

ENL 213:

Advanced Writing for ESOL Students

Instructor: Lin Guo

Office Hours: Wednesday 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. (*I love talking with my students. Please email me to schedule an appointment*)

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WELCOME MESSAGE

First, I want you to know that I care deeply about you — not just in my class but also in your life. My goal is to connect with each of you so that we can work together to accomplish your learning goals. I hold the fundamental belief that everyone in this class is fully capable of engaging the material and making progress. Our classroom will be an inclusive space where ideas, questions, mistakes, and misconceptions will be discussed with respect.

This semester, you will do more than practice academic writing — you will conduct **real research that matters**. As international students yourselves, you bring unique insight and lived experience to the topic we will investigate together: the mental health challenges facing international students on campus. Working in small groups, you will administer validated research surveys to fellow international students, analyze the data you collect, and write a professional report addressed to Syracuse University administrators. Your findings have the potential to inform real policy change and support services.

This course is structured as a **Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE)**, which means your research questions have genuinely unknown answers, your data will be new to the field, and your work will be of interest to stakeholders beyond this classroom. You are not simulating research — you are doing it. I look forward to spending this semester with you, learning alongside you as a community of researchers.

ABOUT ENL 213 AND THE CURE MODEL

ENL 213 is an advanced composition course that prepares you for research-based writing at Syracuse University and beyond. This course fosters Communication Skills, a component of Syracuse University's Shared Competencies.

This semester's course is designed around five defining features of a CURE (Auchincloss et al., 2014; Dolan, 2016):

1. **Discovery:** Your group will collect and analyze original data whose outcomes are unknown. No one — not even your instructor — knows what you will find.
2. **Relevance:** Your findings will be of genuine interest to the Syracuse University community, particularly administrators responsible for international student support.
3. **Scientific practices:** You will engage in the full cycle of research — reading literature, administering validated instruments, analyzing data, interpreting results, and communicating findings to a real audience.
4. **Iteration:** Research rarely works perfectly the first time. You will revisit, revise, and refine your work throughout the semester, building on your group’s and classmates’ findings.
5. **Collaboration:** You will work as a team and contribute to a class-wide research effort, just as researchers do in professional settings.

The overarching class research question is:

“What mental health challenges do international students face at Syracuse University, what are the causes, and what institutional support do they need?”

Each group will investigate one sub-question within this larger question, using an established, validated survey instrument. Together, the class will produce a collective body of findings that contribute meaningfully to this question.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain in writing vocabulary, concepts, and issues related to international student mental health;
2. Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to cultural similarities and differences among students and in the United States;
3. Administer and interpret a validated research survey as part of an original primary research project;
4. Analyze and synthesize quantitative and qualitative data in combination with secondary scholarly sources;
5. Write a professional research report addressed to a specific institutional audience;
6. Use critical thinking skills to summarize, critique, analyze, and synthesize;
7. Communicate intelligibly in pairs, small groups, and class discussions;
8. Practice presentation skills including PowerPoint; and
9. Develop confidence to do the academic work required in other courses.

RESEARCH GROUPS AND TOPICS

You will be assigned to a small research group (3–4 students) in Week 1. Each group will investigate one specific mental health challenge facing international students and select a **validated survey instrument**. Using established instruments ensures that your findings are methodologically rigorous and can be compared to existing research.

Group topics and suggested survey instruments:

Group Topic	Survey Instrument
Loneliness and social isolation	UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, 1996)
Academic anxiety and performance pressure	Test Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, 1980)
Depression and emotional well-being	PHQ-9 Patient Health Questionnaire
Cultural adjustment and identity stress	Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994)
Barriers to seeking mental health support	Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (Fischer & Farina, 1995)

Each instrument is widely used in the research literature, has established validity and reliability, and is appropriate for your target population. You can choose the suggested instrument or seek an alternative with scoring guide and relevant published studies using the instrument.

GRADING

Component	Percentage
Research Report (final deliverable)	30%
Iterative Drafts & Milestones	25%
In-Class Work & Collaboration	20%
Homework	15%
Final Presentation	10%

Letter Grade Scale (SU Rubric)

Grade Range	Grade Range
A 94–100	C+ 77–79
A- 90–93	C 74–76
B+ 87–89	C- 70–73
B 84–86	D 60–69
B- 80–83	F 0–59

Important note on grading and research outcomes: Because this is a CURE, your grade does NOT depend on obtaining particular results. Research sometimes produces surprising, inconclusive, or unexpected findings — this is a normal and valuable part of the scientific process. You will be assessed on the quality and rigor of your process, writing, and thinking, not on what your data shows.

DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

1. Research Report (Final Deliverable)

Your group's final product is a **professional research report** (2,500–3,500 words) addressed to Syracuse University administrators. This report presents your survey findings, situates them within the scholarly literature, and makes evidence-based recommendations for institutional policy or practice. Components include:

- **Executive Summary** (150–200 words): A concise overview for a busy administrator audience.
- **Introduction:** Background on international student mental health, significance of the issue at SU, and your group's specific research question.
- **Literature Review:** Synthesis of 6–8 peer-reviewed sources relevant to your topic.
- **Methods:** Description of the validated instrument used, participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis process.
- **Findings:** Presentation and interpretation of survey results, with tables or figures in APA format.
- **Discussion & Recommendations:** Implications of your findings and concrete, actionable recommendations for the university.
- **References:** APA 7th edition.

The report is developed in stages across the semester. Your grade does not depend on the direction of your results — negative or unexpected findings are equally valuable and should be reported honestly.

2. Iterative Drafts & Milestones

Research is iterative — you repeat, refine, and build on your work. Each week's milestone is a step toward the final report. You will receive feedback from peers and the instructor and will be expected to revise substantively before moving forward. Milestones include a topic pitch, literature review draft, data collection log, analysis summary, and multiple report drafts.

3. In-Class Work & Collaboration

CUREs depend on collaboration. Regular in-class activities include group research meetings (modeled on professional research group check-ins), peer review workshops, data analysis labs, discussion of readings, and collaborative writing tasks. Your contributions to your group and to the class community are part of your grade.

4. Homework

Homework assignments build research and writing skills. These include: reading responses, source evaluations, paraphrase and summary practice, reflective journals, and peer feedback forms.

5. Final Presentation

Each group will present their research findings in a formal 8–10 minute presentation with slides, followed by Q&A. Presentations should be addressed to a simulated administrator audience and communicate your question, methods, key findings, and recommendations clearly.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

PHASE 1: Entering the Conversation (Weeks 1–3)

Goal: Establish the research community, understand the topic, and engage with the literature.

Week 1: Introduction to the CURE and Our Research Community

- What is a CURE, and why does it matter? Discussion of discovery, relevance, and ownership in research
- Introduction to the class research question and group topics
- Discussion: What do we already know about international student mental health? What do we want to find out?
- **Deliverable (Week 1, Fri):** Group topic pitch (1 page): your sub-question, why it matters to the SU community

Week 2: Searching and Reading the Literature

- Academic databases: PsycINFO, ERIC, Google Scholar
- Developing effective search strategies and keywords for your topic
- Evaluating source credibility and relevance
- Reading empirical articles: understanding methods sections, results, and limitations
- **Deliverable (Week 2, Fri):** Search 8–10 candidate peer-reviewed sources in APA reference format

Week 3: Synthesizing the Literature

- Moving from summary to synthesis: how to weave multiple sources into an argument
- Identifying themes, debates, and gaps in the research on your topic
- APA 7th edition: in-text citations, reference lists, and quotation ethics
- Choose a validated survey instrument: reading the instrument, understanding what it measures, and reviewing published studies that have used it
- **Deliverable (Week 3, Fri):** Annotated bibliography (6–8 sources) with 150–200 word entries (summary, evaluation, intended use)

PHASE 2: Collecting Original Data (Weeks 4–6)

Goal: Administer the validated instrument responsibly and collect original data that contributes new knowledge.

Week 4: Understanding Your Instrument and Research Ethics

- Deep reading of your group’s validated instrument: item by item, what does each question measure and why?
- Why use validated instruments? Reliability, validity, and comparability across studies
- Research ethics: confidentiality, informed consent, voluntary participation
- Cultural and linguistic considerations for surveying international students
- How to recruit participants respectfully on campus
- **Deliverable (Week 4, Fri):** Participant recruitment plan + informed consent language draft

Week 5: Data Collection

- Groups administer surveys to international students on campus
- In class: workshop on tracking responses and maintaining a data log
- Discussion: What surprises are you encountering? What is the data beginning to suggest?
- **Deliverable (Week 5, Fri):** Data collection log (running record of recruitment, responses, and notes)

Week 6: Completing Data Collection and Organizing Your Data Set

- Continue data collection as needed
- Introduction to data organization: setting up a clean data table
- Calculating response rates and checking for data quality
- Group research meeting (modeled on professional research check-ins): share progress and troubleshoot challenges
- **Deliverable (Week 6, Fri):** Completed and organized data set (minimum 20 responses per group); brief data quality memo (1 page)

PHASE 3: Making Meaning of Your Data (Weeks 7–9)

Goal: Analyze findings, interpret results, and connect them to the literature — the intellectual core of the CURE.

Week 7: Analyzing Survey Results

- Quantitative analysis: calculating means, percentages, and score ranges using your instrument’s scoring guide
- Identifying patterns, trends, and outliers in your data
- Qualitative analysis: coding open-ended responses for themes (if applicable)
- Creating APA-formatted tables and figures to visualize findings
- **Deliverable (Week 7, Fri):** Data analysis summary (1–2 pages) + one APA table or figure

Week 8: Connecting Your Data to the Literature

- How do your findings compare to existing research using the same instrument?
- Writing synthesis paragraphs that integrate your data with scholarly sources
- What does your data confirm, challenge, extend, or add to the field?
- Peer workshop: reviewing each other’s synthesis paragraph drafts

- **Deliverable (Week 8, Fri):** Synthesis paragraph draft (300–400 words) connecting one key finding to 2–3 sources from the literature

Week 9: Writing the Methods and Findings Sections

- Components of a Methods section: participants, instrument description, procedure, analysis
- Writing about validated instruments: how to describe the tool, its established reliability, and how you administered it
- Writing about data honestly: reporting what you found without overstating conclusions
- **Deliverable (Week 9, Fri):** Methods section draft (400–500 words) + Findings section draft (500–700 words)

PHASE 4: Writing for Your Audience (Weeks 10–12)

Goal: Communicate your research to a real-world audience with clarity, purpose, and actionable recommendations.

Week 10: Writing for Administrators — Genre, Audience, and the Executive Summary

- What is a professional research report? Analysis of real campus policy reports as models
- How does writing for administrators differ from writing for academics?
- Writing the Executive Summary: the most-read section of any policy report
- **Deliverable (Week 10, Fri):** Executive Summary draft (150–200 words)

Week 11: Introduction and Literature Review

- Writing an introduction that establishes significance for a non-specialist audience
- Organizing the literature review thematically around your sub-question
- Connecting your group’s findings to the class-wide research question
- **Deliverable (Week 11, Fri):** Introduction draft (300–400 words) + Literature Review draft (700–900 words)

Week 12: Discussion, Recommendations, and Peer Review

- Interpreting your findings: what do they mean for the SU community?
- Writing evidence-based, actionable recommendations — specific enough for administrators to act on
- Addressing limitations honestly and professionally
- Full draft peer review workshop: structured peer review using a rubric
- **Deliverable (Week 12, Fri):** Full report draft (all sections) submitted for peer review + peer review feedback forms completed

PHASE 5: Going Public (Weeks 13–14)

Goal: Share your research with the campus community and reflect on your growth as researchers and writers.

Week 13: Global and Local Revision

- Revising based on peer and instructor feedback: argument, coherence, audience awareness
- Local revision: clarity, concision, APA mechanics
- Class synthesis: How do the groups' findings together answer the overarching research question? Drafting a class-wide summary section
- Presentation preparation: communicating research visually and verbally
- **Deliverable (Week 13, Fri):** Revised full draft + presentation slides

Week 14: Final Presentations and Report Submission

- Group presentations (8–10 minutes + Q&A)
- Showcase: each group reads one section they are proud of and explains their writing choices
- Class debrief: What did we discover together? What questions does our research open up?
- Individual reflective memo (400–500 words): what you learned, how your thinking changed, and three research-writing strategies you will carry into other courses
- **Deliverable (Week 14, Thu):** Final research report (PDF + .docx) + individual reflective memo

KEY DELIVERABLES AT A GLANCE

Deliverable	Week Due	Description
Group topic pitch	Week 1 (Fri)	Sub-question, rationale
Search log + candidate sources	Week 2 (Fri)	8–10 APA-formatted sources
Annotated bibliography	Week 3 (Fri)	6–8 sources, 150–200 words each, a validated instrument
Recruitment plan + consent language	Week 4 (Fri)	Ethical recruitment materials
Data collection log	Week 5 (Fri)	Running record of survey administration
Completed data set + quality memo	Week 6 (Fri)	Min. 20 responses + 1-page memo
Data analysis summary + table/figure	Week 7 (Fri)	Key patterns + APA visual
Synthesis paragraph draft	Week 8 (Fri)	Primary + secondary data integrated
Methods + Findings drafts	Week 9 (Fri)	900–1,200 words combined
Executive Summary draft	Week 10 (Fri)	150–200 words
Introduction + Literature Review draft	Week 11 (Fri)	1,000–1,300 words
Full draft + peer review forms	Week 12 (Fri)	All sections + completed peer feedback

Deliverable	Week Due	Description
Revised draft + presentation slides	Week 13 (Fri)	Polished draft ready for presentation
Final report + reflective memo	Week 14 (Thu)	2,500–3,500 word report + 400–500 word memo

COURSE POLICIES

On Research, Uncertainty, and Intellectual Ownership

In a CURE, you are doing real research with real stakes — which means results are uncertain. You may find that your data confirms existing research, contradicts it, or produces inconclusive results. All of these outcomes are valuable and publishable. Your grade reflects the quality of your process and writing, not the direction of your findings. You are also expected to take intellectual ownership of your project — to make decisions, defend your interpretations, and engage with your data as a researcher, not just as a student completing an assignment.

Academic Support

- SU Writing Center: <http://wc.syr.edu/>
- SU Tutoring and Study Center: <http://tsc.syr.edu/>
- OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Use of Artificial Intelligence

If you use AI in completing an assignment, you must submit a declaration including: the tool used, the prompts entered, the purpose of use, and the extent of use. Full use of AI with disclosure and citation is permitted. (*See original syllabus for declaration examples.*)

Inclusion and Diversity

I view the individual identities and values of students in our class as a strength. This course deals with topics — mental health, cultural adjustment, belonging — that may be personally meaningful to many of you. All perspectives will be treated with care and respect. You are never required to share personal experiences, though you are always welcome to draw on them in your analysis.

Participation

I encourage you to actively participate in this course because I have found it is the best way to engage you in learning.

- arrive to class on time ready to work when the class begins
- be prepared to work in class (e.g., bring the homework, textbooks, and any handouts)

- actively participate, speak up and express your thoughts, understandings and feelings
- listen attentively to others' opinions when they speak
- act respectfully to the instructor and your fellow students
- cooperate fully in all class, group, and paired activities and discussions
- put your cell phone on vibrate at the beginning of the class, and refrain from using it until after class
- use laptop only for legitimate class activities (e.g., note-taking, assigned tasks)
- do not leave the classroom without asking the instructor in advance
- try not to distract or annoy your classmates

DISCUSSIONS RULES

I am committed to creating a learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized and valued as a source of strength. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom culture that is based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

As a class, we will approach all discussion with respect and civility. Disagreements and debates in academic discourse are expected and welcome, but personal attacks are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. I strive to ensure an open and welcoming classroom for students. We are all learning together.

- listen actively and attentively; refrain from interrupting one another---even when you are excited to respond
- respect the speaker, even when you do not agree with the point the speaker is making
- Keep an open mind---be open to be challenged and be open to learning something new from others
- bring out ideas, perspectives, or solutions that you think have not been adequately discussed
- offer opinions with supporting evidence; be honest when you are not sure if you have enough evidence to make a strong argument.
- build on one another's comments, and work toward shared understanding
- critique ideas but not people; challenge another's opinion but do so respectfully
- ask for clarification if you are confused about other perspectives; avoid making assumptions
- speak from your own experience without generalizing about groups
- avoid monopolizing discussion; give others a chance to contribute to the discussion
- if you feel offended by anything said during discussion, communicate it openly and resolve conflict in a civic way

TTH CLASS ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Three unexcused absences will result in a final grade being lowered by 5 percent (e.g., 93 → 88). **Four unexcused absences** will result in a final grade being lowered by 15 percent (e.g., 93 → 78). **Five or more unexcused absences will receive an "F" in the course** (e.g., 93 → 50). Also, **two late arrivals of ten minutes** or more will equal one unexcused absence.

An unexcused absence from class results in a "0" for that day's class participation grade and for any class work/quiz/test that is given. Late arrivals or leaving during class will have a negative

effect on your participation score. No in-class work due to unexcused absences can be made up, and any assignment not turned in on time will be counted as late. This applies to both in-person and online class meetings.

Excused absences include mandates to quarantine due to Covid, documented medical reasons for which the Health Center advise absence (simply visiting the Health Center is not a viable excuse), religious observances, officially sanctioned athletic events (student athletes should submit documentation for these absences), as well as absences deemed excusable at my discretion.

If you are unable to participate in-person or virtually for an extended period of time (48 hours or more), please request an absence notification from your home school/college Dean's Office or the Dean of Students Office. I will be notified via the "Absence Notification" flag in Orange Success. If possible, please also email me to let me know.

Please note that Barnes Center at the Arch (Health, Counseling, etc.) staff will not provide medical excuse notes for students. When Barnes Center staff determine it is medically necessary to remove a student from classes, they will coordinate with the Dean of Students Office case management staff to provide appropriate notification to faculty through Orange Success.

Late Work Policy

Assignments may be accepted up to 3 days late with a 10% penalty per day. After three days, no work will be accepted for credit. Because this is a collaborative research project, late milestones affect your entire group — please communicate early if you are struggling.

Academic Integrity

As a pre-eminent and inclusive student-focused research institution, Syracuse University considers academic integrity at the forefront of learning, serving as a core value and guiding pillar of education. Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy provides students with the necessary guidelines to complete academic work with integrity throughout their studies. Students are required to uphold both course-specific and university-wide academic integrity expectations such as crediting your sources, doing your own work, communicating honestly, and supporting academic integrity. The full Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy can be found by visiting class.syr.edu, selecting, "Academic Integrity," and "Expectations and Policy."

Upholding Academic Integrity includes the protection of faculty's intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or share instructors' course materials, including presentations, assignments, exams, or other evaluative materials without permission. Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others, which are then presented as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course and may be classified as a Level 3 violation. All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person assignments, quizzes, and exams also apply online.

Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered. Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

The grade penalty for established academic integrity violations in this course will be a zero on the assignment in most cases. However, depending on the situation, established violations could result in a harsher penalty of course failure. The following are examples of violations of academic integrity in this class:

- submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving advance written authorization from both instructors
- submitting work with large chunks of texts (e.g., an entire sentence) copied from tools that automatically generate texts for you (e.g., translation tools, paraphrasing tools, AI tools)
- submitting work that was generated, revised, or edited by another person or website. It is fine to request feedback on your grammar or writing from other people or websites and then use that feedback to revise and edit your own paper. If you do this, you must keep copies of your drafts before requesting feedback as well as the feedback you received.
- using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as their own

Mental Health

Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. Given the nature of our research topic, it is normal if readings or discussions bring up personal feelings. Please reach out to me or campus resources at any point. The Barnes Center provides counseling services 24/7 at 315-443-8000 (<https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/>). You are never required to disclose personal mental health experiences in this course.

Disability-Related Accommodations

Many students have visible or invisible disabilities, and Syracuse University offers accommodations and adjustments that allow them to achieve their full potential. Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation.

Furniture may be placed in your classrooms for specific use by students with disabilities. This furniture is generally labelled with signs that request that it is not to be moved per the Center for Disability Resources. Students with disabilities rely on this furniture to remain where it is placed within the classrooms.

As you instructor, I strive to make all my assignments, assessments, and educational materials accessible for everyone in our class community. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process. To utilize specific accommodations, you will need to register with this office. CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with you to develop an access plan.

Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin the process. Visit their website at

<https://disabilityresources.syr.edu>. For more detailed information, please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu. I would be glad to assist you with this process if you are unsure how to get started.

REFERENCES (CURE FRAMEWORK)

Auchincloss, L.C., et al. (2014). Assessment of course-based undergraduate research experiences: A meeting report. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 13, 29–40.

Dolan, E.L. (2016). *Course-based undergraduate research experiences: Current knowledge and future directions* [White paper]. National Research Council.