



## **Bachson Academy at Assumption College**

### **Intensive English Program**

**All courses in the Intensive English Program meet twice weekly for a total of 5 hours each week over a 15-week semester.**

#### **Course Descriptions:**

##### **Academic Listening and Notetaking (3 Levels, Intermediate to Advanced)**

In this class, students will develop key academic vocabulary and listening skills while learning effective note-taking strategies to help them succeed in university credit courses. Listening activities will include listening and taking notes from authentic academic lectures and educational talks of various lengths as well as panel discussions and expert interviews. Topics will cover a broad range of academic disciplines. Students will also learn to summarize the key concepts of a lecture or talk in speaking and writing, how to use and interpret symbols and abbreviations, how to comment on a lecture, and how to ask for clarification.

##### **Listening, Conversation, and Pronunciation (3 Levels, Beginner to Intermediate)**

By listening to examples of everyday and academic conversations and participating in discussions, students will increase their familiarity and fluency with the common phrases, idioms, spoken grammar structures, vocabulary, and cultural aspects they will encounter on campus and in the community. Students will also participate in whole-class and small-group discussions on current events and ideas, and give short presentations on topics of personal knowledge and interest. Throughout the course, students will continue to improve their

pronunciation of particular sounds, will increasing emphasis on developing more natural rhythm and intonation and understanding variations in meaning related to word stress and intonation changes.

### **Academic Speaking and Presentation Skills (Upper Intermediate and Advanced)**

Students will develop increasing fluency and confidence in speaking as they participate in discussions and debates, interviews and exchanges, and give and evaluate various types of talks and presentations. In addition to expanding students' vocabulary and improving their accuracy in speaking, a variety of useful phrases and discourse markers will be presented and practiced. Students will learn effective techniques for giving presentations (use of voice, body language, visuals, and pauses).

### **Reading (5 Levels)**

Reading is not only essential to academic success in US universities, research shows that it is also key to building vocabulary and knowledge of grammar and patterns of writing in a second language. Students will learn many strategies to increase their vocabulary, improve their comprehension of a variety of written texts, and to increase reading speed and fluency. In addition to extensive reading of longer texts and study and focus on shorter texts, both fiction and non-fiction and on many topics, students will discuss readings to enhance their understanding and learning of new vocabulary and concepts. In the higher levels, excerpts from actual university textbooks will be included in the reading and there will be increased emphasis on learning the most commonly used words in academic and professional texts.

### **Writing 1: The Sentence and the Paragraph**

In this introductory writing course, students who have previously been introduced to the English alphabet will learn and practice basic sentence mechanics of capitalization and punctuation, write short, simple original sentences demonstrating knowledge of basic word order and subject-predicate sentence structure, and learn to write and spell the most common everyday vocabulary. Building on this base, students will learn to write short, 3-5 sentence paragraphs about everyday topics and describing people, places, things, and events.

### **Writing 2: Great Paragraphs**

The focus of this course is on writing longer paragraphs in which students more fully develop and support their ideas with details and examples. Students will learn how to write a good topic sentence, a unified paragraph, and a conclusion statement, and to use the writing process to

develop, organize and connect their ideas in writing. Students will also continue to improve their writing at the sentence level: learning to write with a variety of types of simple and compound sentences, using a variety of vocabulary and grammar, correct capitalization, punctuation and word order, and incorporating common phrases.

### **Writing 3: The Short Essay (Intermediate)**

This course focuses on short essays from 3 to 5 paragraphs. Students will study and analyze written models and use the writing process to produce essays of increasing length, complexity, and sophistication to describe, compare, explain, inform, and recount events. Students will learn techniques for brainstorming, organizing, and expanding ideas, how to format an academic essay, and how to write a good introduction, thesis statement, cohesive body paragraphs, and a solid, satisfying conclusion. Language work will include building vocabulary and grammar for writing, with emphasis on using increasingly varied and complex sentence structures and verb tenses, transitional phrases, prepositional phrases, and adverbs.

### **Writing 4: Academic Essays (Upper Intermediate)**

This course will continue to build on the foundations of essay writing techniques learned in Essay Writing 1, but will focus on writing longer essays about academic themes. Students will learn to classify, express opinions and theories, compare and contrast products, processes or theories, and explore causes and effects in writing. Important elements of academic writing are introduced, including concepts of formality, avoiding over-generalization, appropriate use of transitional phrases and discourse markers, and the importance of unity and cohesion. Students will also learn to elaborate, supplement, and support their ideas through reading and research. Students will learn basic in-text citation and bibliography writing as well as how to avoid plagiarism. As such, students will learn how to find reliable resources and how to summarize, paraphrase, and use quotations from these outside sources in their own writing.

### **Writing 5: Academic Essays and the Research Paper (Advanced)**

This course will continue to build on the foundations of essay writing techniques learned in Essay Writing 1 and 2, and students will learn how to write a research paper. Students will learn how to find and choose appropriate resources, how to take organized notes from multiple sources, and how to synthesize the information to write a convincing, well-organized, well-supported, and properly cited 3- to 4-page essay. Students will gain practice, confidence and fluency with academic writing through short daily and weekly writing assignments and work with the Academic Word List. Students may repeat this course as needed until they

demonstrate sufficient mastery of academic composition, research and citation, and written language to progress to credit courses in English writing.

### **Practical Grammar (5 Levels)**

Really learning grammar is about more than studying conjugations and charts and rules. While it is useful for students to understand the grammar system of English and compare it to their own language's grammar, to be able to use grammar for real-world communication, students also need a lot of practice with using grammar in context of both speaking and writing. At all levels of grammar study, students will not only learn the basic rules of use, many real-world examples will be examined, along with the most common learner mistakes. Most importantly, students will practice, practice, practice applying the grammar in conversation and writing.

### **TOEFL Preparation**

Are you preparing to take the iBT TOEFL (Internet Based Test of English as a Foreign Language) for university admission? This course will help you increase your score by building familiarity and confidence with all sections of the exam. In addition to practice with specific skills and preparation exercises, students will do sample tests and be able to ask questions about aspects of the language and the test that they find confusing. Outside study and homework to reinforce and expand on class time learning are part of the course.

**In addition to the above core courses offered every semester, students in the Intensive Program can choose from elective courses which vary each semester.**

## **Examples of Elective Courses**

### **Business Communication for English Language Learners (full semester or 8-week mini course)**

This course provides students with Intermediate to Advanced level English communication skills opportunities to develop business related vocabulary, expand and polish their grammar and pronunciation, and gain fluency and confidence through practice of listening, speaking, reading and writing in context of everyday professional situations. Specific course content will vary according to the needs of course participants, but areas typically covered include talking about one's job and work history, making and changing plans and arrangements, meetings and conference calls, email language and telephone skills, presentations, discussing status of projects, group decision-making, managing teams, and negotiating.

### **Business Writing in English for Non-Native Speakers**

Even fluent English speakers who learned English as a second language while growing up in the US often find they struggle with writing when they enter the workforce. Discover and fix the grammar, spelling and word-combination errors that are most common and most likely to stand out to your native speaker clients, colleagues, supervisors and prospective employers so that you can be sure to “put your best foot forward” and make a positive, professional impression in your emails, letters, proposals, applications, and reports

### **English for Health Care Practitioners**

Gain essential vocabulary for health care consultations and writing medical notes. Through visual input, extensive listening and speaking practice, writing models, individual writing feedback, and role play and simulations, participants will improve understanding, pronunciation, fluency, and confidence for communicating in the healthcare workplace. This class is available both on campus and for groups in the workplace.

### **Pronunciation Improvement: Stress, Rhythm, and Sounds**

Have you been living in the US for a while but still find that people you don't know well have trouble understanding you? If people have difficulty understanding you, they are often uncomfortable spending much time talking with you. Non-native speakers' unnatural intonation (the musical melody of English) can cause many misunderstandings as speakers can sound rude, aggressive, bored or uncertain without intention. These are a few reasons your pronunciation may interfere with establishing friendships and building professional relationships with native speakers. In this course, we will work hard on specific problem sounds each student has

(students will be assigned individual homework practice), learn and apply some common rules about the connections between sounds and spelling, identify stress and intonation patterns of American English, practice emphasizing specific words and parts of words, listen and repeat phrases and dialogues to practice the flow, rhythm and melody of common structures, and learn how to use your voice more effectively to communicate feelings, give presentations, make requests, and tell stories and jokes.

### **Exploring US Culture**

This is an integrated skills class so classes will include listening, reading, discussion, conversation, presentations and writing related to aspects of US culture, both in general and specific to US universities. Topics will include government, cultural history and values, body language and gestures, concepts of time, social expectations in group projects and classroom, and contemporary issues. Students will be exposed to a variety of American voices and viewpoints, be able to ask questions, analyze language use and culture, learn natural language and idioms, and share and discuss their own experiences and native cultures. This course is designed for both international students and permanent residents.

### **Advanced Conversation, Pronunciation and Grammar**

This practical, discussion-based course is for higher-level speakers, including those who have been living and working in the US for some time and can interact with a good degree of fluency in one-to-one situations, but want to improve their listening and speaking skills in group situations, clean up their grammar and pronunciation, and learn more natural phrases and idioms. Topics and activities will vary based on the interests and specific needs of the class members each semester. An oral assessment is required prior to registration for this class.