

SYLLABUS

Fall 2015

Course ID: Prep 040 2841
Course Name: Test Preparation
Level: 3
Credit Hours: 12
Meeting Times: Tue @ 10:20 – 11:35, 11:45 – 13:00
Wed @ 11:45 – 13:00
Fri @ 11:45 – 13:00
Instructor: Roman Mamashev
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Office hours: Tuesday @ 14:25 – 15:25

I. Texts & Materials

Core texts:

- Deborah Phillips, *Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL® Test: The Paper-Based Test*, Pearson Education, Inc., 2003

Extra materials are to be either distributed in class as handouts or posted online (starting with Week 2).

II. Course description

This course introduces the one-year program in Test Preparation and covers the material targeted at improving your overall score on a standardized exam. It will familiarize you with the overall structure of the test, and focus on particular parts: structure, listening, and reading comprehension. The course also includes work on vocabulary, component essential for understanding information of any kind, as well as abilities needed for more effective academic activities in any language.

III. Outcomes

Having taken this course, students will be able to get higher grades on a standardized exam and improve the abilities tested by the respective exam (i.e. retrieve more information from informal conversations or lectures delivered in class, read academic texts critically, and be able to edit their own writings).

- **Listening Comprehension:** Students will know how to deal with the three subsections of this part of the test, which strategies to use and what information to pay attention to. They will also learn the vocabulary used in listening comprehension section, such as idioms and phrasal verbs, and know how to retrieve implied information, making logical conclusions based on the stated information.
- **Structure and Written Expression:** Students will get familiarized with simple and complex sentence structure as well as problems connected with common misuse of the sentence components. They will also refresh their knowledge of basic grammar taught at school and acquire the skill of intuitively locating parts in conflict with the rest of the sentence.
- **Reading Comprehension:** Students will get familiarized with reading on academic level, be able to make logical conclusions based on the information stated in the passage and guess the meaning of the unfamiliar words. They will also learn the vocabulary used in various fields of science, such as arts, music, etc.
- **Writing:** Students will be drilled to spawn ideas quickly and be able to categorize and organize ideas within the limited period of time.

IV. Grading

Activity Grading*

Grades are given based on:

Type of activity	Pts	Ttl
Classroom Activities	10*15	150
Home Assignments	10*15	150
Blog entries and Replies	10*14	140
Section Tests	40*3	120
Glossary Entries and Projects	20*7	140
Online Activities	10*7	70
In-class Quizzes and Tests	5*14	70
Final Exam	1*40	40
TOTAL		880

Grade/Percentage Ratio:

A	94-100%	B-	77-79%	D+	60-63%
A-	90-93%	C+	74-76%	D	54-59%
B+	86-89%	C	68-73%	D-	50-53%
B	80-85%	C-	64-67%	F	< 50%

Shared Responsibility

Some activities will be graded based on:

1. Instructor evaluation
2. Peer evaluation
3. Self-evaluation

The criteria will be announced and/or discussed before the grading takes place. Thus, the Shared Responsibility principle will come into effect starting no earlier than the second week.

The activities with a shared grade will include:

1. Classroom activity
2. Online activity (Blogging included)
3. Project work
4. Home assignments (in part)

At the start of each week, you will receive a form with the list of students and the rubric with the evaluation criteria. These forms must be filled in during the week and submitted to the instructor on the last day of your week's classes.

More information on evaluating team projects will be discussed in class and posted on the e-course.

V. Course Expectations

We will strive to build a community where everyone is respected and accepted. Some of your activities will have a collaborative nature: a group project and presentation, online and classroom discussions. In all your communication, please be tactful and polite.

Online Access

Each student should have access to the Internet and must register for the Moodle e-course in the first week of classes. All class-related electronic communication will be done through Moodle messaging.

Attendance and Participation

No credit is given for being present, but being regularly late or passive affects your final grade. Every minute you are late for the class will be counted out of your class grade (thus, being 5 minutes late will become -5%).

It is also *your* responsibility to notify the instructor, the adviser and the office if you are going to miss a class because of an emergency (illness or other). This can be done via phone or email. *6 unexcused absences will result in an F for the course.* Your participation during the class will be graded collectively, as mentioned above, and it is your responsibility to work for the grade.

If you have a missed class because of an emergency, it is your responsibility to:

- a) Provide a document justifying your absence (medical certificate, etc.);
- b) Contact your instructor to arrange an extra assignment to make-up for a missing participation grade.

Unjustified absence does not qualify for a make-up. A zero received for a missed class is final.

Homework

Home assignments are an integral and important component of the instruction. All home assignments should be completed on time. If you miss, or do not understand, a home assignment, you must check with your instructor or with another student *promptly*. Below you will see the types of home assignments you will have during this course.

Assigned Readings/Videos

You are to read the assigned texts prior to coming to class. They are assigned for the week that follows to ensure the depth of classroom interaction and individual reflection. You are expected to look up unfamiliar words before coming to class.

Online Forums and Blogs

On our Moodle course site you will participate in online forums and write/record reflections on issues raised in class and topics given by the instructor. These have several benefits:

First, they accommodate the students who need more time to reflect on issues raised in our classroom discussions. Next, online forums/blogs allow you to record your thoughts and go back to read what your classmates have said on a particular topic. Finally, this recorded discussion may help you generate ideas for your essays. When participating in online forums, you are expected to follow the rules of netiquette.

For each Forum, you need to make a post answering the questions and then comment on at least two other classmates' posts. Make your comments worth reading.

Group Project and Presentation

You will work individually or in groups of four to work on a project and present it to the whole class. Specific instructions and grading criteria will be given on the Moodle course site.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted by the due date. No exceptions. ***Late works will not be accepted, and the grade for the writing assignment will be zero (F).*** Papers can be submitted electronically (preferred) or printed out and brought to class. The Moodle site will have the submission box for your assignments. All papers are to be typed, double-spaced in 12 pt. Times Roman typeface or 11 pt. Calibri with one-inch margins.

Cell Phones

All cell phones (including the instructor's) will be either turned off or set to "silent" for the duration of the class session. Failure to do so will affect your grade for the class (minus 10%).

Personal Issues

If you have any problems concerning the course material or the classroom instruction, you are encouraged to immediately discuss it with your instructor, or your advisor, outside of class time — during "office hours" (see course information).

Academic Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable. All work submitted by a student must represent her/his own ideas, concepts, and current understanding. Any content that is referenced or has small amounts of material quoted should be cited using APA format. Images or other media used in projects should be original, used with permission, or come from public domain. You will find resources for the APA style and free media on our Moodle course site.

VI. Lesson Schedule*

Weeks	Test Skills and Materials (pages)**	Glossary Topics***
Weeks 1-2	LS: Part A: Strategies (12-18); GR: Sentences with one clause (98-106), Sentences with multiple clauses (107-113); RD: Questions about the idea of the passage (251-258)	House and Household
Weeks 3-4	LS: Part A: Who, What, Where (19-27); GR: More sentences with multiple clauses (114-122), Sentences with reduced clauses (123-130); RD: Directly Answered Questions (259-274)	Anatomy and Health
Weeks 5-6	LS: Part A: Negatives (28-37); GR: Sentences with inverted subjects and verbs (131-142), Problems with subject/verb agreement (144-151); RD: Indirectly answered questions (275-287) Section Test 1	Entertainment and Arts
Weeks 7-8	LS: Part A: Functions (38-45); GR: Problems with parallel structure (152-157) Problems with comparatives and superlatives (158-163), Problems with the form of the verb (164-168); RD: Vocabulary Questions (288-305)	Education and Technology
Weeks 9-10	LS: Part A: Contrary meanings (46-52); GR: Problems with the use of the verb (169-177), Problems with passive verbs (178-181), Problems with nouns (182-189); RD: Overall Review Questions (306-337) Section Test 2	Culture and Cuisine
Weeks 11-12	LS: Part A: Idiomatic language (53-58); GR: Problems with pronouns (190-195), Problems with adjectives and adverbs (196-203), Problems with Adjectives (204-209); TWE: Sample Essays (338-343), Before writing (344-349)	Biology
Weeks 13-14	LS: Part B (59-69); GR: Problems with Articles (210-216), Problems with prepositions (217-220); TWE: While writing (350-361)	Astronomy
Week 15	LS: Part C (70-87); GR: Problems with usage (221-227); TWE: After writing (362-374) Section Test 3	

LEGEND: **LS** = Longman, Listening Section
 GR = Longman, Structure and Written Expression Section
 RD = Longman, Reading Section
 TWE = Longman, Test of Written English Section

- * This schedule is subject to adjustments and changes. You will be notified beforehand.
- ** E-course assignments and deadlines will be posted on the course page.
- *** Glossary-related projects will be posted on the e-course