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

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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friday, December 1</th>
<th>Monday, December 4</th>
<th>Tuesday, December 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing final</td>
<td>Grammar final</td>
<td>Reading final</td>
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<td>10:00 am–12:00 pm</td>
<td>10:00 am–12:00 pm</td>
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<td>Speaking final</td>
<td>Listening final</td>
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<td>1:00 pm–3:00 pm</td>
<td>2:00 pm–4:00 pm</td>
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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 are required to update information about the student’s sponsor and advisor. Students must complete this form each semester and when their sponsor information changes.

ELI Activity:
ELI Halloween Party

The ELI will again have our annual Halloween Party! The party is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 27, from 6:00-9:00 pm. There will be food, candy, pumpkin carving, traditional Halloween games, prizes for the best Halloween costumes, and more!

Tickets for the party are $5 each if you pay by Wednesday, Oct. 25. Tickets are $10 each if you pay after Oct. 25. This will help compensate for the cost of renting the hall, food, candy and prizes. There are no refunds. The main office will start collecting money on Monday, October 16.

Start planning your Halloween costume now. You can create your own Halloween costume or buy one at any retail store (including Target, Walgreens, CVS, RiteAid, etc.). The ELI has some Halloween costumes that we will loan to students. (We do ask for a $20 deposit for costumes. When you return the costume, you get your money back.) Look for more information about how to rent these costumes on page 2 of this week’s ELI News. Costumes are not required, but they are encouraged. It’s fun!

The ELI Halloween Party will be held in the basement hall of First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh at 159 North Bellefield Ave. We are using the church’s space because they have a large kitchen we can use for carving pumpkins and a stage we can use for the costume contest. Halloween and Halloween parties are not religious activities. If you have any questions, please contact Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu.

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.

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.

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

Visit the ELI NEWS online: www.eli.pitt.edu/eli-news
Student Storytellers – Yasuda Women’s University in Hiroshima

This semester, the ELI welcomed 35 students from Yasuda Women’s University in Hiroshima, Japan. Next Thursday, October 19th at 4:00 pm in the Conference Room (M-15) the ELI’s very own Rino Shiota will give a brief presentation describing her university and the city of Hiroshima. Please come join us for our first Student Storyteller presentation of the semester. After her presentation, Rino and other students from Yasuda will answer your questions. Everyone is welcome!

Halloween Costumes

A selection of Halloween costumes are available for ELI students who will be attending the Halloween party. You can come see the selection in M15 from 4:00-4:30pm on Friday, October 20 and Monday, October 23. Costumes will not be available outside of these times. Students will be asked to make a $20 deposit when they borrow the costume. When they return the costume on Monday, October 30, the $20 will be returned to them. Contact Ece at ecu4@pitt.edu if you have any questions.

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
1:00 pm-1:45 pm
3:00 pm-3:30 pm

Friday
1:00 pm-1:45 pm

Prayer Rooms Fall 2017

The ELI can provide the following rooms for prayer:

Room 107:
1:00 – 1:45 pm.
Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday

If you plan to use these rooms, you must read and follow the rules below. Please note that if any of these rules are broken, the prayer room will no longer be available.

- Rooms are available only for the times listed.
- Students must finish prayer at the times listed. The teachers of the 1:00 and 2:00 classes must be able to prepare before the class begins. If the teacher ever has to wait for students to finish praying, rooms will be removed from the schedule immediately.
- Students may not pray in the hallways, locker room, or anywhere in the ELI building.

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. We have had two meetings so far, but if you missed them, 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.

Personal Belongings in Classrooms

We have noticed that many students leave their personal belongings in ELI classrooms during the lunch break each day. The ELI cannot guarantee the safety of your bags, laptops, or other items. Remember that it is always safest to keep your personal belongings with you, or locked in your ELI locker. If you leave your things in an ELI classroom during the lunch break, you are taking a chance that you may lose them. The classroom door may be locked when you leave, but please remember that many people have keys to those doors. The ELI cannot guarantee that the classroom will remain locked until you return. In addition, you should never leave your belongings alone in the ELI hallways, on a restaurant table, or in any other public place. It only takes a second for someone to take what is yours, so please be careful! If you would like to sign up for a locker, see the ELI main office.

Mark your Calendars!

Upcoming ELI Activities

Monday, October 16: International Speed Friending
Tuesday, October 17: Language Music Club
Friday, October 27: Halloween Party
Sunday, November 5: NBA Cavs Game
Saturday, November 18: ELI Brunch
Tuesday, November 21: Motown the Musical

Visit the ELI NEWS online: www.eli.pitt.edu/eli-news
Friday the 13th

In American culture, Friday the 13th is considered by many to be an unlucky day, and tomorrow is Friday, October 13! Don’t worry though. It’s just a superstition. While some people believe in this, there is no scientific or rational proof that this day really is unlucky. Some say that this superstition comes from a combination of beliefs that both the number 13 and Fridays are unlucky.

Some people attribute the superstition to the idea that 13 is not a “complete” number. Since there are 12 months in a year, 12 signs of the zodiac, 12 hours on the clock, etc., 13 is breaking from that. (You may even notice that some buildings do not have a thirteenth floor! The builders will skip from twelve to fourteen so that they can avoid bad luck.) Other theories go even farther and say that Friday the Thirteenth as an unlucky day can be traced back to either Scandinavian mythology or to the day the Knights Templars were executed in France on Friday, October 13, 1307.

In any case, Friday the Thirteenth as an unlucky day has become a superstition in the US. According to some experts, fear of Friday the 13th is the most widespread superstition in the US with approximately 8% of Americans believing this day is, in fact, unlucky. What do you think? Do you believe this superstition? Are there similar superstitions in your culture?

Your Name on Your ELI Certificate

Each term, we award certificates for students who attend their classes. The way we print your name on your certificate is the same as it will be printed on the midterm grade report that you will receive next Tuesday. If you would like to make any changes, please email the ELI Main Office at elipitt@pitt.edu. Common changes include: adding a hyphen (Ji-young instead of Jiyoung), adding a capital letter (Ji-Young instead of Ji-young), or adding a middle name.

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.

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 rm17@pitt.edu.

ELI Storytellers Series

One of the benefits of studying at the ELI is the chance to meet and 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.

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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 or 412.401.4782. I look forward to hearing from you!

“You Say Potato...”

Pitt’s Less Commonly Taught Languages Center is hosting a potato-based event on Tuesday, October 17 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm in the William Pitt Union. Stop by during your lunch break and learn how to say or write the word “potato” in many different languages, including Arabic, Greek, and American Sign Language. Some of the languages represented will bring potato-based snacks from the countries those languages are spoken, including a Pittsburgh favorite, pierogies.

Study Rooms Available

The ELI can offer Room 110 from 12:00pm-12:45pm, and Room 102 from 1:00pm-1:45 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for a quiet place to study. Please note the following rules:

• No food in the classrooms.
• No drinks in the classrooms, unless using a spill-proof cup
• No noise: These classrooms are for students who want to study
• Use the Vault for socializing

If the rules are broken, the study room will be removed from the schedule.

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 School of Law by visiting the LLM program website at http://law.pitt.edu/llm, or call 412-648-7023.

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.

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.

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 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.

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