Exploring critical thinking through writing
- ✓ Common features of a critique
- ✓ Improving style in academic writing
- ✓ Incorporating sources
- ✓ Using reporting verbs
- ✓ In-Class Assessed Assignment 2: Critique

**Class 10: Thinking critically 1**

- Understanding critical thinking
- Stating your arguments

**Class 11: Thinking critically 2**

- Avoiding logical fallacies
- Exploring critical thinking through writing

**Class 12: Writing a critique**

- Review features of critiques
- Analyzing texts, summarizing, critiquing, arguing
- Starting the process

**Class 13: Peer review and text analysis**

- Peer review of complete draft of the practice critique
- Analysis of effective critique

**Class 14: Library visit**

- Visit SFU library
- Finding materials
- Assessing reliability of sources

**Class 15: Incorporating sources: review**

- Reporting verbs
- Attribution
- APA citation style

**Class 16: Assessed In-Class Writing 2: Critique (30%)**

- Write an assessed critique in class

## ***UNIT 4: ESSAYS AND RESEARCH***

**In this unit, students will study the following:**

- ✓ Introductions and conclusions
- ✓ Paragraphs
- ✓ Punctuation
- ✓ Common aspects of research
- ✓ In-Class Assessed Assignment 1: Essay

### **Class 17: Introductions and Conclusions**

- Common features of introductions & conclusions
- Choose essay type for practice essay

### **Class 18: Paragraphs 1**

- Topic sentences
- Paragraph coherence
- Keeping to one topic

### **Class 19: Paragraphs 2**

- Supporting your ideas
- Concluding sentences
- Write the main body paragraphs and conclusion

### **Class 20: Punctuation**

- Punctuation: commas and semi-colons

### **Class 21: Writing Workshop 1: Adding Research**

- Peer review of practice essay
- Searching for sources
- APA citation and reference style

### **Class 22: Accuracy and Style**

- Review sentence structure accuracy and style

### **Class 23: Accuracy and Style**

- Review sentence structure accuracy and style

### **Class 24: In-Class Assessment 3: Essay (30%)**

- Write an essay in class choosing one of four essay types

### **Class 25: Writing workshop: Adding research**

- Review APA, citation phrases, reporting verbs
- Add research to updated essay

### **Class 26: Final class – course review**

**Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL X99)**  
Assessed In-class Writing 1: Summary (30%)

**TASK**

You are required to write a 200-word in-class summary (in 90 minutes) of an article selected by your instructor for 30% of your grade for FAL X99. You should not go 10% over or under of the word limit.

Your summary should include the main information/ideas of the article, represented accurately.

**Suggested method**

Your introductory sentence should name the article, author, publisher, date of publication, and general topic – as appropriate. This should be followed by a general statement that sums up the article. Thereafter, you should write short paragraphs of an appropriate length organized around the main information/ideas of the article. Remember to include clear language of attribution to make it clear to the reader who states or thinks what.

**You should not include your own personal opinion in this summary.**

The grade for the *Assessed In-class Writing 1: Summary* will be final and marked according to the following criteria:

<b>Criteria for In-class Writing 1: Assessed Summary (30%)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. Content and organization (40%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of information/ideas</li> <li>• Accurate and clear representation of ideas</li> <li>• Organization (logical ordering of ideas, overall coherence and cohesion)</li> </ul>		
2. Features of the summary (20%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate style</li> <li>• Clear attribution</li> <li>• Describing not arguing</li> <li>• Word limit</li> </ul>		
3. Language (40%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accuracy and range of vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation</li> <li>• Adequate &amp; appropriate paraphrasing and quotation</li> </ul>		
<b>OVERALL LETTER GRADE:</b>		

## Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL X99)

### Assessed In-class Writing 2: Critique (30%)

#### TASK

For the In-Class Assessed Critique, you are required to write a minimum of 300 words (in 90 minutes) and engage critically as a writer with ideas presented in an article selected by your instructor.

#### Suggested method

Read and annotate the article, highlighting ideas that are main ideas, and those that you agree and disagree with. Make a note of whom the main ideas and arguments belong to. Begin by summarizing the article, author, publisher, date of publication, and general topic – as appropriate. Then choose a coherent structure for the paragraphs. Present the key ideas/arguments and state whether you agree with them and why. Back up your arguments with ideas from the text and your own personal life experience. Remember to use clear language of attribution so that your reader knows which ideas belong to whom. You do not need to write APA in-text citations or a reference list for this assignment. Conclude with one or two sentences.

The grade for the *Assessed In-class Writing 2: Critique* will be final and marked according to the following criteria:

<b>Criteria for In-class Writing 2: Assessed Critique (30%)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. Selection and organization of ideas (30%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selection of information/ideas</li><li>• Organization (logical ordering of ideas, overall coherence and cohesion)</li></ul>		
2. Content and critical engagement (30%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accurate and clear representation of ideas from the article</li><li>• Ability to look at issues from various angles</li><li>• Quality of critique, including support for arguments and opinions</li></ul>		
3. Language (40%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accuracy and range of vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation; overall style</li><li>• Adequate &amp; appropriate paraphrasing and quotation</li></ul>		
<b>OVERALL LETTER GRADE:</b>		



**Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL X99)**  
**Assessed In-class Writing 3: Essay (30%)**

**TASK**

For the Assessed In-Class Writing 3: Essay, you are required to write an essay of 400-500 words in 1 hour: 40 minutes. You will receive a list of four questions (argument, comparison, problem-solution, and cause and effect) from your instructor on the day of the assessment. You should choose one these four essay types from Part 2 of the course textbook: Writing about arguments, Writing about comparisons, Writing about problems and solutions, and Writing about causes and effects. Your instructor will provide answers for any chapters that you complete through self-study. During your self-study, make sure that you follow the chapter instructions regarding the structure, style, and vocabulary for the essay type.

The in-class essay should have a clear introduction, main body paragraphs, and a conclusion. You do not need to use in-text citations or APA citation style for this assignment.

The grade for the Assessed In-class Writing 3: Essay will be final and marked according to the following criteria:

<i>Criteria for Assessed Research Essay (30%)</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Structure and cohesion (20%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay outline</li> <li>• Cohesion in and between sentences and paragraphs</li> </ul>		
2. Content and coherence (40%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of arguments and support (reasons, examples, evidence) as appropriate</li> <li>• Clarity, logical ordering of ideas</li> </ul>		
3. Language (40%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accuracy and range of vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation; overall style</li> </ul>		
<b>OVERALL LETTER GRADE:</b>		

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### Active Learning: (10%)

The grade for Active Learning will be assessed as follows:

<b>Criteria Active Learning: (10%)</b>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Marginal</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<b>Grade</b>
	A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C	C- D	F	
1. Improvement (50%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewriting and adding research to in-class assignments</li> <li>• APA citation style</li> </ul>						
2. Engagement (50%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance, Punctuality, Engagement in class, giving helpful peer feedback, homework completion, quizzes (as applicable)</li> </ul>						
<b>OVERALL LETTER GRADE:</b>						