ELI Writing Contest

The ELI is holding a competition for students in all writing classes. There will be one winner in each level (2,3,4,5,6), and the winners will be announced at the ELI Closing Ceremony.

If you have written a good composition in your writing class this semester, you should tell your writing teacher that you would like to enter it in the writing contest. Your teacher will then submit your paper for you. Your entry will be read anonymously by judges (your name will be removed from the paper, so they won’t know who you are). The judges will choose the best composition from each level.

**The deadline for entries is Tuesday, April 3 at 4:00 pm.**

If you are in level 4, 5, or 6, your entry must be an essay that you wrote in class this semester. If you are in level 2 or 3, your entry can be a shorter composition, even a single paragraph. Each student can enter only one composition. Good luck!

**Sponsorship Letters**

If you have an official sponsorship letter from your government (SACM or CBIE, for example) you must submit it to the ELI Main Office. Students must give an updated sponsor letter to the ELI and to the Student Payment Center each term. If you have any questions about this, please visit the ELI Main Office.

All sponsored students must also complete an information sheet in the ELI Main Office. The ELI must contact sponsors throughout the term, and we require updated information about the student’s sponsor and advisor. Students must complete this form each semester and when their sponsor information changes.

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**ELI Activity:**

**FRIYAY FISH FRY**

**What’s for dinner? How about a Friday Fish Fry?**

Come join your ELI teachers and classmates this Friday, March 2nd, and eat dinner at a traditional Pittsburgh Fish Fry! In early spring in Pittsburgh, it is traditional for people to gather in public places such as schools, churches, and fire stations on Fridays to eat fish together. A traditional Pittsburgh Fish Fry dinner consists of fried or baked fish along with delicious foods from Eastern Europe such as pierogis and huluski. If you don’t know what these foods are, you should join us and find out for yourself!!

How did this tradition begin? In the past, many Catholic people came from countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Italy to work in Pittsburgh’s factories. Their religion required them not to eat meat on Fridays during Lent, which is a period of time beginning six weeks before Easter. Instead of meat, they would often eat fish. Community organizations and churches began serving fish dinners on those Fridays to raise money for good causes, and the tradition continues today!

Please note: Although many Friday Fish Fry dinners are often hosted by churches, they are NOT religious events. Many Pittsburghers of all religions attend a Friday Fish Fry for the good food and friendly atmosphere.

There will be NO religious service and people of all faiths or no faith are welcome.

**Place:** Epiphany Church, 164 Washington Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, next to the PPG Paints Arena in Downtown Pittsburgh.

**Time:** We will meet in the ELI lobby at 4:00 and leave at 4:15. We will take the bus downtown together. You can also take your own transportation and meet us there.

**Cost:** A fish sandwich costs $9.00 and side dishes cost $2 - $3. Drinks, additional side dishes and desserts are available for a few dollars more. **BRING CASH!!** There are no credit cards or debit cards accepted.

**Website menu:** [https://epiphanychurch.net/fish-fry/](https://epiphanychurch.net/fish-fry/)

If you plan to attend, please sign up before Thursday, March 1 in the Vault!

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**ELI Trip to Washington, DC Mandatory Meeting**

It’s almost time for our terrific tour of Washington, DC! We will have a pre-departure briefing (meeting) on Thursday, March 1 from 4:00-4:30pm in Room M15. This is the room next to the main office. At this briefing, we will sign legal releases, go over packing requirements, and review the itinerary. Attendance is mandatory. Please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu if you are unable to attend.
English in the Classroom

This is just a reminder that it is a huge benefit for your language learning if you speak English as much as possible. Some of you are still tempted to speak your native languages to your friends. This is understandable because it is much easier and more comfortable. Please remember, though, that when you are in an ELI classroom, your teachers and your classmates only want to hear your English, even if it isn’t quite accurate yet. Your teachers cannot be flexible with this requirement; they have to insist that you utilize your English.

Keeping Classrooms Clean

We try to create a nice environment for our ELI students, and part of that is providing neat and tidy classrooms for you. Please help us to keep our classrooms clean by throwing away any garbage in the appropriate trash cans. Please don’t leave any water bottles, cups, papers, or any other trash on desks, on the floor, or in the hallway after you have finished with them. There are trashcans in every classroom and in each hallway please use them.

Information for Sponsored Saudi Students

If you are a sponsored student, the ELI is required to report on your performance each term. Please note the following information from the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM).

SACM has reminded us that it has a 100% attendance policy for its sponsored students. SACM writes, “Students are expected to be in class at all times, and absences must be limited to sick leave authorized by a physician and/or an immigration situation that requires an absence to maintain legal standing.” Please be careful to attend all classes for the rest of the term unless you have an illness or an immigration issue that requires attention. The ELI is required each term to report on progress and excessive absences of sponsored students to SACM.

Please note: The ELI has its own attendance policy, as well. There are no excused absences in the ELI. If you miss class because of an illness or an immigration issue, it will be counted as an absence on your ELI record, even if SACM allows it. There are no exceptions to this rule. For details on the ELI attendance policy, see the online Student Handbook.

If you have any questions about these policies, please see Stacy.

What’s Happening Around Pitt’s Campus?

As a student at the ELI, you have the opportunity to participate in various student affairs events throughout the Pitt campus. Consider attending any of the below events remaining in February with a fellow ELI student or to make a new friend! For questions, email elipitt@pitt.edu or visit the student affairs master event calendar at www.events.pitt.edu.

Multicultural Dance Battle
Friday, February 23, 4 pm to midnight
O’Hara Student Center Ballroom

Salsa Workshop
Sunday, February 25, 1:30 to 4 pm
O’Hara Student Center Dining Room

Delta Chi Bake Sale
Monday, February 26, noon to 4 pm
William Pitt Union Info Table

Artful Wednesday’s Performance
Wed., February 28, noon to 1 pm
William Pitt Union Nordy’s Place

Trump or Trump?
By Carol Harmatz

Everyone knows what Trump means, but can you define trump? First, be sure that you know the significant difference in meaning between a capital letter and a small letter! If you don’t know, ask someone to explain it to you.

The Longman Dictionary [www.ldoceonline.com] lists the first meaning of trump as it relates to playing cards. The most valuable card that a player uses will win all the cards on the table, and it will be identified as the trump card. However, this idea of competing and winning can be applied to any situation. For instance, the Longman Dictionary gives the following example: Her creative and compelling research trumped all the other talks given at the conference. What do you think this means?

Interestingly, although Donald Trump is given as an option when you look up the word trump, it doesn’t list his current job. I guess that the Longman Dictionary has not updated their entries.

Wikipedia [en.wikipedia.org] says that the name Trump comes from German, and it means drum.

ELI Final Exam Schedule Spring 2018

The ELI gives final exams at the end of the term. These exams are worth 30% of the final grade for each class. There are no excused absences for finals. The ELI does not give early final exams or makeup exams. Please note the following schedule and plan to be present for the finals.

Coffee Talk on Fridays!
4:00 – 6:00 pm Panera (3800 Forbes Ave.)
ELI Activity:

**International Speed Friending**

Join us for International “Speed Friending” on Tues., February 27 from 4:30-6:30 pm in the O’Hara Student Center Dining Room (4024 O’Hara St). This is a fun way to make friends fast, have fun, and practice your English!

If you’ve ever heard of “Speed Dating,” this is similar. The only difference is that the objective is to make friends! On Tues., February 27, international students from Pitt will have the opportunity to meet American students at Pitt, and vice versa. Students will be seated across from each other (one American student and one international student) and have 5 minutes to talk with each other in English to see if they have similar interests or hobbies. This is not for dating! This is for making friends. After five minutes, a timer will go off and the students move on and talk with someone else. Students will also have the opportunity to exchange contact information in case they want to keep in touch. Refreshments will be served.

You must pre-register for this event by Monday, February 26 at www.tinyurl.com/ISF2184. Seating is limited and is on a first come, first served basis.

Don’t be reluctant to do this. You have nothing to lose and will gain practice with English and maybe even a new friend!

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**F1 Students and Part Time Study**

Students with F1 visas have the benefit of taking a vacation term for part time study. If you have studied full time at the ELI for two semesters, you can choose to take a break next semester or to study part time. You may only take one vacation term during your study at the ELI.

Please remember that you must pre-register for this benefit. You cannot change to a vacation term after the term starts. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** The deadline for choosing a vacation term or part time study for F1 students is April 9, 2017.

Also, please remember that Saudi and Kuwaiti students who are sponsored by their governments are not allowed to study part time because of sponsor rules. If you are a sponsored student and would like to study part time, you must provide a letter of permission from your sponsor before April 9. This letter must be in English. The ELI does not make these requests for students; you must speak to your sponsor yourself.

**Lateeness**

Please remember that the ELI Attendance policy states that a student will be considered absent if the student is over 5 minutes late for class. Your teachers do not have any flexibility with this policy; they must mark you absent if you are over 5 minutes late. Please be aware of your breaks between classes and come to class on time.

**Repeating Level 6 at the ELI**

Many of you are making plans for your academic future here in the U.S. Please remember that ELI students are allowed to take only two semesters at level 6. After you complete two terms at level 6, you must transfer to another program if you want to stay in the U.S. The ELI cannot make exceptions to this rule, so please plan carefully.

For more information about this event, contact Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

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**ELI Activity:**

**Snow Tubing Reminders**

You may have noticed that we have had unseasonably warm weather and rain the last few days. That means there is a chance we won’t be able to go snow tubing this Saturday.

If you signed up for this activity, Ece will send you an email on Friday that will tell you if we are going snow tubing. You can also try to find her in M02 or ask in the main office. If the activity is canceled, you will receive a full refund. If the ELI doesn’t cancel the activity, there are no refunds even if you decide not to go.

On February 24, we will meet at 1:00 pm in front of the ELI. Be sure to check the bus schedules to campus, as they are slightly different on Saturdays. If you are late, we cannot wait for you because our tickets are for a scheduled time.

We are taking university vans. If you bring a drink, it must be in a spill-proof mug. Before we leave, you will be required to sign two legal releases for this activity, one for the ELI and one for Boyce Park.

Boyce Park is approximately 35 minutes from the University. Once we arrive, we will have 2 hours to enjoy tubing. We will return to Pittsburgh around 6:00 pm.

The current weather forecast for Saturday is 58°F (14°C) with a chance of rain. Although it won’t be very cold, the ground might be wet, so bring waterproof clothing if you have it. You might also want to bring a change of clothes in case you get wet. There are coin lockers available at the park. If you have any questions, please contact Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.
ELI Activity:

Baseball Game

Join the ELI as we cheer for the Pittsburgh Pirates when they take on the Cincinnati Reds on Sat., April 7, at 7:05 pm. Tickets are $22 each. Our seats are in the Upper Level Grandstand (with a view of the game and the skyline!).

Everyone in our group will get a Pirates Cap! In addition, we will get to enjoy a fantastic fireworks show after the game.

If you would like to go with our group, you must pay the main office by 4:30 pm on Thursday, March 1. Please bring the exact amount, cash only. Feel free to buy a ticket for a friend, too, even if they are not in the ELI.

There are no cancellations or refunds. Even if it rains, we will still go to the game. Baseball games are rarely cancelled because of weather, but the fireworks show could be cancelled because of the rain.

ELI Absence Policy

We often have questions about excused absences in the ELI. It is true that if you are sick, it is not appropriate for you to come to school—you may infect others, and it is crucial that you rest to get well. Please note, though, that the ELI attendance policy states that "there is no such thing as an excused absence" in the ELI. Even if you are sick, the absence must be counted as an unexcused absence according to the ELI rules.

If you miss over 8 classes, you will not receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the term. If you miss over 12, you may not be invited back to the ELI next term. If you are an F-1 student and you miss over 15 classes, your visa may be terminated. Please see the online Student Handbook for more information on the ELI attendance policy.

Also, please remember that if you do not do the work in your classes and the homework, this will affect your grade. If you want to make progress with your language learning, it is important that you attend class on time, regularly, with your homework complete. Please see Stacy if you have any questions or concerns about attendance in the ELI.

Letters of Recommendation

Many of you will need to ask Stacy for a letter of recommendation if you are applying to other institutions. There are two important things to remember when making a request for a letter. The first factor is that letters of recommendation are based on your performance at the ELI. Stacy uses your grade reports as a resource for information about your performance. If you miss a lot of classes and don’t do your work, your letter of recommendation will not be very strong.

The second important factor is time. Please remember that it takes approximately one week to receive a letter of recommendation. Stacy has many letters to write, and she cannot provide them immediately when you ask for them. This means that if you need a letter before the semester break in April, you should request it by Monday, April 9. If you request a letter after this date, or during the break, you will have to wait until after the next term begins. Please plan ahead when making your requests.

Upcoming ELI Activities

Friday, February 23: Pitt Night at the Ballet: Swan Lake
Saturday, February 24: Snow Tubing
Monday, February 26: Language Music Club
Tuesday, February 27: International Speed Friending
Friday, March 2: Fish Fry
Friday, March 9-Sunday, March 11: Trip to Washington, DC
Saturday, March 17: ELI Night
Saturday, April 7: Pirates Game

Title IX Policy

Title IX is a U.S. law that gives you the right to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the University, have the University investigate what happened, and have your complaint resolved. Sexual misconduct is sexual contact that you do not want:

- Someone speaking to you in a sexual way or asking you for sex when you aren’t interested.
- Someone forcing you to have sexual contact.
- Relationship violence: Spouse/partner speaking to you or treating you in an abusive or violent way.
- Stalking: Someone repeatedly following or threatening you, including by phone/text/email/mail/social media.

You can report sexual misconduct to ELI officials or to the police. The ELI will help you report the issue to the University. Please note: If you report an issue to an ELI staff or faculty member, the ELI is required to report the issue to the University Title IX office. The ELI cannot maintain complete confidentiality. In other words, if you tell any teacher or staff member in the ELI, they must report it to the university. If you want to speak to a confidential advisor, the ELI can help you find a counselor at the University Counseling Center. In almost all cases, this counselor will not inform other people about what you tell them.

University Counseling Center
119 University Place
Nordenberg Hall
412-648-7930

If you experience any type of sexual misconduct, harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, please talk to the ELI Student Advisor or an ELI teacher immediately.

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