**Student Storyteller Series**

My Beautiful Hometown: Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia

Please join us for our first Student Storyteller Speaker presentation of the spring semester on Friday, February 9th at 1:00 pm in the ELI Conference Room (M-15). Level 4 student Sophia Ha will be speaking about her hometown, Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia. She will talk about the people, the food and the natural beauty of her country. Feel free to bring your lunch to enjoy while you listen to this interesting and informative presentation. Sophia will answer questions after the presentation. Everyone is welcome!

If you are interested in giving a Student Storyteller presentation this semester, please get in touch with Heather via email: hlm44@pitt.edu or stop by M-18 to discuss your idea in person.

**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.

**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.

**ELI Activity:**

Let’s Make Valentine Cards and Gifts!

Valentine’s Day is Feb. 14, but since we don’t have class on this day, we will celebrate on Monday (Feb. 12) and Tuesday (Feb. 13).

Monday: Cards for Patients and Seniors

Giving Valentine’s Day cards may have started as a way to express romantic love, but now we give them to everyone. On Monday, we’ll be making Valentine’s Day cards for children who are patients at Children’s Hospital and for seniors (elderly people) who reside in local nursing homes. The materials will be in M15 from 1:00-1:45 pm and Dawn will be there to help out.

Bring your lunch! We will be using a PittServes DIY Service Box for the project. PittServes works to provide opportunities to contribute to the community. Making these Valentine’s Day cards is one way that the ELI can help others in our community.

Tuesday: Cards for Friends and Family

Get together with your classmates and make Valentine’s cards, paper flowers, and more! You can make these items for your friends and loved ones. Wouldn’t it be sweet to brighten someone’s day on Valentine’s Day? The ELI will provide all the materials you need. All you have to do is show up, be creative, and have fun! On Tuesday, there will be valentine cards and crafts in the Vault throughout the day, and you can continue working on your valentines after classes until 4:45 pm.

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Visit the ELI NEWS online: www.eli.pitt.edu/eli-news
Valentine’s Day is a holiday celebrated in some countries on February 14. In the US, it is a day when couples express their love for each other by sending cards and giving gifts (often chocolates in heart-shaped boxes, jewelry, or romantic dinners). School children usually give each other Valentine’s cards and eat sweets in school.

Many people say that the tradition of Valentine’s Day comes from a day that originally honored a saint in the Catholic church, St. Valentine, who lived around the year 200. While some sources on Wikipedia say that there is no evidence for this, popular legend says that Saint Valentine was a priest who refused to follow a new law at that time that prohibited young men from marrying until after they had served in the army. The law supposedly was created because the emperor believed that married men were not good soldiers. St. Valentine, however, did not believe this and secretly performed marriage ceremonies for any young man and woman who were in love.

When the emperor found out about this, he put Valentine in jail and sentenced him to death. While he was in jail, Valentine met and fell in love with the jailer’s daughter. On the night before he was to be executed, it is said that Valentine wrote a note to the girl and signed it “From your Valentine.” This note was a symbol of his love and the inspiration for today’s Valentine’s cards that often say “Be my Valentine.”

That’s the legend. Nowadays, handwritten Valentine’s cards or notes are rarely used; commercially produced cards are used instead. In fact, the US Greeting Card Association reports that approximately 1 billion Valentine’s cards are sent around the world each year. The Association also mentions that over 95% of all Valentine’s cards in the US are purchased by females but that men spend more than twice as much money on Valentine’s Day than women.

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/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
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.

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.
**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.

**Cold and Flu Season**

It’s winter in Pittsburgh, and this means that some of you may feel a little under the weather. While it’s true that the ELI does not have excused absences, we also want to remind you that you shouldn’t come to class if you are very ill. If you are sick, it is important that you stay home and rest so you can get well. It is also important that you stay home to avoid passing your illness to others. Remember, the ELI allows up to 8 absences a term without any consequences because we understand that sometimes you just cannot come to class. If you are sick, contact your teachers to tell them, ask about makeup work, and let Stacy know if you need any help.

**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.

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<th>Friday, April 6</th>
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**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.

**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!

**Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities**

- **Monday, February 12:** Language Music Club
- **Monday, February 12:** Valentine’s Day Service Project
- **Tuesday, February 13:** Make Valentines for Friends and Family
- **Tuesday, February 20:** Handwriting Class
- **Friday, February 23:** Pitt Night at the Ballet: Swan Lake
- **Saturday, February 24:** Snow Tubing
- **Tuesday, February 27:** International Speed Friending
- **Friday, March 9-Sunday, March 11:** Trip to Washington, DC
- **Saturday, March 17:** ELI Night
- **Saturday, April 7:** Pirates Game

**FREE Flowers for Your Valentine!**

Who is your Valentine? Surprise her (or him!) with a beautiful bouquet of flowers personally arranged by you. The Pitt Program Council will be offering a variety of free flowers and all the supplies you need to personally arrange a bouquet of flowers for your special friend or loved one. Stop by the Lower Lounge of the William Pitt Union on Wed., Feb. 14, from 11 am to 3 pm (or until supplies run out). A valid Pitt student undergrad ID must be presented at the door to be admitted. There is a limit of one bouquet per person. For more info about this free activity and other Pitt Program Council events, visit ppc.pitt.edu.

Visit the ELI NEWS online: www.eli.pitt.edu/eli-news
Make Your Own Glass Heart, Glass Flower, or Glass Love Letter

The Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) is offering you the opportunity to work with their artists to create your very own glass heart pendant for a necklace ($25), glass flower ($35), or glass love letter tile ($25) on Friday, February 9, from 4 to 9 pm. Advance registration is not required, but it is very highly recommended. This is a very popular activity! PGC is located in Shadyside at 5472 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206, and is easily accessible by bus.

Why does Pittsburgh have a place called the Pittsburgh Glass Center? Well, everyone knows that Pittsburgh played a big role in the steel industry but most people don’t know that for over one hundred years the Pittsburgh region has been the center of America’s glass industry. Nowadays, there are also many artists who have their glass studios in Pittsburgh.

For more info about this event or to see other classes and events offered by the Pittsburgh Glass Center, visit www.pittsburghglasscenter.org/classes/

FREE Performance to Celebrate Black History Month

In celebration of Black History Month at the University of Pittsburgh, San Francisco’s celebrated performance artists, Rhodessa Jones, and Idris Ackamoor and the Pyramids will present “Performance Music: Theater for the 21st Century” on Thursday, February 22, at 7 pm in the Charity Randall Theatre at 4301 Forbes Ave. The performance is free and open to the public.

“Performance Music” includes excerpts of several of their significant performances, such as the spoken word musical tone poem, “The Grandma Cole Story”, about the slave trade as told through the eyes of a ten-year-old African girl held aboard a slave ship. “China Lane” tells the story through spoken word and music of a forbidden love affair between a Chinese laundromat owner and a freed slave. “Midnight Train to Munich” deals with the current immigration crisis in Europe and features a family of Albanian refugees escaping into Germany. Music will be provided by Idris Ackamoor’s remarkable tenor and alto sax playing, and the bass and percussion groove of the Pyramids.

Super Bowl Vocabulary

By Carol Harmatz

Did you watch the Super Bowl on Sunday? I’m reluctant to ask because I admit that I did not. Although everything that surrounds the Super Bowl (the anticipation, the television commercials, the half-time show, etc.) is an American phenomenon, I was not inclined to participate.

Do you know which teams played and which team won? The underdog won! Isn’t that wonderful?! No one expected the Philadelphia Eagles to win, but they did. I love it when the underdog wins!

The Longman Dictionary explains the word underdog as a person, team, etc. that is weaker than the others, is always expected to be unsuccessful, and that is often treated badly [www.ldoceonline.com]. Are you the kind of person who roots for (supports) the underdog? Why or why not?

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.

ELI Activity:

Pitt Night at the Ballet: Swan Lake

Join the ELI on February 23 as we go to see Pittsburgh Ballet Theater’s production of “Swan Lake”, one of the most famous ballets ever performed. This activity is planned by the University’s Pitt Arts Office, so we will be joining other Pitt students on this very special event.

On Feb. 23, we will meet at the ELI at 5:45 pm, walk over to the William Pitt Union to check in, and board our own big yellow school buses to go downtown. Yes, we’re going to the ballet in big yellow American school buses! When we arrive, we’ll attend a private dessert reception where we will be joined by members and dancers from the ballet. The performance begins at 8 pm. We should be back on campus around 11 pm.

Discounted tickets for Pitt students (and up to three guests) are only $20 (regular $28) and include transportation, ticket for the ballet, and the private dessert reception. You must sign up and pay in the ELI Main Office by 2 pm on Tues., Feb. 13. Please bring the exact amount, cash only. There are no refunds. These tickets are selling quickly. The longer we wait, the less chance we have of getting tickets. The $20 tickets might sell out and/or we might not all be able to sit together.

If you have any questions about this ELI activity, contact Rob Mucklo at rm17@pitt.edu. For a video preview of “Swan Lake”, visit www.pbt.org/performances/swan-lake-pbt-orchestra/.

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