

# Going Blue: Culture, Language and Beyond

## Summer 2023

The Syllabus explains what you can expect from this course.

Congratulations on your admission to the University of Michigan, one of the world's premier public institutions of higher learning. This optional non-credit online course prepares you to succeed at U-M by exploring how you want to engage with campus life, culture, and communication in English. You can anticipate a fun, engaging, social experience.

### Objectives

By participating in the course, you will

- Enhance your **confidence speaking and writing in English**
- Prepare for **Academic life at U-M**, e.g. participating in discussion classes, navigating group work, interacting with instructors, writing and speaking in academic contexts
- Get involved in the U-M campus community, engaging with **Social life**, e.g. friendships, residential life, community connections
- Understand **U-M efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)** and to change racist structures and practices
- Learn about **Support**, e.g. campus units and student organizations that provide support to international students in hundreds of different ways

### Course Activities

- Discussion forums
- Video-centered discussions
- Live conversations on Zoom (optional)
- Group activities
- Four-part Personal Engagement Plan

*Plan on setting aside 3-4 hours each week to explore language, campus culture and beyond together.*



## Course Outline

### **Week 1: Getting to know one another and this course**

Become familiar with the course & one another. Participation in everything this first week unlocks the rest of the class.

Discussions involve life transitions, diversity, and naming.

### **Week 2: Getting to know Michigan: Campus life & resources**

Explore a variety of different features of campus life and the myriad resources available to students to help them thrive.

Explore the campus and its resources (virtually), negotiate roles in collaborative projects, navigate academic integrity, explore dorm life and learning communities, and start to build your Personal Engagement Plan (PEP). Your PEP will help you to make the most out of your undergraduate experience by setting clear academic and non-academic goals, listing resources and how to access them, outlining spaces to find community on campus, and developing a plan to cope with emotionally challenging situations.

### **Week 3: Getting involved in campus life**

Start to engage with multiple spaces where you can find community and support at Michigan. Identify and learn how to access the vast array of resources with value to multilingual and international students.

Select student organizations to get involved in, practice visiting office hours, find writing support, and complete a team project showcasing useful resources for students at U-M, plus of course integrate your takeaways into your Personal Engagement Plan.

### **Week 4: Facing challenges successfully**

Discover the power of assertive communication to achieve multiple goals: for building relationships, for communicating and making requests to administrators and faculty members, for dealing with roommates and peers, for managing group work, for crafting effective written assignments, and more.

Explore the range of assignment types students might encounter, plan for sustained wellness, practice self-advocacy, examine impostor syndrome, and reflect on all the pieces you will have put together in your Personal Engagement Plan.



## Your Instructor

Pamela Bogart, Lecturer IV, English Language Institute

We will interact throughout the course, and I look forward to getting to know you well.

You can send me messages within the Canvas Inbox ( [Canvas dashboard](#) ) or email <pbogart@umich.edu> anytime.

## Course format

Each week, you'll have a few asynchronous discussions with a deadline for participation. This way, you don't have to worry about time zone or your summer schedule. You can also choose to join optional Zoom conversations if you want to.

## Technical requirements to take this course online

The course is set up in Canvas, available to U-M students at <http://umich.instructure.com>. This is the same platform you will use in your Fall classes across the university. You will need:

- an internet-capable device that can play video, record voice and video, and upload video files to the course website (and optionally connect via Zoom.)
- for some activities, a laptop or desktop computer may work much better than a phone or tablet
- access to a means to use your U-M email and login (which may require a VPN, depending on where you're taking the course, because U-M email (@umich.edu) is on the Google email platform)

## Grading

Since this course isn't for credit, you won't be earning a typical grade, like "A-" or "Credit." Instead, we'll look at degree of participation. (See the table below.) Earning at least 80% of the point total constitutes "Completion" of the course. Your grade is private to you, and will not be recorded by the University of Michigan Registrar, so it will not be included in your official U-M transcript.

Degree of participation	Percent of possible points
Completed course!	80% - 100%
Active participation	<80% - 60%
Intermittent participation	<60% - 30%



Minimal participation	<30%
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## Content you'll typically find in U-M Course Syllabi

The Syllabus is like a contract between you and your instructors, and also supplies access to resources on campus that can help you succeed in each course. Here are sections of our syllabus that are also likely to be part of the syllabi for your courses this fall.

### Community Commitments: Our Guidelines for Inclusive Participation

How can we create an online community together for this course that is caring, inclusive of everyone in the course, intellectually challenging, and boosts everyone's confidence in using English?

We are soon going to be posting a video self-intro so that we can get started speaking in English together right away. Sharing a video with strangers, however, can feel kind of stressful. Thus, before we begin to post videos, we want to foster an inclusive, respectful community.

Here is a starting set of guidelines for our ongoing collaboration. We will allow these guidelines to evolve as we discuss them and build a dynamic, inclusive learning community together. This Syllabus will be updated accordingly in the first couple weeks of our course.

1. **Privacy** We will not share any information about anyone else in the class or anything they post, electronically or otherwise. We'll all be submitting informal audio/video recordings, and these should never be re-posted anywhere else.

2. **Learning from one another** We will listen to each other and respond to each other, not just look for opportunities to make our own points. We realize that the differences among us in backgrounds, skills, interests, and values will increase our awareness and understanding. Part of making learning from one another possible is offering productive feedback to classmates to the best of our abilities.



3. **Valuing one another's perspectives** We will not demean, devalue, or "put down" people for their experiences, lack of experiences or difference in interpretation of those experiences. In other words, **always respect classmates** (which is true for 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 too).
4. **Challenge ideas, not people** If we wish to challenge or disagree with something that has been said (or written), we will be careful to talk about the idea, not the individual person sharing this idea.
5. **Balance participation** Be mindful of taking up much more space than others, and seek contributions from classmates. Also be mindful of making minimal contributions, and empower yourself to contribute when others are dominating the conversation or group effort.
6. **Read/listen before posting to discussions** By reading and listening to what's already been posted before joining online discussions, frame your contribution as deepening or broadening the conversation, not just repeating what has been said. This approach will make discussions both more efficient and more productive.
7. **Be sensitive to diverse beliefs and identities** Topics involving beliefs or identity such as religion, sexual orientation, nationality, or political views should be discussed with extra care to express respect and empathy. It will be important to use guidelines 2, 3, and 6 to interact thoughtfully with one another. From a 2020 student: if politics come up, let's remain rational in our responses to one another.

*Guidelines adapted for this course from "Guidelines for Dialogue," The Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan, 2016 and revised with input from ELI students.*

## Accommodations

If there is anything you'd like me to know about how you learn best and any accommodations that would support your best learning, please contact me via email or Canvas messaging. If you have a disability or learning difference that we can accommodate, I am eager to do so.

Of course I will maintain the confidentiality of any information you share with me.

## Religious/Cultural Holidays

I encourage you to celebrate religious or cultural holidays that are important to you. Please inform me in advance as to how a given holiday will affect your participation schedule, so that we can make advance alternate plans together.



## What else the English Language Institute (ELI) can offer you

The ELI offers a range of credit and non-credit ways to enhance your oral and written communication in English.

### Courses

See the ELI website for a current list of 1-credit mini-course offerings, which range from interactive speaking to writing and vocabulary.

### Studio

The ELI Speaking and Writing Studio offers one-on-one consultation on any aspect of speaking or writing you'd like to work on. You can practice for an upcoming presentation, strategize a self-study plan for summer, or get advice on revising a paper or application, for example.

### Conversation Circles

To practice fluent, everyday social interaction in English, you may be interested in joining a Conversation Circle to practice these skills in a fun, friendly environment. Circles meet weekly at a wide range of times and places (including online.)

## Student Wellbeing

Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, U-M offers the following resources:

- [\*\*Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)\*\*](#) - confidential; 734-764-8312; for after-hours urgent support, call and press 0; counseling, workshops, groups and more, counselors are embedded in some schools
- [\*\*Dean of Students Office\*\*](#) - 734-764-7420; provides support services to students and manages critical incidents impacting students and the campus community



- [Ginsberg Center for Community Service Learning](#) - 734-763-3548; opportunities to engage as learners and leaders to create a better community and world
- [Multi-ethnic Student Affairs \(MESA\)](#) - 734-763-9044; diversity and social justice through the lens of race and ethnicity
- [Office of Student Conflict Resolution](#) - 734-936-6308; offers multiple pathways for resolving conflict
- [Office of the Ombuds](#) - 734-763-3545; students can raise questions and concerns about the functioning of the university.
- [Services for Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#) - 734-763-3000; accommodations and access to students with disabilities
- [Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center \(SAPAC\)](#) - confidential; 734-764-7771 or 24-hour crisis line 734-936-3333; addresses sexual assault, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and stalking
- [Spectrum Center](#) - 734-763-4186; support services for LGBTQ+ students
- [Trotter Multicultural Center](#) - 734-763-3670; intercultural engagement and inclusive leadership education initiatives
- [University Health Service \(UHS\)](#) - 734-764-8320; clinical services include nurse advice by phone, day or night
- [Well-being for U-M Students website](#) - searchable list of many more campus resources
- [Wolverine Wellness](#) - confidential; 734-763-1320; provides Wellness Coaching and much more

## Canvas help

[Link to Canvas support for students](#)