

**Heather Boldt**  
**ESL Program, The Graduate School**  
**August 8, 2008**  
**ESL 516: Laboratory in Advanced Communication Skills**

### **Introductory paragraph**

I think my course project was relatively straightforward because I was able to take the theme of sustainability and work it into an existing ESL graduate course, ESL 516. This course is the final class in a required sequence for graduate students whose first language is other than English and who did not place out of Emory's ESL program. Since the course objectives, in terms of improving communication skills, were already set, all I had to do was incorporate the sustainability theme into the tasks. That being said, when I sat down to actually design the course, despite my very rewarding experience in the two-day Piedmont Project workshop, writing the syllabus and planning the schedule became just one of many things to cross off my "to-do" list. So, my advice regarding how to keep things fresh and exciting is to be creative! I can't tell you how much adding an activity designed around one of my favorite songs energized me (see below for lyrics to the song). Another piece of advice is to take good notes during the workshop sessions. I referred back to my notes on numerous occasions, to find articles that a speaker had mentioned or just to scan for ideas that I had regarding what to add to the course. As for any major challenges, I think they are still to come. As you will see when you read the syllabus and the daily schedule, each student will choose a focus within the broader theme of "sustainability." Since there is such a sea of information on this topic, I'm afraid that they may be overwhelmed at first. Although I've created a bank of articles to get them started, if I teach the course again, I may have to narrow the focus from the outset. This time, however, I'm just going to let the students go with their interests and see what happens.

**Big Yellow Taxi** (written by Joni Mitchell, the lyrics below were slightly changed by Bob Dylan)

They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot  
With a pink hotel, a boutique  
And a swinging hot spot

(chorus:)

*Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot*

They took all the trees  
Put 'em in a tree museum  
And they charged the people  
A dollar and a half just to see 'em

(chorus)

Hey farmer farmer  
Put away that DDT now  
Give me spots on my apples  
But leave me the birds and the bees  
Please!

(chorus)

Late last night  
I heard the screen door slam  
A big yellow bulldozer  
took away the house and land

(chorus)

They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

### **You tube videos**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgMEPk6fvpg>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9F8cwExXWQ4>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPwEdeOfkbQ>

Joni singing the song (1970)  
Counting crows singing it (2003)

**ESL 516 LABORATORY IN COMMUNICATION SKILLS SYLLABUS**  
**Section 516 00P~ Spring 2009**

**Instructor:**

Name: Heather Boldt  
Office: 101 N. Decatur Building, in ESL office suite  
Contact: hboldt@emory.edu / 404-727-8075 office / 404-221-8990 home (not after 9 pm please)

**Class Information:**

Meeting times: Tuesdays, 4 –5:20 pm  
Location: 101 N. Decatur Building, Room D  
Start date: Tues, Jan 20  
Spring break: Week of March 9-13  
Final class: Tues, Apr 14 (but note testing dates below)  
Post assessment: Mon, Apr 20 & Tues, Apr 21 – On completion of ESL 516, students will take the Oral Proficiency Interview, a speaking assessment similar to the one taken upon entering the program. The post score should show a sufficient level of improvement in relation to the initial score. Individual appointments will be given to each student.  
Closings: For university closings, due to severe weather or other emergencies, call 404-727-1234

**Required Materials:** 3-ring notebook in which to put course materials

**Course Objectives:**

To improve the communication skills of the intermediate (Level 2) student by focusing on

- fluency: solidifying the ability to narrate and describe in various time aspects, and developing the ability to hypothesize, explain and defend arguments, and discuss abstract topics
- extended discourse: advancing the ability to link paragraphs into cohesive extended discourse using linguistic strategies such as organizational markers, focus cues, redundancy, and rewording
- pronunciation accuracy: improving grouping (pausing, linking, and focus), rhythm (word and sentence stress), intonation (vocal variety), and English sound articulation
- academic speaking tasks: practicing effective communication techniques as lecturers and as seminar participants and leaders to minimize interference with communication
- continuous learning strategies: self-monitoring for language issues, putting classroom activities into practice, and implementing learning techniques outside the classroom. The course will facilitate movement from instructor-guided monitoring of communication patterns (as in ESL 515) to self-monitoring during structured and spontaneous speaking situations

**Course Theme:**

For each of the above objectives, students will participate in activities related to the theme of sustainability, and each student will choose a focus within this theme. Students are encouraged to choose a focus that relates to their field of study. Alternatively, students could choose a focus that relates to sustainability issues in one of their "communities" (Emory, Atlanta, their hometown, etc). **Students will read articles, lead a small group discussion, and present a graph or table related to their sustainability focus (see below for more details).**

**Grading:**

S – satisfactory (80%+)

U – unsatisfactory (79% or lower)

In order to receive an "S" in this course, students must:

- attend classes and actively participate in class discussions & activities (20%)
- lead & participate in small group discussions (20%)
- deliver two recorded presentations (30%)
- record a minimum of 5 audio recordings outside of class (15%)
- track a news source and give informal weekly reports (15%)
- demonstrate improvement in functional speaking ability as described in the course objectives above

## Brief Description of Major Course Components:

(More detailed handouts and information packets for each of these components will be provided as the semester progresses.)

### Leading and participating in academic discussions

Students will choose an article related to their sustainability focus, summarize the article, and lead a discussion on the topic. All participants will read all articles in preparation for the discussions.

### Presenting visual information effectively

Students will prepare and deliver a presentation describing a table or graph related to their sustainability focus.

### Recording Audio Activities

Throughout the semester, students will be provided with a total of 8 audio activity assignments related to our small group discussions, the tables & graphs associated with in-class activities, the use of effective intonation, the correct use of hypothetical structures, and preparation for the post assessment. Students must submit a minimum of 5 recordings.

### Tracking a news source

Throughout the semester, students will be responsible for tracking 1 major news source, looking for information related to their sustainability focus. Students will share what they have learned in weekly informal reports. (A list of the top – in terms of circulation - US television newscasts, radio stations, and newspapers will be provided. International sources, if available in English, may also be used.)

## Daily Course Schedule:

See page 3 of this document for details on each day's in-class focus and homework assignments.

## Attendance Policy:

ESL courses are developed around a very tight schedule making attendance in each class important for full language development. In order to meet the English language requirements of the ESL Program in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, students are expected to participate actively in all ESL classes.

If a student misses 2 classes in a 2-credit course, the Instructor will notify the Director of the ESL Program in writing. The ESL Instructor in consultation with the student and the ESL Program Director will determine if s/he will be able to complete the class satisfactorily.

**PLAGIARISM:** Deliberately or inadvertently using the words of another person without giving due credit is considered plagiarism (a serious offense in the ESL Program and on the Emory campus). Each student is responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism.

## ESL 516: Advanced Laboratory in Communication Skills (2 credits) ~ Spring 2009

Mondays, Section 00P ~ 4-5:20 pm ~ Instructor Heather Boldt

CLASS # DATE	<b>In-Class Focus*</b>	<b>~ Homework: Due Before Next Class (unless otherwise noted)</b> <b>~ Audio Activities: 5 out of 8 must be completed</b>
1. Tues Jan 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Objectives &amp; Brief Introductions</li> <li>• Introduction to course theme: What is sustainability and why is it important to you and/or your field of study?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access our course in Learnlink; email me before next class if you have any difficulties</li> <li>• Visit <a href="http://www.sustainablemeasures.com">www.sustainablemeasures.com</a> and read through the various definitions of "sustainability." Be prepared to discuss the following questions: What are the connections between sustainability and your field of study? What could your focus be?</li> </ul>
2. Tues Jan 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Intonation, Reduction &amp; Linking: A song about sustainability</li> <li>• Tracking Sustainability Issues in the News: Overview &amp; Choice of News Source</li> <li>• Effective Use of Visual Aids in Presentations: excerpts from Frumkin's "Sprawl &amp; Health"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read pp 1-3 in the packet of information entitled "Seminar Discussions"</li> <li>• Audio Activity #1: Effective Intonation (Recording a poem)</li> </ul>
3. Tues Feb 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Seminar Discussions: Overview &amp; Schedule</li> <li>• Effective Use of Visual Aids in Presentations: Describing Charts &amp; Graphs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #2: Record a description of the bar graph "US Coastal Lands at Risk from Sea-level Rise"</li> <li>• Bring in graph or chart for Presentation #1 (related to sustainability focus for this class)</li> </ul>
4. Tues Feb 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Preparation for Presentation 1: Using Signals &amp; Describing Trends with Visual Aids</li> <li>• Preparation for Presentation 1: What is the graph you have chosen and what's it about? (informal group sharing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #3: Record a description of the pie chart "US Greenhouse Gas Emissions"</li> <li>• Prepare for our Presentation #2 "practice session" (bring copies of your visual to class or post your chart/graph to Learnlink)</li> <li>• Read your assigned article for our first seminar discussion</li> <li>• Discussion Leaders 1 &amp; 2: Completed worksheet due by the end of week (Fri 2/13)</li> </ul>
Thurs Feb 12	<b>Theater Workshop with Professor Tim McDonough (mandatory)</b> Workshop begins at 4:30 pm; dinner reception to follow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #4: Reactions to Theater Workshop</li> <li>• Also, see homework from class #4 (above)</li> </ul>
5. Tues Feb 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation #1: Presenting Your Visual (small group practice session)</li> <li>• Seminar Discussions #1 &amp; 2: Leaders _____ &amp; _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #5: Record a section of presentation 1, focusing on pitch changes within thought groups (due no later than Fri 2/20 so I can give feedback before you present)</li> <li>• Come to class on Tuesday ready to present!</li> </ul>
6. Tues Mar 3	<b>Presentation #1: Presenting Your Visual (recording)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read your assigned article for our second seminar discussion</li> <li>• Discussion Leaders 3 &amp; 4: Completed worksheet due by the end of week (Fri 3/6)</li> </ul>
Tues, March 10    NO CLASS ~ SPRING BREAK    (Use Spring Break to record "make-up" audio activities if necessary!)		
7. Tues Mar 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Using Hypotheticals: Discussing possibilities for a sustainable future</li> <li>• Seminar Discussions #3 &amp; 4: Leaders _____ &amp; _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #6: Using hypotheticals (Possibilities for a sustainable future)</li> <li>• Discussion Leaders 5 &amp; 6: Completed worksheet due by the end of week (Fri 3/20)</li> </ul>
8. Tues Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Seminar Discussions #5 &amp; 6: Leaders _____ &amp; _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read articles for discussion group</li> <li>• Discussion Leaders 7 &amp; 8: Completed worksheet due by the end of week (Fri 3/27)</li> </ul>
9. Tues Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Hypotheticals: Discussing Problems/Solutions (The way we build &amp; health)</li> <li>• Seminar Discussions #7 &amp; 8: Leaders _____ &amp; _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #7: Watch the excerpt from Frumkin's presentation again. How does car dependency in Atlanta affect you? What possible solutions can you think of?</li> </ul>
10. Tues Apr 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly Sustainability Reports: What's been in the news?</li> <li>• Final Presentation: Employment Interview (Responding in a professional manner) ~ Worksheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for Presentation #1 by reviewing possible questions (see p. 4 of worksheet and make brief notes as needed)</li> </ul>
11. Tues Apr 14	<b>Final Presentation (recorded):</b> Employment Interview/Responding in a professional manner • Course Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio Activity #8: Choose 1 additional interview question and record a professional response to it (due by Fri 4/17 so I can give feedback before your post assessment)</li> </ul>
4/15 & 4/16	Individual meetings with instructor to 1) review recording of your "job interview" and 2) to review language goals for the future	
Post Testing	Post Assessment/Oral Proficiency Interviews: Monday, April 20 & Tuesday, April 21 ~ Individual appointments will be given	

\* This schedule is tentative and may change at the discretion of the instructor.