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“With this program we hope that we meet the challenge imposed by the globalized world”

English for Engineers Program in the College of Engineering

With the vision of having professionals with a more competitive profile, the current administration of the College of Engineering of Universidad de Antioquia, implemented the program English for Engineers, from the first term 2008. This program is the result of a curricular amendment, which purpose is to provide graduates with the knowledge of a second or third foreign language.



Nowadays, professionals are required to manage a second language, mainly English; it is well known that a professional managing a second language has more opportunities in the labor market.

According to Olga Gil Dominguez, English professor and official translator, coordinator of the program English for Engineers, “the general objective of the program is that students at the end of sixth semester are able to communicate in English, either orally or in a written way.” Professor Gil Dominguez explains that every person needs to manage four abilities: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

From 2008-1, engineering programs included English from the first term; consequently English is a mandatory subject for students enrolled in 2008-1. Students from other terms could take the courses conditioned to the possibility of a room for them.

The College of Engineering opened 32 groups for the first level of the program; each group has 25 students. The courses are lectured by 12 teachers in on-site modality. Ude@ program started on July 18th with 7 courses lectured by 4 teachers.

English for Engineers program will offer six levels for learning and practicing English. When students complete the sixth level, there will be spaces for the practicing of the language, either through courses in English or through extracurricular activities. Professor Olga Gil Dominguez

states that “languages are not to be learned but to be practiced”. To learn a language demands a lot of practice.

English from the beginning to the end

The methodology used in the English program is based on case study; students have to use English from the very beginning to the end of the course, and in every case study, students have to communicate in an oral and a written way. Level I is about presentations, nationalities, daily life activities, purchases, food, and family. Level II deals with getting a job: interviews, CVs, medical examination to enter a company, labor environment, mobbing, labor stress, vacation. Level III is about Environment, etc. Every case study is based on oral and written communication in which students have to use vocabulary, listening, grammar, reading, writing, and interviews. Vocabulary for engineering is included in readings and interviews. The idea is that students learn both daily life and engineering vocabulary so at the end of the six levels they are trained not only to understand oral and written texts for engineers but also take any exam to study abroad and be able to have an interview in English.

It is important to mention that “learners are responsible for their learning”. To help them in this process, there will be extracurricular activities to help learners from the program or from the College of Engineering in general, as well as teachers and employees to improve their English language. If they have difficulties in pronunciation, they could consult the extracurricular activity: Clinicians. If their difficulty is in