



# ELI NEWS

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

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## New I-20's for F1 students

If you are a new F1 student in the ELI, please see the ELI main office for your new I-20. You have a new copy of the I-20 that shows that you have registered for classes and are living in the US legally. This is the document that proves that you have enrolled in school, so you must pick up the updated copy for your records.

## 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 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.

## Fall Foliage Time! ELI Nature Walk in Schenley Park

Join the ELI on Wednesday, October 11 for a walk through Schenley Park to see the beautiful leaves. Fall is a beautiful time in Pittsburgh when the leaves begin to change colors.

On October 11, meet Ece under the tent at Schenley Plaza at 1pm. Wear comfortable clothes and good walking shoes for this activity! Please email Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu) or write your name and email address on the sign up sheet in the Vault if you plan to attend. She will send you an email if the walk is canceled due to bad weather.

## Sponsorship Letters

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

## 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.

## 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.

## English Language Institute Final Exam Schedule Fall 2017

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 make up exams. Please note the following schedule and plan to be present for the finals.

Friday, December 1	Monday, December 4	Tuesday, December 5
Writing final 10:00- 12:00 Speaking final 1:00-3:00	Grammar final 10:00- 12:00 Listening final 2:00-4:00	Reading final 10:00- 12:00

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.



## 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.

## Midterm Grade Reports

by Heather McNaught

On Wednesday, October 11th, your teachers will turn in your midterm grades. Although these are not your final grades, they do show you how well you are doing in each class. Teachers also write specific comments for each student in each class, which tell you exactly what you do well and what you need to work a little harder on. Finally, if there is something you don't understand about the grade, please talk directly to your teacher.

Your copy of the midterm grades will be given to you on Tuesday, October 17th, in your Speaking class. If you are absent or do not have Speaking class on Tuesday afternoon, you may pick up your midterm grade report in the ELI Main Office on Thursday the 19th. If you receive very low grades or have many absences, you will be given an appointment with the Student Advisor to discuss any problems you might have and get advice about how to improve.

If you still have questions about grades, read p. 11 in the ELI Student Handbook!

**Please Note: Students with unpaid tuition and fees on their account will not receive a grade report until they have paid.**

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



## 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](mailto:sar72@pitt.edu).

### Stacy's office hours are:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday  
1:00 pm-1:45 pm  
3:00 pm-3:30 pm

Friday  
1:00 pm-1:45 pm

### Co-ed 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](mailto:sar72@pitt.edu) or visit her in her office in M22.

### ELI Students and Pitt Email

ELI students MUST use Pitt email. Your teachers and the university will use ONLY Pitt email to contact you. If you don't check your Pitt email every

day, you may miss important messages about your classes, registration, or tuition payments. To check your email, visit [my.pitt.edu](http://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, please read the yellow paper in your orientation folder (or get a new yellow paper in our computer lab). This will give you instructions on how to activate your email address this week.

### Make Friends Fast: International Speed Friending October 16

Join us for International "Speed Friending" as part of International Week at the University of Pittsburgh. This is a fun way to make friends fast, practice your English, and have fun while achieving your goals of improving 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 Mon., Oct. 16, from 5-7 pm, in the William Pitt Union Kurtzman Room, 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 approximately 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, and there will be prizes, too!

You must pre-register for this event by Sunday, October 15 at <http://tinyurl.com/Speedfriending-Fall2017>. Seating is very 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!

For more information about this event, contact Rob at [rom17@pitt.edu](mailto:rom17@pitt.edu).

### ELI Storytellers Series

One of the benefits of studying at the ELI is the chance to meet and to learn from people with diverse backgrounds and experience. The ELI Storytellers Series gives students an opportunity to share their stories with classmates. Speakers give a 10-15-minute presentation, followed by a question and answer period. The talks are scheduled during the 1:00 lunch break. The series is open to all ELI students, and it is a great way to get extra speaking and listening practice outside of class. Your English doesn't have to be perfect! This is a great opportunity to challenge yourself and share your story with your friends, teachers and classmates.



How about you? Do you have an interest or a skill you would like to tell us about? Have you accomplished something special or done something fun and exciting? Would you like to share information about your culture or hometown? What is your story? If you are interested in giving a short presentation, email Heather at [hlm44@pitt.edu](mailto:hlm44@pitt.edu)

### Mark your Calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities

**Saturday, October 7:** Doors Open Pittsburgh  
**Tuesday, October 10:** Language Music Club  
**Wednesday, October 11:** Nature Walk  
**Monday, October 16:** International Speed Friending  
**Friday, October 27:** Halloween Party  
**Sunday, November 5:** NBA Cavs Game  
**Saturday, November 18:** ELI Brunch  
**Tuesday, November 21:** Motown the Musical

## 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.

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.

ELI Activity:

### Doors Open Pittsburgh Deadline Today!



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Join the ELI on Saturday, October 7 as we attend Doors Open Pittsburgh and explore the diverse architecture in the city. It is no secret that Pittsburgh is home to many beautiful buildings, but have you ever wondered what these buildings look like inside? Now is your chance to find out! Doors Open Pittsburgh is an annual event that began last year. During this event, many of the buildings in select neighborhoods in Pittsburgh open their doors to let the community experience and learn about these buildings. This event lasts two days, October 7 and October 8, but the ELI will explore on October 7.

On Saturday, October 7, we will meet at the ELI at 11 am and take the bus downtown together. Most of the

buildings close at 4 pm, but you can leave at any time you want. Because we will be traveling on foot and walking a significant amount, we will focus our tour on the buildings downtown. If you are interested in seeing the buildings in other neighborhoods, such as the North Side and the Strip District, consider purchasing a two-day ticket and then explore these neighborhoods on your own on Sunday.

One-day tickets cost \$9.25. If we purchase at least 10 tickets, the cost is \$8.25. Admission for seniors (65 or older) and children (17 or younger) is free, but each person, including seniors and children, must have a ticket to access the buildings. Please let the main office know if you need any tickets for seniors or children.

Please pay in the main office by 4:30pm today, Thursday, October 5. Bring exact change, cash only. You can find more information about this event at <http://doorsopenpgh.org/>. Please contact Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu) if you have any questions.

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 meets every Tuesday at 4pm in Room 104. The first meeting was on Tuesday, October 3. If you missed it, don't worry! You can drop in anytime! You don't have to be a good singer to participate. 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](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu).

## Muslim Women in America Study

Hello Pitt ELI students! My name is Jenna Pelly, and I am a Research Associate in the Parkvale building. Some of you may have seen me around! I recently graduated from Duquesne University with a Psychology major and an Intercultural Engagement minor. I love learning about cultures and engaging with research topics that integrate people from all over the world

I am currently conducting a study with a doctoral student at Duquesne University, and we are investigating women's experiences of wearing hijab, as well as its cultural and embodied significance. In order to qualify for participation, you must identify as a woman, wear hijab at least 50% of the time, live in the United States, and be between the ages of 18-35.

If you choose to participate, you would be asked to complete an interview regarding your experiences wearing hijab; the interview will last no longer than one hour. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may choose not to answer any question or to withdraw from the study at any point. Your participation in this study and any personal information that you provide will be kept confidential at all times and to every extent possible. Participants' names will never appear on any research instruments. This study has already received IRB approval from Duquesne. For more information about participating, please contact me at [pellyj@duq.edu](mailto:pellyj@duq.edu) or 412.401.4782. I look forward to hearing from you!

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