

IS 502: Academic Seminar

WN26 | U-M ELI

Your Instructor: Katie Coleman, Lecturer II, U-M ELI (You can call me "Katie")

Email: kcolema@umich.edu

Location/Time: 955 Weiser Hall, 12-2pm Wednesdays

Dates: Jan 21, 2026 - Apr 8, 2026 (10 week course; no class March 3 or March 25)

Course Description

This course provides scholars, researchers, faculty and other academic professionals with communication strategies for effective academic speaking and writing. Participants learn the basics of academic presentation and develop techniques for effectively participating in academic discussions. Other course topics include the style and organization of research writing, vocabulary development, and pronunciation. Extensive individualized instructor feedback helps participants at all levels of English proficiency improve their spoken accuracy, fluency, and delivery style in both professional and social settings.

Course Goals

The goals for this class are for you to be able to:

- Increase your confidence communicating in academic situations
- Introduce yourself and your professional contributions clearly and confidently
- Participate effectively in formal discussions (i.e. give and support opinions, defend claims, interrupt politely, etc.)
- Improve clarity in academic presentations, conversations, and discussions
- Boost vocabulary in oral and written English
- Write a problem-solution text in your field and edit your work based on feedback
- Give an academic presentation in your field with accompanying visuals

Materials

We will use a variety of resources that I will distribute in class or post on Canvas. Slides for each session will be posted on Canvas.

Contacting Me

Besides regular office hours, I am available by email (kcolema@umich.edu) or on Zoom. If you want to meet, send me an email and we'll set up a time.

Grading

This is a non-credit course and no grades will be assigned. You will receive individualized feedback on all of your assignments. Students who regularly attend and successfully complete all course assignments will receive a Certificate of Successful Completion at the end of the course.

ELI resources

- [ELI Speaking and Writing Clinics \(Free one-on-one help!\)](#)
- [ELI Conversation Circles \(Make friends, practice conversational English\)](#)

Accommodations & Religious/Cultural Holidays

If there is anything you would like me to know about how you learn best or any accommodations that would support your learning, please contact me via email or in person. If you have a disability or learning difference that we can accommodate, we are eager to do so. Any information you provide is private and confidential. I encourage you to celebrate religious or cultural holidays that are important to you. Please inform me in advance, in writing, so that we can make advance alternate plans together.

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. Additional on-campus mental health resources can be here: <https://www.umichwsn.org/resources>.