

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA
ESCUELA DE LENGUAS MODERNAS
Bachillerato en Inglés y Bachillerato en la Enseñanza del Inglés
Sección de Segundo a Cuarto Año

COURSE OUTLINE

Name: Oral Communication I	Requisites: LM-1002
LM-1230	Co-requisites:
Credits: 5	Cycle: III
Schedule: 15 hours weekly	Type: <i>Plan de Estudios</i> B. A. in English and B. A. and <i>Profesorado</i> in English Teaching
Level: Second year	Modality: 100% in person

I. DESCRIPTION

This communication course is the first of six required oral communication courses for students in the BA in English and the BA and *Profesorado* in English Teaching undergraduate programs. This is an intermediate course through which students will further improve the oral communication, listening, and reading skills introduced in the first year of the major(s). This course will prepare students to communicate their ideas on the contents discussed in class accurately and fluently in English at an intermediate level. Students will also be exposed to a variety of reading and listening materials that will promote discussion and provide lexical and syntactical models. Fluency and accuracy will be emphasized equally. Students will use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as a pronunciation tool with emphasis on the vowel sounds of the English language. Classes will be instructed 100% face-to-face. Materials and additional exercises as well as homework assignments might be uploaded to Mediación Virtual.

II. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. develop basic public speaking and pronunciation skills;
2. talk about topics related to health issues and the environment;
3. incorporate the vocabulary and structures presented in the listening and reading passages in their speech;
4. use a variety of listening and reading strategies (note taking, summarizing, guessing meaning from context, skimming, scanning, and paraphrasing, among others);
5. recognize the sounds of the English language in different linguistic contexts with emphasis on vowels;
6. produce the sounds of the English language in different linguistic contexts with emphasis on vowels;
7. transcribe high-frequency and topic-related words using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA);
8. develop critical thinking skills.

III. CONTENTS

A. Topics for discussion

1. Introduction to public speaking skills
2. Health issues
3. The environment

B. Pronunciation contents

1. Theoretical introduction at a basic level (definitions of linguistics, phonology, phonetics, phoneme, allophone, minimal pairs, simple vowel, diphthong, the syllable—onset, coda, nucleus, rhyme—and stress, among others)
2. The International Phonetic Alphabet (I.P.A. last version), phonetic symbols, and their names
3. Suggestions for the students (how to improve their pronunciation skills)
4. Phonetic transcriptions
5. Review of the pronunciation of –ed and –s endings
6. Classification of English vowels
7. The pronunciation of English vowels (The simple vowels: /ə/, /ʌ/, /i/, /ɪ/, /ε/, /æ/, /ɑ/, /ɔ/, /ʊ/, /u/, spelling correspondences, and diphthongs: /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /oʊ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/)
8. The importance of word stress
9. Unstressed vowels and the obscuration rule

IV. METHODOLOGY

Classes will be instructed 100% face-to-face. Materials and additional exercises as well as homework assignments might be uploaded to Mediación Virtual. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and to do the assigned readings and exercises **in advance**. Content will be presented through readings, lectures, video and listening segments, reports, interviews, and others. Students are expected to participate actively through individual, pair, or group work. Students must take part in the following activities:

- A. small or whole group discussions and activities on the reading and listening passages,
- B. individual and pair-work in reading and listening comprehension exercises,
- C. presentation of group projects,
- D. analysis of phonetic exercises,
- E. transcription and reading of key words and phrases in and out of class.

Some sessions or segments thereof might be recorded. Students will be notified when recording will start so that they can decide whether they want to be on the recording.

V. EVALUATION

A. Oral Exam I (Tribunal) ¹	25%
B. Oral Exam II (Tribunal) ¹	25%
C. Group Project (before oral exam II) ²	10%
D. Oral Quizzes (at least two)	20%
E. Written Quizzes (at least two)	20%

All content (reading/listening passages and presentations) will be evaluated and included in oral evaluations. Both vowel and consonant sounds will be evaluated in all oral presentations and evaluations. All evaluations will include phonetic transcriptions.

¹ **These two exams will be taken in front of two of the professors teaching the course and will be recorded. The professors participating in the exam will be announced one week in advance. Last minute changes of the professors participating in the exam may occur in case of unexpected situations. Students are advised to record their presentations with their own device to keep them as back up.**

² **For the group project, the professor will record the presentations. Students are advised to record them too with their own device to keep them as back up.**

Todo estudiante en todo curso queda sujeto a los reglamentos de evaluación de la Universidad de Costa Rica.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. **Oral exams I and II** will be **10-12 minute** discussions in pairs. Students will answer two different questions (5 to 6 minutes to answer each question). Questions will be chosen by the students at random from a set related to content studied in class.
2. **Oral quizzes I and II** will be a **5-6 minute** discussion in pairs. Students will answer one question. The question will be chosen by the students at random from a set related to content studied in class.
3. **The group project** will be a **20-minute** presentation with 4 or 5 members. The topic will be chosen by the students and previously approved by the professor. Further instructions will be given along the semester.
4. All content (reading/listening passages and presentations) will be evaluated and included in quizzes and/or oral exams unless specifically indicated otherwise.
5. There **will not** be any make-up quizzes or presentations unless there is a valid justification according to *Régimen Académico Estudiantil*.
6. Students who read or memorize the content of their presentations (project/quizzes/exams) will automatically obtain a **5.0 or lower**.
7. The course instructor might take attendance only to keep track of student participation in class activities without affecting students' grades.
8. Students must know and study the *Reglamento de Orden y Disciplina de la Universidad de Costa Rica*, and should pay special attention to the following norms regarding plagiarism and evaluation procedures.

Reglamento de Orden y Disciplina de los Estudiantes de la Universidad de Costa Rica

ARTICULO 4. Son faltas **muy graves**:

g) Utilizar, con conocimiento de causa, documentos falsificados, para cualquier gestión universitaria administrativa, académica o de cualquier otra índole.

j) Plagiar, en todo o en parte, obras intelectuales de cualquier tipo.

k) Presentar como propia una obra intelectual elaborada por otra u otras personas, para cumplir con los requisitos de cursos, trabajos finales de graduación o actividades académicas similares.

ARTICULO 5. Son faltas graves:

c) Copiar de otro estudiante tareas, informes de laboratorio, trabajos de investigación o de cualquier otro tipo de actividad académica.

ARTICULO 9. Las faltas serán sancionadas según la magnitud del hecho con las siguientes medidas:

a) Las faltas muy graves, con suspensión de su condición de estudiante regular no menor de seis meses calendario, hasta por seis años calendario.

b) Las graves con suspensión de quince días lectivos a seis meses calendario.

ARTÍCULO 22. Debe observarse el siguiente procedimiento, en relación con la calificación, entrega e impugnación de los resultados de cualquier prueba de evaluación, salvo disposición expresa en contrario:

a) El profesor debe entregar a los alumnos las evaluaciones calificadas y todo documento o material sujeto a evaluación, a más tardar **diez días hábiles** después de haberse efectuado las evaluaciones y haber recibido los documentos.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABC News. (2013). Greek Island: A Fountain of Youth.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SORukNAI0o>

Alami, F; Carrere, J; & Velazquez, S. (n.d.) *Plastic Disaster: An Ocean Pollution Documentary*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aciqraXMhs>

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Dale, P. & Poms, L. (2005). *English Pronunciation Made Simple*. NY: Pearson Education, Inc.

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<https://phys.org/news/2013-10-longline-fishery-costa-rica-thousands.html>

Lujan, B. (2002). *The American Accent Guide*. Utah: Lingual Arts.

Preiss, S. (1998). *North Star: Focus on Listening and Speaking. Advanced*. First edition. Unit 2: The Oldest Old: A Look at Centenarians. Longman Pub Group

Sharples, T. (2009, June 22). A User's Guide to Good Health at Every Age. *Time*, 173 (24) 85-86, 89-90

Stewart, D. (2014). *Sugar V. Fat* [film]. BBC.
<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1vvedq>

The Oprah Winfrey Show (n.d.) Blue Zones.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bWHDM8AwQWUIPzBtl-kdLbpfJsAoXJO/view?usp=sharing>

The Story of Stuff Project. (2007) *The Story of Stuff* [Film]. Tides Foundation Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption, and Free Range Studios.
<https://www.storyofstuff.org>

VII. OTHER RESOURCES

Other articles from several different sources.

Students are required to buy the pronunciation package and the reading booklet (Health Issues & The Environment) at Copymundo. Place your order at Copymundo's webpage www.copymundo.cr, via email at copymundo506@gmail.com, or by WhatsApp 8808-5512.

A monolingual English dictionary is a must for the English major. Recommended dictionaries include Cambridge, Merriam-Webster, McMillan, Collins, and Oxford. Most of these dictionaries are also available online at:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>
<https://www.merriam-webster.com>
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english>
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/coming_1?q=coming

Tentative Course Syllabus: PART 1 (Health Issues)

Week 1 March 10-14	Course syllabus Introductions and diagnostic/review activities Introduction to public speaking Introduction to Linguistics, the International Phonetic Alphabet Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 2 March 17-21	Introduction to public speaking Introduction to Linguistics, the International Phonetic Alphabet Reading & discussion <i>A User's Guide to Good Health at Every Age</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 3 March 24-28	Reading & discussion: <i>The Oldest Old: A Look at Centenarians</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 4 March 31 - April 04	Videos & discussion: <i>Blue Zones</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 5 April 07-11 (Holiday: Friday, April 11)	Oral Quiz 1 Pronunciation & transcription practice
April 14-18	Easter Break
Week 6 April 21-25	Documentary: <i>Sugar vs Fat</i> Feedback on oral quiz #1 Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 7 April 28 - May 02	Review of exam contents Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 8 May 05-09	Oral Exam I

Tentative Course Syllabus: PART 2 (The Environment)

Week 9 May 12-16	Introduction to successful group projects Oral Exam I Feedback Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 10 May 19-23	Video & discussion: <i>The Story of Stuff</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 11 May 26-30	Reading & discussion: <i>Top 10 Countries Killing the Planet</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 12 June 02-06	Documentary & discussion: <i>Plastic Disaster</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice Oral Quiz 2
Week 13 June 09-13	Reading & discussion: <i>Longline Fishery in Costa Rica Kills Thousands of Sea Turtles and Sharks</i> Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 14 June 16-20	Group Project Presentations Feedback on oral quiz #2 Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 15 June 23-27	Feedback on group projects Review of exam contents Pronunciation & transcription practice
Week 16 June 30 - July 04	Oral Exam II

IMPORTANT DATES:

Oral Exam I: Week 8 (May 05-09)

Oral Exam II: Week 16 (June 30 - July 04)

Grades due: By Monday, July 07, 2025

Ampliación Exam*: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 (8am to noon)

*Students for ampliación will have a tribunal (content questions: 80%) and a written exam (20%).