Introduction to the MA Research Project (Non-credit)

Instructor: Dr. Gordon Myskow
Email: myskow-g@kanda.kuis.ac.jp

4/5 (Sat. 16:00-18:00)	8/2 (Sat. 16:00-18:00)

Note: This non-credit course follows a flipped classroom model, which means most lectures and assignments are offered on demand. Individual writing conferences will also be scheduled for students to discuss their writing with the course instructor.

Course Overview

This non-credit course is designed to support students preparing to write their MA projects. Students will gain practice writing the project by preparing an outline and getting started on the first two sections (Issue in Context; Selective Literature Review). A major focus of the course will be connecting the three sections of the paper to ensure a logical information flow across them. Useful language and discourse features will also be explored through genre analysis activities. Upon completing the course assignment, students may choose to develop their paper further into a full-length MA project under the supervision of a faculty member. Note that the paper will likely be changed significantly through the supervision process. As this course focuses specifically on writing for the MA Project, it should be taken near the end of the program, typically in the semester before students plan to write their MA projects.

Course Schedule*

Session	Topic
1.	Course orientation, writing community building, pre-class assignment Q&A
2.	Q&A, reflection, and planning for the next steps.

Important Notes about the course

Please carefully note the following before enrolling in the course:
- Students planning to graduate in **March 2026** are strongly encouraged to take *Introduction to the MA Research Project* in **Spring 2025** followed by the *MA Research Project* in **Fall 2025**.
- All students are expected to take *Introduction to the MA Research Project* before enrolling in the *MA Research Project* course. These courses should not be taken concurrently, except with permission of both the course instructor and the MA Project supervisor.
- All course participants are expected to complete the IMAP Paper and submit it together with their proposal form to the TESOL Office by the designated date.

Pre-course Reading

There may be some short pre-course readings of sample essays. The instructor will notify course participants prior to class and post them to Google Classroom.

Required textbook

None. The instructor will provide all handouts and materials.

Course Objectives

Produce a well-organized IMAP Paper that outlines an issue in context, explores relevant literature, and includes some notes about the pedagogical action.

Enabling Objectives

1) Identify key discourse and language features by analyzing samples.

2) Identify and select appropriate organizational patterns for different rhetorical goals.

3) Make appropriate use of genre-specific discourse features such as concessions, reported speech formulations, and logical connectors.

4) Accurately use APA conventions including citation and referencing practices.

5) Identify relevant literature on the writer's topic.

6) Form a supportive community of writers to help each other in the writing process.

Instructor Bio

Gordon Myskow (PhD) is Associate Professor and Assistant Director of the MA TESOL Program at Kanda University of International Studies. For over twenty years, he has taught in a variety of contexts in Japan including secondary school and has been active in teacher education courses for over a decade. His current research interests are in functional linguistics and subject-matter instruction (e.g., CLIL). His work has appeared in a number of prominent international journals including *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *English for Specific Purposes*, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *Linguistics and Education*, *ELT Journal*, *Writing & Pedagogy*, *Functions of Language*, *Visual Communication*, *Linguistics and the Human Sciences*, and *Functional Linguistics*. He is an advisor to the United Nations Test of English (UNATE).