



ELI NEWS

English Language Institute • University of Pittsburgh
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March is Women's History Month in the United States

In American culture, March is recognized as Women's History Month. Women's History Month in the United States grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. Now, U.S. Presidents pass annual proclamations announcing Women's History Month, and the National Women's History Project declares a theme each year. The 2018 theme is "Nevertheless she Persisted: Honoring Women Who Fight all Forms of Discrimination Against Women".

Did You Know?

International Women's Day, which also takes place in the month of March, is a global celebration of the economic, political, and social achievements of women. Many countries around the world celebrate the holiday with demonstrations, educational initiatives and customs. The first International Women's Day took place for the first time on March 8, 1911. The United Nations has sponsored International Women's Day since 1975. This year, International Women's Day will take place on Thursday, March 8th.

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Reminder about Spring Break

Please remember that next week is Spring Break. Students will not have class from **Monday, March 5th to Friday, March 9th**. The ELI office will not be open to students during this time.

FI Students and End-of-Term Grace Period

The Department of Homeland Security requires students to complete all levels of the ELI program in order to receive the 60-day grace period following the completion of study. This means that if you complete level 6 at the ELI, you will have 60 days after your last day of study to remain in the U.S. or request a transfer to a new program.

If you end your study at the ELI before completing level 6, you will have a two-week grace period after your final day of class. This means that you will need to request a transfer to a new program or leave the U.S. within 2 weeks of your last day of study if you do not complete level 6.

If you transfer to a new program at any time, you must begin study at the first available term for the new program. If you transfer within your grace period, you are permitted to be out of school for up to 5 months before beginning the first available term of your new program. Please see Stacy if you have questions about these policies.



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Pitt Master of Laws for Foreign-Trained Lawyers Program (LLM)

The University of Pittsburgh offers a Master of Laws (LLM) degree that provides lawyers who have already completed a law degree outside the U.S. with training in common law legal tradition and the U.S. legal system. This is a one-year program with an average of 15 students each year. It is offered by the School of Law's Center for International Legal Education. For acceptance to this program, TOEFL and IELTS scores are waived for students who have completed all classes at ELI Level 5 or 6 with at least 85% final grades in each class. Applicants must also have a recommendation from the ELI Student Advisor. See Stacy if you have questions, or find out more about getting your LLM at Pitt Law School by visiting the LLM program website at <http://law.pitt.edu/llm>, or call 412-648-7023.



First Day of Summer 2018 Term

Please remember that if you are planning to study at the ELI next term, the first day of official attendance is Friday, May 11, 2018. If you arrive at the ELI after the first day of official attendance, you will be counted absent for each day that you miss. If you cannot arrive by Friday, May 18, you will need to wait until the next semester to attend the ELI. Please see Stacy if you cannot arrive by May 18.

Sponsored Students and Final Exams

Please note that if you are a sponsored student, and you miss your final exam for any reason, or if you fail the final exam, your sponsor will be notified immediately. Final exams in the ELI are worth 30% of the overall final grade, and both the ELI and your sponsors expect you to take the exams and to perform as well as you can on them. Remember, too, that satisfactory academic progress is a requirement of the F1 visa. If you fail courses, your F1 visa may be revoked. Please check the posted schedules for ELI final exams and plan your schedule accordingly.

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!

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.

ELI Trip to Washington, DC Pre-Departure Meeting Today!

It's almost time for our terrific tour of Washington, DC! We will have a pre-departure briefing (meeting) **today, 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.



ELI Activity:

ELI NIGHT Calling all Performers!

Get ready for one of the most highly anticipated activities in the ELI! ELI Night will be held on **Saturday, March 17** from 5-8 pm in the basement hall of the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh at 159 North Bellefield Ave.

ELI Night is a potluck dinner for ELI students and teachers, Talk Time leaders, conversation partners, and their families and friends. At a potluck dinner, everyone brings a dish to share. The dish should be enough to feed you and your guests and approximately 6-8 others. There is always a diverse selection of delicious food to select from. You will not leave hungry!

Please let us know if you are planning to attend. You can do this online at <https://tinyurl.com/ENSpring2018>. Let us know if you are coming and how many guests (family members, conversation partners, Talk Time leaders, friends) will be coming with you. We want to make sure that we have enough tables and chairs for everyone!

To compensate guests for their hard work preparing food, after dinner, ELI students and teachers sometimes perform. If you'd like to sing, dance, or play an instrument for us at ELI Night, please let Ece know **by Tuesday, March 13**, so that she can plan accordingly. If you are too timid to perform alone, get your classmates together and perform something as a group! Email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu if you are interested in performing. She will respond to confirm your performance.

You should plan to arrive at the church at 5 pm. Dinner will be served at 5:30 pm. If you arrive after this time, you will miss out on a great deal of delicious food! If you have any questions, please contact Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

Music Club Two Weeks Left!

When you come back from Spring Break on the 12th, you might need a little motivation to get you back into the studying mood. What better way to motivate yourself than by attending the the Language Music Club! Meet us on Monday, March 12 from 1:00-1:50 pm in Room M15! For more information or to make song suggestions, please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

ELI Activity:



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 pierogies and haluski. 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 CONSOL Energy Center 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/>

If you plan to attend, please write your name on the signup sheet in the Vault **by Thursday, March 1!**

ELI Activity:

Baseball Game Deadline Today!



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 Activity:

Up and Away

"Up, up, and away!" was the original Superman's catchphrase, which he would say shortly before taking off into the sky. Join the ELI as we go see Up and Away, a musical at the CLO Cabaret downtown on **Saturday, March 24 at 7:30pm.** A musical is a performance that is similar to a theater play but with the addition of singing and dancing.

Up and away follows the story of two brothers, Joe and Jerry Jessup, who live in the boring city of Farmtown. Nothing much happens in this town until one day when Joe acquires superpowers! Eager to become famous, he leaves his quotidian life behind and moves to Big City with his brother. What could possibly go wrong? Come to the show and find out what kind of hilarious adventures await them!

This performance is unique for two reasons. First, the venue for the Cabaret is more intimate than other large venues in Pittsburgh like Heinz Hall and the Benedum Center. The stage is smaller and instead of many rows of seats for the audience, there are tables and chairs and only a few rows of seat in the back, which is where we will sit. Why are there tables and chairs? The Cabaret is not only a performance venue, but they also serve food and beverages. Before the show, servers will ask you if you want anything and you can enjoy it during the show!

Another special aspect of this performance is that there are many characters, approximately 50 of them! If the stage is small, how will all those people fit on the stage? Although there are 50 roles, there are only 5 performers in the entire show. That means that each actor will play a variety of characters.

If you would like to enjoy this performance with the ELI, you must pay the main office on **Monday, March 12 or Tuesday, March 15.** Discounted tickets are \$15 each. **Please bring the exact amount.** There are no refunds. If you have any questions, please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

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.

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.

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.

Friday, April 6	Monday, April 9	Tuesday, April 10
Writing final 10:00am-12:00pm	Grammar final 10:00am-12:00pm	Reading final 10:00am-12:00pm
Speaking final 1:00pm-3:00pm	Listening final 2:00pm-4:00pm	

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.

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.

Coffee Talk on Fridays!

4:00 – 6:00 pm Panera
(3800 Forbes Ave.)



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.

March

Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities

Friday, March 2: Fish Fry
Friday, March 9-Sunday, March 11: Trip to Washington, DC
Monday, March 12: Language Music Club
Saturday, March 17: ELI Night
Saturday, March 24: Up and Away
Saturday, April 7: Pirates Game

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