**CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS (SPRING, 2024-2025)**

**Course Instructor**: Lecturer Dr. Nadire ARIKAN **Course Code:** 171812029

**Class hours**:  Monday, 09:00 - 10:50 **Class:**D-19

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**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND GOALS**

This course is designed to enhance the critical thinking and listening skills of EFL students majoring in English Language Teaching. It emphasizes active participation, encouraging students to collaborate with their peers, exchange ideas, and construct well-reasoned arguments essential for effective communication in ELT. Through engaging with academic and general English audio/video materials, students will develop their ability to listen attentively, extract key information, and critically analyze content.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Listen attentively to various audio/video materials and extract relevant information.

Take effective notes that capture key ideas, arguments, and supporting details.

Use their notes to construct well-supported arguments and articulate their opinions clearly.

Defend their viewpoints using logical reasoning and evidence.

Refute opposing arguments effectively while maintaining respectful academic discourse.

Engage in collaborative discussions, actively exchanging ideas with their peers.

Develop communication strategies specific to ELT contexts, including discussions on pedagogy, linguistics, and classroom interaction.

**COURSE DESIGN**

It is a blend of interactive lectures, discussions /debates, presentations, and individual, pair, and/or group work

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Selected audio/video and/or written materials shared

Please check ESUZEM to see the materials shared the week before each lesson

| **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION** | **%** |
| --- | --- |
| WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS | 15 |
| IN-CLASS TASKS (Presentations, discussions, debates, role plays, etc.) | 30 |
| MIDTERM EXAM (DEBATE) | 25 |
| FINAL EXAM (ACADEMIC POSTER PRESENTATION) | 30 |

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**:

Any instances of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Participation**:

active participation in class activities and discussions is required as it is based on practice and process-oriented assessment

If you do NOT come to (attend) class on the day you are required to do one of the assessment tools/methods, you will NOT be allowed to do it afterward.

**Attendance**:

recorded during each class throughout the semester

absence up to **30% of the total classes (equivalent to 8 hours**, including the first week of classes)  - **for any reason, such as family emergencies, health issues, or personal matters**

**If you come 10 minutes late after each lesson starts, you can join the class, but you will be marked as absent in the attendance sheet. In-class tasks won’t be graded!**

**FINAL REMARKS!**

Be on time! **Do NOT miss more than 8 (eight) class hours**this semester. It includes health reports!

**In case of any problems, contact your instructor via email beforehand.**

Late assignments will not be accepted (unless there is a valid and significant excuse), so do NOT write your instructor any emails concerning your excuses.

Check your “ESUZEM” page for the necessary information regularly as there will be materials shared.

Any necessary announcements will be made on ESUZEM, so update your email addresses on the website to receive them.

The instructor may make some necessary changes in the syllabus when needed.

\*\* You can check your attendance and grades by clicking on the following link: (*A Google Drive link provided for the students taking the course*.)

**TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

| **WEEK** | **TOPIC** | **TASKS** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| WEEK 1 03022025 | Introduction | Overview of course objectives and expectations |
| WEEK 2 10022025 | Note-Taking Techniques for Effective Listening | Practice: Taking notes on short academic talks |
| WEEK 3 17022025 | Understanding and Analyzing Arguments | Practice: Listening to debates and identifying argumentative structures |
| WEEK 4 24022025 | Defending Your Ideas with Evidence | TASK 1: Constructing and presenting a short argument &  Responding to counterarguments in real-time |
| Refuting Opposing Views Effectively |
| WEEK 5 03032025 | Collaborative Discussions and Idea Exchange | TASK 2: Facilitating and participating in structured discussions |
|  |
| ASSIGNING MIDTERM TASK: Students form teams to research and  prepare for a structured debate |
| WEEK 6 10032025 | Analyzing Real-World Debates and Speeches | Practice: Identifying rhetorical strategies and persuasive techniques |
| WEEK 7 17032025 | Review of listening, note-taking, and argumentation skills | MIDTERM TASK: DEBATE |
| WEEK 8 | MIDTERM WEEK |  |
| WEEK 9 31032025 | Power and Inequality | TASK 3: How English functions as a global language, issues of  linguistic imperialism, and native vs. non-native speaker privilege |
| WEEK 10 07042025 | Technology and ELT | TASK 4: The ethical implications of AI, online learning, and digital tools  in language education |
| WEEK 11 14042025 | Identity and Inclusion | TASK 5: How language learning intersects with race, gender,  culture, and social class |
| WEEK 12 21042025 | Accent and Pronunciation Discrimination | TASK 6: Should English learners aim for native-like pronunciation? & |
| Is it fair to judge English proficiency based on accent? |
| WEEK 13 28042025 | The Role of Grammar in Language Learning | TASK 7: explicit grammar instruction VS grammar taught  implicitly through communication & accuracy VS fluency |
| WEEK 14 05052025 | Code-Switching in the Classroom | TASK 8: Does code-switching help or hinder language acquisition? |
| WEEK 15 12052025 | REVISION | FINAL TASK: POSTER PRESENTATION |