

CETL 8723 Academic Writing for International Graduate Students

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: Karen Peterson

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General Course Information

Description

In this course, students examine academic writing with a focus on core principles that support clear, purposeful, and effective communication. The course emphasizes two foundational principles:

1. Effective writing is driven by purpose, audience, and tone.
2. Clear organization shapes and supports meaning.

Students learn how academic research writing is organized and analyze writing in their own disciplines to understand what makes it effective. Throughout the course, students revise and edit their own academic documents—such as a proposal, dissertation chapter, or journal article—with guidance and feedback from the instructor.

Career-related writing is also a major focus of the course. Students learn how to prepare materials for both academic and industry positions, including resumes/CVs, cover letters, research statements, teaching statements, biosketches, and LinkedIn profiles. As time permits, students may choose to draft and receive feedback on additional career documents.

Grammar and vocabulary instruction is individualized. Students identify patterns in their own writing, particularly errors common among non-native English writers, and learn strategies to anticipate, correct, and prevent these issues in future writing.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should

- Consider purpose, audience, and tone when planning, drafting, and revising academic writing.
- Analyze, organize, and develop academic texts, including paragraphs, sections, and key components of research papers (such as abstracts).
- Understand the conventions and organization of career-related documents and produce effective materials such as resumes/CVs.

Required Course Materials

All instructional materials are provided by the instructor.

Grading Policy:

This course is a pass/fail course. Assignments for this course include the following:

- Working document, revision, final paper and individual conferences (40%)
- Academic writing handouts (20%)
- Career writing handouts (20%)
- Grammar and/or vocabulary handouts (20%)

Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

In-person attendance is required. Students who fail to attend 75% of the time will FAIL the course unless in case of emergency situations. If a student misses the class because of an illness or emergency, it is strongly recommended that the student make an appointment with the instructor with any questions they may have for the class or classes they missed.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

