



ELI NEWS

English Language Institute • University of Pittsburgh
Parkvale Building, Room M13, 200 Meyran Ave • Pittsburgh PA 15260

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LAST CHANCE: Register TODAY for a Talk Time Conversation Group!

By Suzanne Meyer



Registration for Talk Time will take place in the Conference Room (M-15) **TODAY** from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. Stop

by during your lunch break! Talk Time groups will start meeting from Monday, January 29. Please e-mail elicomm@pitt.edu if you have questions or need more information about Talk Time.

Talk Time groups are for fun and informal communication; they are not classes. Groups are usually scheduled in ELI classrooms, and meeting times are typically at 1:00 or 4:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays. ELI students register for a group and meet with that group once a week. Each group includes a native English speaker and a group of about 4-5 ELI students. Joining a Talk Time conversation group is a great way to practice listening and speaking as well as to learn more about culture!

Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities

Saturday, January 27: Carnegie Library Tour and Kazoo Fest

Wednesday, January 31: Ice Skating

Monday, February 5: Hollywood Special Effects Show

Saturday, February 24: Snowtubing

Friday, March 23: Pitt Night at the Opera: Moby Dick

Saturday, April 7: Pirates Game

ELI Activity:

Hollywood Special Effects Show Deadline Today!

Join the ELI as we go see the Hollywood Special Effects Show at the Byham Theater downtown on Monday, February 5 at 7:30 pm. Special Effects are the images and sounds that are created for movies and TV shows.

This show will take you behind the scenes of famous movies and demonstrate the science behind these fantastic images and sounds we see and hear in movies. In this show, a team of professionals who have had experience in popular movies, such as *The Dark Knight Rises* and *Guardians of The Galaxy*, will reveal their secrets in the world of special effects.

Please be aware that this show uses a wide variety of effects. These effects may include but are not limited to strobe lighting, smoke and haze, airbursts, and gun flashes.

On Monday, February 5, we will leave from the ELI at 6:15 pm. The show will finish around 8:45 pm. If you would like to experience this exciting show with the ELI, you must pay the main office by 4:30pm today, Thursday, January 25. 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.

Friday Prayer for Muslim Students

The ELI is aware that many of our Muslim students attend mosque on Fridays at 1:10. Of course, we want to assist you with this, so teachers will allow up to 20 minutes for Muslim students to return for the 2:00 class. If you are over 20 minutes late, though, teachers will have to count you as

absent. If you are having a problem returning to class within 20 minutes, please see Stacy.

Conversation Partners Registration is OPEN

By Suzanne Meyer

If you would like a conversation partner this term, register now! **Online registration for conversation partners is open until Wednesday, January 31.**

To sign up, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/ELI-CLEP-SP18>.

Sorry, late requests will not be accepted. Please note that only ELI students in the intensive program will be paired.

E-mail elicomm@pitt.edu if you have questions or need more information about Conversation Partners.

ELI Emergency Phone Number



The ELI has an emergency phone number for students to use in medical or legal emergencies. The

number is (412) 444-8280. Please take a moment to add this to the contacts in your phone. This number is only to be used evenings and weekends, during times that the ELI main office is closed. Please note that this is an *emergency* number. You should only call this number if you have a serious medical or legal issue, and you need help. It is also possible that Stacy may not be able to answer the phone immediately when you call. If you get the voicemail, leave a clear message with your name, phone number, and emergency. Stacy will return your call.

Probation at the ELI

As you know, consistent attendance, homework, and participation in classroom activities are all important for successful language learning. If you do not attend classes regularly and do the assigned work, your progress may be slow, and your grades may suffer.

In addition, students who do not make a good effort in their work will be put on probation. Students on probation must improve their effort during the probation term, or they may be expelled from the ELI. Sponsors will be notified of probation, as well. There are three ways to be put on probation at the ELI:

1. Having failing final grades in two or more classes
2. Having over 8 absences in two or more classes
3. Having over 15 absences in one or more classes

If you had poor grades and/or attendance last term, you will receive a probation letter. If you are sponsored, your sponsor will be notified that you are on probation, as well. If you have any questions about the probation policy at the ELI, please see Stacy.

Fire Alarms at the ELI

Please be careful about setting off false fire alarms because this causes problems with the fire



department. We would not want to have fire trucks at our building for a false alarm when they might be needed for a real emergency somewhere else. Please remember the following:

- There are several square red alarms on the walls in our building. They call the fire department, and they are sensitive. Do not lean on the wall next to them or touch them unless there is a fire.
- If the fire alarm goes off, leave the building and turn right on Meyran.
- Move calmly but quickly to the parking lot on the corner of Meyran and Sennott. **Walk on the sidewalks.**
- Do not stand in the hallways or the in the middle of the street.
- Wait outside until a firefighter says it is ok to reenter the building.

LAST CHANCE: Meet Point Park University Students!

By Suzanne Meyer



If you are interested in meeting with native speakers of English, you can meet students at

Point Park University (PPU). Students in a PPU education class want to meet English language learners and get to know each other. You and your PPU partner will meet several times (not weekly but 6-8 hours in total) during the spring semester as well as attend a group activity at PPU. If you are interested in getting to know a PPU student, contact Community Outreach at elicomm@pitt.edu.

For your information: ELI students can have PPU partners *and* still join the ELI Conversation Partners program, too. They are different programs, and ELI students can meet native speakers in each!

ELI Activity:

Language Music Club

Do you enjoy listening to music in English? Do you ever try to understand the lyrics? Do you enjoy singing along to songs? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the Language Music Club is for you! The main objective of this club is to have fun practicing English in a musical environment! The meetings of the Language Music Club will include a variety of activities, including focusing on the grammar and vocabulary used in lyrics as well as practicing pronunciation and fluency. We will also have discussions on what these songs mean.



The Language Music Club will meet every Monday at 1:00 pm in Room M15. This room is next to the main office. The first meeting is on Monday, January 29. If you miss the first meeting, don't worry! You can drop in any time! No musical talent is required. All you need is a desire to improve your English! For more information or to make song suggestions, please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

ELI Activity:

ELI Trip to Washington, DC



Join the ELI on March 9-11 for a trip to Washington, DC! We will depart the University on Friday, March 9 at 8:30 am and return on

Sunday, March 11 around 9:00 pm. There was an information session on Monday, January 22, but if you missed it, you can still join us!

The cost of this trip is \$250 per person (based on 4 people per room with 2 people sharing each bed). You can choose your roommates, or the ELI will choose for you. If you would like to have a maximum of 2 people per room (one person per bed), the cost is \$300. However, if you choose this option, you must also choose your roommate. The trip includes:

- Roundtrip transportation in university vans
- Hotel accommodations for 2 nights
- A ticket to The Spy Museum (www.spymuseum.org)
- A night tour of the monuments in university vans
- Visits to other museums and landmarks based on student interest

This price does not include any meals. You are welcome to invite a friend, but no children please. We will be walking a LOT.

Please pay in the main office and bring the exact amount, cash only. There are no refunds. The deadline for the full amount is 4:30pm on Thursday, February 1. Please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu for more details.

Student Advisor Office Hours

Please remember that Stacy Ranson, your Student Advisor, can



help you with questions about your registration and classes, academic issues, letters of recommendation, and personal issues, as well. Feel free to stop by her office in M22 during any of her office hours. You can also email her at sar72@pitt.edu.

Stacy's office hours are:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
1:00 pm-2:00 pm

Transfer Process

Students with F1 visas who want to transfer to a new school must see Stacy to complete the transfer. You must bring a copy of the acceptance letter and the transfer form from the new school. You may transfer at any time during the term, but you must complete this process to remain in legal status. Remember that if you complete your final term of study at level 6 at the ELI, you have a 60-day grace period. During that time, you may stay in the U.S. without studying, and you may request a transfer at any time during that 60-day period. If you do not complete level 6, you have a 2-week grace period, and you must request a transfer within that time.

If you do not request a transfer during the grace period, you will be out of status at the end of your grace period, and it will be too late to transfer your SEVIS record. Please see Stacy if you have any questions about this process.

ELI Student Library

The student library is on the mezzanine floor outside of Stacy's office, M22. Students can borrow one book at a time for two weeks. You must write your name, book title, email address, and the date that you borrow and return the book on the sign-out sheet.

You can access the books when the ELI is open. Most of the books are graded readers. A graded reader is a book with limited vocabulary and grammar structures, and is often a short version of a longer book. A graded reader is a good learning resource for ELI students because you read longer, connected texts at an appropriate level.

If the vocabulary and grammar are simplified, you can focus on general reading comprehension. There are a few novels and short story collections, too. If you want to read more authentic books, become a member of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. The Oakland branch is located very near the ELI. Use this link to get more information about becoming a member: <http://www.clpgh.org/usingthelibrary/getcard.html>



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on Twitter!**

Follow us on Twitter at
@UPITT_ELI

ELI Activity:

Carnegie Library Tour and Kazoo Fest

Join the ELI as we go to the Carnegie Public Library in Oakland on Saturday, January 27, for

a special private tour and also for an exciting public event called Kazoo Fest.



We will meet at the ELI at 12:00 pm and walk to the library together. The Carnegie Library is not just a place for books. Our tour guide will show us how to find materials to help improve your English; books, magazines, DVDs, and downloadable files that you can borrow for free; as well as classes and social events offered at the Carnegie Libraries.

After our 1-hour tour, we will join other library patrons for Kazoo Fest! This is an event celebrating the American instrument, the kazoo. What is a kazoo? It is a simple instrument that you play by holding the kazoo to your lips and humming. We make this kind of sound when we produce the melody of a song without the words. There are no keys. You make the different sounds in the same way you do when you hum! Anyone can do it, and the library will provide the kazoo's.



If you are already familiar with the Carnegie Library and don't want to participate in the tour, you can meet us at the Kazoo Fest. It will take place in the Children's section of the library on the main floor from 2:00-3:00 pm. This event is for all ages. Bring your friends and families!

Please email Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu by 12:00 pm on Friday, January 26 if you would like to join us. Advance registration is not necessary, but she would like to get a general idea of how many people will be on the tour to let the library know.

TOEFL Prep Course at the ELI

Do you find yourself bored with nothing to do on Wednesdays? Are you worrying about that upcoming TOEFL exam? Well, the ELI has the perfect solution for both of these common problems: the ELI TOEFL Preparation Course!

The TOEFL Preparation Course is an intensive class that will meet on Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The class covers all aspects of the test. Module 1 covers Reading and Writing, and Module 2 covers Listening and Speaking, each module is six weeks long. Space is limited. **Sign up in the ELI Main Office by February 6.** The cost is \$165 per module for students in the ELI's intensive program and \$200 per module for non-ELI students.

Please Note: The TOEFL Prep Class is open to anyone in Pittsburgh, but individuals wishing to take the TOEFL Prep Class must be in Levels 5 or 6 in the ELI (or have the equivalent fluency). For a complete description of these courses, along with textbook information and information about other special courses being offered this term, visit the ELI's web site at <http://www.eli.pitt.edu/programs/toefl-preparation-course>.

Sponsorship Letters

If you have an official sponsorship letter from your government (SACM or CBIE, for example) you must submit it to Rachael or Rosemary in 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 also must 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.

Coed Group Work in the ELI

As you already know, students at the ELI work together in pairs and small groups during almost every class. Interacting in pairs and small groups is an important part of language learning. Please remember that ELI teachers will not be able to form separate groups for men and women during classroom activities. Separating men and women limits the amount of interaction that women at the ELI receive. In order to best serve all of our students and their language development, we must maximize interaction during class time. Remember, if you are planning to move on to academic work in the U.S., men and women will be expected to work together without question, so your ELI experience will be a good opportunity to practice in this situation if it makes you uncomfortable.

If you would like to talk more about this policy, please contact Stacy at sar72@pitt.edu or visit her in her office in M22.

Coffee Talk

You might be reluctant to do anything after your last class of the week. You might be inclined to just go home, but on Fridays from 4:00–6:00 pm come to **Coffee Talk!** Other individuals from the ELI can participate in open conversation at Panera (on Forbes Avenue). This is a way for us to relax, build community, identify potential friends, practice English, and more.



There are just a few rules.

1. The objective of Coffee Talk is to practice English, so please do not use your native language during this activity (others will chastise you if you do).
2. Because Panera does not ask us to pay for the room, please buy something to eat or drink, even just a cup of coffee or tea. (Frugality is not a problem.)

There is no better resource to assist you with your language progress than a place to just speak English, and Coffee Talk is your place. See you tomorrow!

Medical Emergencies in the ELI



It is the ELI policy that any time an ELI student shows signs of a serious medical issue, ELI staff and faculty must call 911 for medical assistance. For example, if a student complains of the symptoms of a heart attack, the ELI will call an ambulance. In a medical emergency, the first priority of the ELI is always the well-being of its students, and 911 will be called even if the ill student protests or is not insured. Ambulance rides can cost from \$400 to over \$1000, depending on the kind of care the crew must provide and the distance traveled. Patients are responsible for the cost, and patients without health insurance will be responsible for the entire cost of ambulance service. This means that you-not the ELI- must pay for the ambulance, even if an ELI teacher or employee called for the ambulance. The ELI requires that students buy health insurance, which may pay for part of the ambulance service, depending on your coverage.

Renters Insurance

Many of you rent apartments in Pittsburgh while you are studying at the ELI, and we want to strongly encourage you to buy renters insurance while you are here. Renters insurance covers personal property, so it will help you replace your items if they are lost due to theft or destruction from a fire or storm.

Renters insurance can also cover damage that you may cause to your apartment. For example, if you accidentally start a fire in your apartment while you are cooking, there could be thousands of dollars worth of damage, and you may be expected to pay for the repairs. Renters insurance could cover the cost of these repairs.

This type of insurance is very inexpensive, with an average cost of \$15.00 a month. You can check out some policy quotes at <https://www.geico.com/information/aboutinsurance/renters/> or at <https://www.statefarm.com/insurance/home-and-property/renters>. If you need help finding or buying insurance, please see Stacy.

ELI Activity:

Ice Skating

Join the ELI on **Wednesday, January 31**, as we go downtown to ice skate at the Mass Mutual Pittsburgh Ice Rink at PPG Place. What? You don't know how to ice skate? That's okay! We'll learn together.



We'll meet in The Vault (the ELI's student lounge) at 11:00 am and take the bus downtown together. Admission is \$8, and skate rental is an additional \$4 (plus tax). You should also bring at least two quarters (25-cent coins) so that you can put your shoes and other items in a locker.

The weather forecast for next Wednesday is a high of 49° F (10° C), which is a great temperature for ice skating! The rink is open until 3:00 pm, but you are free to leave whenever you like. For more information about the rink, visit www.ppgplace.com/directory/the-rink/.

Free Lockers In the ELI

By Stacy Ranson

The ELI has a limited number of lockers available in our building. All students are eligible for free use of a locker, but you must sign up for a locker in the ELI main office, room M13. If you put a lock on a locker that you did not register, the lock will be removed.

To sign up for a locker:

- Buy a combination lock. Remember that the lock must be 25mm-30mm. Many locks are 50mm or bigger, and these are too big for the ELI lockers.
- Bring your lock to the ELI main office and give Rachael or Rosemary the combination.
- You can then choose a locker.

Please remember to register for a locker if you would like to use one, because the ELI will remove locks that are not registered.