The academic year may end in April for most people, but it doesn’t have to. UBC Continuing Studies offers courses throughout the year in a wide variety of areas, from language and web design to creative and academic writing. Even though the courses are non-credit, many of them can be relevant to your Arts degree and your career.

When considering Continuing Studies, it’s easy to get lost at the “non-credit” part. A lot of the courses offered through UBC Continuing Studies don’t fit into a typical Arts degree at UBC. Culinary Arts won’t help your economics degree. A course in academic or business writing, however, might be worth the investment.

“Especially with the economy being so competitive these days, as someone with an Arts background, being able to say you’ve taken a report and business writing course could really help you professionally,” says Loren Aytona, Student Services Representative at the UBC Continuing Studies Writing Centre, a division of UBC Continuing Studies. In this same vein, courses offered through Continuing Studies in web programming, web design, and social media are useful for professionals in any field, given the digital age we live in.

The UBC Continuing Studies Writing Centre offers courses in academic, creative, and business writing. Included in its broad variety of subjects are specific courses for undergraduates transitioning to university writing, courses for graduate students working on their thesis, and courses for anyone working on academic articles. On a lighter note, taking a course in food and travel writing, novel writing, or book illustration would be interesting just for the sake of it, and taking courses for fun can lead you to some pretty interesting places. Aytona says, “Especially in our freelance article writing course, we have people who have never seen their name in print and end up getting published in local media like the Georgia Straight.”

UBC Continuing Studies also has an extensive languages program that includes conversational courses in 21 different languages. For anyone intending to travel abroad after graduation, or study in another country through an exchange program like Go Global, this program presents an alternative to undergraduate languages courses. Tea Inkinen, Administrative Manager for the Writing Centre and Languages, Cultures, & Travel, says: “I think sometimes students find they’re in classes and they don’t get enough opportunity to practice the conversational side of learning.” She adds that this applies to language majors too – courses in the conversational format provide the opportunity to practice conversation without the pressure of marks and exams.

Some courses offered over the summer run once a week, some are week-long intensives, and others run for one or two full days. UBC Continuing Studies offers their courses for “lifelong learners,” which includes anyone eighteen or older, and there are no formal prerequisites for any of their courses. Inkinen says, “In the summer there are a lot of interesting opportunities for students. The courses might fit into their schedule more easily because they don’t have as much to do as in the fall, so why not? Why not come?”

More information on UBC Continuing Studies as well as detailed course descriptions and times can be found on their website.