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 June 1. 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 Course 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

Schedule Change for Summer 2018

The ELI will have a slight change to the regular schedule during the summer term. We will not have classes on Monday, May 28 or Tuesday, May 29, to celebrate the Memorial Day holiday. The ELI will hold classes on Wednesday, May 30 to make up for this day off. Please be prepared to attend classes at the usual times on Wednesday, May 30.

Proof of Health Insurance: Deadline

All ELI students must provide proof of health insurance in order to enroll in classes. The ELI does not recommend any specific insurance plan or company; you may choose the plan and insurance company that is best for you. Many of our students use ISO insurance at www.isoa.org or International Student Insurance at www.internationalstudentinsurance.com, but you may choose any company.

Bring your insurance card, or a printout from the insurance website that shows that you have bought a plan, to the ELI main office. You may also email your proof of insurance to elipitt@pitt.edu.

The insurance deadline has passed. If you have not already submitted it, you must provide your proof of health insurance immediately to the front office, or your registration will be canceled. Stacy is available to help with buying insurance. Email her at sar72@pitt.edu to make an appointment if you need assistance.

Forget to Join Talk Time?

By Brianne Harrison

If you missed registration for the Talk Time conversation groups, there is still a space available for you! Talk Time is a great opportunity for you to practice your listening and speaking, to make new friends, and to learn about American culture. Each small group of ELI students meets with a native speaker for one hour every week. Contact Brianne at elicom@pitt.edu (or visit office M-06) to sign up for a group today!

ELI Activity:

Pittsburgh Glass Center Hot Jam

Join us as the ELI goes to the Pittsburgh Glass Center in the East End of Pittsburgh on Friday, June 1. The Pittsburgh Glass Center is a nonprofit, public access school, gallery and state-of-the-art glass studio. It is dedicated to teaching, creating and promoting glass art.

Every month the PGC hosts an open house called Hot Jam. At this free event, you can watch live glassblowing demonstrations and also view contemporary glass art. It is fun for the entire family! This month’s Hot Jam is even more special because it will include the opening reception for their new exhibition called Making the Ordinary Extraordinary.

On Friday, June 1, meet in the lobby of the ELI at 5:00 pm and we’ll take the bus to the PGC. When we arrive, we will have time to explore the exhibition in the gallery on the main floor and then we will move to the 2nd floor to watch the glassblowing demonstrations. We will return to the ELI by 9 pm.

Check the Pittsburgh Glass Center’s website www.pittsburghglasscenter.org for more information and to learn about the wide variety of classes they offer.
FREE Concert
By Rob Mucklo

Join the Coro Latinoamericano Pittsburgh (Latin American Chorus) on Friday, May 25, for “Canto a la Primavera”, a FREE concert to celebrate Spring. The event takes place from 7:30 – 9:30 pm at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium on the University of Pittsburgh campus. Frick Fine Arts is located 650 Schenley Drive, behind Schenley Plaza.

Coro Latinoamericano-Pittsburgh features regional varieties of music from Latin America, both traditional and popular, and seeks to emphasize the multiple ethnic and linguistic traditions—European, indigenous and African—which are present in the melody, cadence and lyrics of the songs they perform. For more information, visit their website at www.elcorolatino.com or visit them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CoroLatinoamericanoPittsburgh.

Meet Point Park University Students in May and June!

Are you interested in meeting with native speakers of English? If so, you can meet students at Point Park University (PPU). Students in EDUC 250 (a PPU class) want to meet English language learners. You and your PPU partner will meet several times (not weekly but 6-8 hours in total) from mid-May to mid-June as well as attend a group activity at PPU. If you are interested in getting to know a PPU student, contact Community Outreach at elicom@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!

Recycling in the Student Lounge and Kitchen

At the ELI we want to try and be as nice to our planet as we can be. This includes recycling. Things that are recyclable are paper, plastic, aluminum or steel cans, glass, and cardboard. Make sure to place all your recyclables such as cans, bottles, and paper in the blue bin next to the trashcan in the kitchen. There are signs to also help you. Please make sure to only put recyclables in the recycling bin, and put all other trash into the trashcan as normal.

Register for a Conversation Partner
By Brianne Harrison

Would you like to meet a native English speaker who wants to meet an international student? This is a great opportunity for you to practice your English—and hopefully to make a new friend, too. Online registration for conversation partners is open until May 30. Sorry, late requests will not be accepted. To sign up, go to: https://tinyurl.com/CLEP-Summer2018. At this time, I am only able to offer partners to ELI students in the intensive program. Thank you for your cooperation.

Lateness

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.

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.

ELI Students and Pitt Email

ELI students MUST use Pitt email. Your teachers and the university will use ONLY your Pitt email to contact you. If you don’t check your Pitt email every day, you may miss important messages about your class work, registration, or tuition payments. To check your email, visit my.pitt.edu and click on “My Pitt Email”.

If you do not know your Pitt username or password, or you cannot access your account, visit one of the University computer labs in G-27 or G-62 of the Cathedral of Learning, 112 Hillman Library, or 1200 Wesley Posvar Hall.
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.

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.

Pittsburghese Word of the Week: “The O”

Meaning: Essie’s Original Hot Dog Shop on Forbes Avenue, a popular destination for late night food.

Example: “Hey, do yinz want to stop by The O on our way back?”

Follow Us on Twitter! Follow us on Twitter at @UPITT_ELI

ELI Student Library

The student library is on the mezzanine floor outside of Stacy’s office, M22. Students can borrow 1 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

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 sar73@pitt.edu or visit her in her office in M22.

Mark your calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities

Friday, June 1: Pittsburgh Glass Center Hot Jam
Tuesday, June 5: Three Rivers Arts Festival
Wednesday, June 27: ELI Picnic
Sunday, July 15: Pitt Day at Kennywood

F1 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.

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

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

Coffee Talk on Fridays!

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

Visit the ELI NEWS online: http://www.eli.pitt.edu/GENINFO/activities/index.html
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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. This means that you—not the ELI—must pay for the ambulance, even if an ELI teacher or employee called for the ambulance. Please keep this in mind when you are considering your health insurance options in the United States.

Pitt Emergency Alert System

It is very important that ELI students know when there is an emergency on campus. For this reason, all ELI students must sign up for the Emergency Notification System that is provided by the University of Pittsburgh. This system will contact you by phone, email, or text, to tell you when there is an emergency on campus.

When there is an emergency, you should follow the directions from the system notification, your teacher, and any police officers in the area. Unless the alert, or a police officer, tells you to leave, you should remain in the Oakland area, even if the evacuation is long. Usually, if it is a fire alarm, we can reenter the building fairly quickly. The ELI always holds classes when the alert is finished. If you miss classes after we return to the building, you will be counted as absent. Always wait for notification that it is safe to enter the building before you come back to the building.

To subscribe to the Pitt Emergency Notification System:

- Log in to my.pitt.edu
- Click on “My Resources” at the top of the page
- Click on “Emergency Notification”
- Click on “Access Rave”
- Enter your phone number and email
- Click “Submit”

It is very easy to sign up and only takes a minute. Please sign up today!

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.

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.

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 Rosemary or Erica 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.

Visit the ELI NEWS online: http://www.eli.pitt.edu/GENINFO/activities/index.html