



# ELI NEWS

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

11-15-18, Volume 57 Issue 11  
elipitt@pitt.edu

## Evaluations of Your Teachers

by Christine O'Neill

As your ELI teachers evaluate you, you have an opportunity to evaluate your teachers. Your feedback is really very important! All evaluations are now online. Please go to your Pitt email. The Office of Evaluations and Measurements (OMET) will send you an email for each teacher you have. Just click on the link and follow the instructions. You may also access each evaluation in CourseWeb. Each evaluation should take you between 5 to 15 minutes.

Research indicates that people are more likely to do online surveys if they have negative responses. However, we really hope to hear from all of you. We hope to get all feedback –positive as well as negative and in the middle too. Also, be sure to read the items in the survey carefully to be certain you are providing accurate feedback. Sometimes on surveys on a scale of 1 to 5, a “1” is very good; other times it is not good. Please, your feedback helps us to be better. We can't do it without you!

The surveys are available starting Thursday, November 15. Please respond by Thursday, November 29. The survey will not be available after November 29. Please be sure to respond before that day. If you have any questions, ask any or all of your teachers.



[www.facebook.com/PittELI](http://www.facebook.com/PittELI)

ELI Activity:

## Volunteering with CHS

Join the ELI as we go volunteer with Community Human Services, an organization whose mission is to empower “individuals and families to live in stable housing, connect to community resources, build relationships, and access quality food.”

On Saturday, December 1, we will meet at the ELI at 9:10 am and take the bus to the Strip district together. For this activity, we will be putting together toiletry kits for people who use the food pantry at CHS. A toiletry kit is what you usually pack when you travel. It includes essentials such as shampoo, soap, and a toothbrush.

If you are interested in joining us, please email Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu) by 4:30 pm on Monday, November 26. For more information about Community Human Services, visit <https://chscorp.org/>.

After this activity, we will take the bus to nearby Lawrenceville, where there is a cookie tour event. Read the article in this week's ELI News about this event. If you don't want to participate in the cookie tour, Ece will show you where to get the bus back to Oakland after we finish volunteering.

## Pre-registration for Next Term

If you are planning to continue in the ELI and you have not seen Stacy, you must visit her during her office hours before December 3 to sign up for classes. Remember, if you want to participate in classes next term, you must pre-register. If you want to take a vacation term, you must pre-register for that, too. If you want to return to the ELI next semester and you have not talked to Stacy yet, you must see her soon.

## Statement of Purpose Information Session

When you apply to academic programs in the US, most universities ask for a statement of purpose. Many people believe that the statement of purpose is the most important piece of a college application. Your statement of purpose is your chance to tell the admissions committee who you really are. Do you know what to include in your statement? Just as important, do you know what not to include?

If you would like tips on how to write an effective and clear statement of purpose, come to the statement of purpose session on Monday, November 26 from 12:00-1:45 pm in Room M15. You may bring your lunch. You must sign up for this presentation. See Stacy in room M22 or email her at [sar72@pitt.edu](mailto:sar72@pitt.edu) to reserve your space. Hope to see you there!

## Student Storyteller: A Quick Tour of Shanghai

The Chinese city of Shanghai is a vibrant place with a population of over 24 million people. Level 5 student Rong Han will take us on a brief tour of the city and introduce famous tourist spots, universities and delicious food. Please join us in the **ELI Conference room on Monday, November 19th at 1:00 pm** to hear her presentation. Feel free to bring your lunch to enjoy during the talk – you will feel hungry when you hear about the food in Shanghai!

## FI Visa Requirement: Travel Signatures

If you are traveling outside of the U.S. during the December break, and you are returning for the next term, you **MUST** have Stacy sign your I-20 before you leave.

Stacy will not be available after December 12, so you must see her soon if you are traveling. You will have to cancel travel plans if you do not have Stacy's signature before you leave.

**No one else at the ELI is able to sign your I-20. See Stacy even if you think you may travel!**

## Paying Tuition Spring 2019

You may pay your tuition beginning Monday, November 26. To avoid late fees, you should pay your tuition for the spring 2019 term by January 23, 2019. Check your account by logging in to my.pitt.edu and clicking PittPay. There are several ways to pay your tuition.

**eCheck:** Free online transfer from a US bank account to your Pitt account.

**Payment plan:** \$45 fee, see <http://payments.pitt.edu/payment-plans/>

**Cash, check, or money order:** Visit the Student Payment Center in room G-7 Thackeray Hall.

**Credit cards:** online **only** at my.pitt.edu—you may not use a credit card at Thackeray Hall. There is an additional 2.75% fee for using a credit card.

## First Day of Spring 2019 Term

Please remember that if you are planning to study at the ELI next term, the first day of official attendance is Friday, January 11, 2019. If you arrive at the ELI after the first day of official attendance, you will be counted absent for each day that you miss. You may pick up your fall schedule any time after 12:00 pm on Thursday, January 10. If you cannot arrive by Monday, January 21, you will need to wait until the next semester to attend the ELI. Please see Stacy if you have any questions.

## Much Ado About Nothing

On Thursday, November 8 at 8pm, Charity Randall Theatre (4301 Forbes Ave, Pittsburg, PA 15213) will be performing *Much Ado About Nothing*. Filled with intrigue, double crossing, and comedy, *Much Ado About Nothing* is the perfect evening of Shakespeare. Follow the rocky romances of Hero, Claudio, Beatrice and Benedict as they explore what loyalty, trust, and love means to each of them. Students pay \$12 and adults are \$25. If you cannot make it for November 14, don't worry; more dates are available through November 18. Please visit Pitt's Event Calendar for more dates.

## I-20 Expiration Dates for F-1 Students

By Stacy Ranson

The end of the semester is coming soon! If you are an F-1 student, please check the expiration date on your I-20. On page 1 of your I-20, under #5, you will see a beginning date for your studies and a completion date for your studies. **Remember that it is your responsibility to make sure that your I-20 does not expire.** If your I-20 will expire at the end of this semester, you must see Stacy Ranson if you want to extend your time at the ELI. **It is too late to request an extension after your I-20 has expired**, so please take a moment to check now.

## Fantastic Beasts Premiere

It's time to visit the Wizarding World once again! Join Pitt Program Council as we head to the AMC Waterfront 22 Theater on Thursday November 15 at 8:30 pm-1:00am for the premiere of *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald*! Tickets are \$10 and include your movie ticket, regular sized popcorn and drink, and transportation to the Waterfront Theater and back to the William Pitt Union. Buses will leave the William Pitt Union at 8:30 P.M.

## 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 or request a transfer to a new program.

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

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

## Transfer Process

Students with FI 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 Activity:

## ELI NIGHT Please Sign Up!



Get ready for one of the most highly anticipated activities in the ELI! ELI Night will be held on **Wednesday,**

**November 28 from 5-8 pm** at the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, located at 605 Morewood Avenue, which is between North Oakland and Shadyside.

ELI Night is a potluck dinner for ELI students and teachers, Talk Time leaders, conversation partners, and their families and friends. At a potluck dinner, everyone brings a dish to share. The dish should be enough to feed you and your guests and approximately 6-8 others. There is always a diverse selection of delicious food to select from. You will not leave hungry!

Please let us know if you are planning to attend. You can do this online at <https://tinyurl.com/ENFall2018>. Let us know if you are coming and how many guests (homestay family members, conversation partners, Talk Time leaders, friends) will be coming with you. **Please sign up by Monday, November 26.** We want to make sure that we have enough tables and chairs for everyone!

You should plan to arrive at the church at 5 pm. Dinner will be served at 5:30 pm. If you arrive after this time, you will miss out on a great deal of delicious food! In addition, if you are late, many people might already be too full to try your tasty dishes! If you have any questions, please contact Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu).

## ELI Closing Ceremony

by Stacy Ranson

The ELI would like to invite you to the Closing Ceremony for this semester. The ceremony will be on December 6 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the William Pitt Union. We'll take pictures, have some refreshments, and hand out attendance certificates at the ceremony. You all have played a big role in making this semester great—we hope you'll come celebrate with us!

ELI Activity:

## The Joy of Cookies Cookie Tour

The Joy of Cookies Cookie Tour is an annual event in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Lawrenceville. During this 3-day event, many businesses offer free cookie samples to attract customers to their businesses. A variety of stores participate in this event, and it is a great way to get to know a new neighborhood and maybe do a little shopping! Next Pittsburgh summed it up perfectly in a 2014 feature: "Equal parts cookie crawl and buy local movement, the free, family-friendly event showcases Lawrenceville's thriving Butler Street business district."

The Cookie Tour began as an open house at Jay Design Soaps & Gifts in 1997. An open house is an event where people are encouraged to visit a home or place of business to learn more about it. Due to the collaborative spirit of other business owners in Lawrenceville, this event at a single business grew to include more than a dozen businesses. In the year 2000, someone had the brilliant idea to add cookies to this open house and the event became the The Joy of Cookies Cookie Tour.

This event lasts three days, but we will participate on **Saturday, December 1**. Before the Cookie Tour, some of us will already be in the nearby Strip District, volunteering with Community Human Services. Read the article in this week's ELI News about this activity. After we are done volunteering at **12 pm**, we will go directly to Lawrenceville from the Strip District. If you want to join us for only the Cookie Tour, please let Ece know at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu) by **Monday, November 26** and indicate whether you will meet us in the Strip District or in Lawrenceville.

You can find more information about the Cookie Tour at <http://lvpg.com/cookie-tour2018/>.

## Options for Thanksgiving Dinner

In the US we will celebrate Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 22. Some students will travel during that time to visit their families or to go on vacation. Whether you are traveling or staying in Pittsburgh, you have several opportunities to celebrate Thanksgiving:

### Thanksgiving Dinner on Campus

The University is offering a FREE Thanksgiving dinner hosted by Pitt Global Ties on Wednesday, Nov. 21, from 5-6:30 pm in the William Pitt Union Assembly Room.. The event is free for all Pitt students, but there is an additional charge if you'd like to bring a guest. Even though student tickets are free, you must register in advance and get a ticket. Tickets are available in the William Pitt Union ticket office between Nov 7 and Nov. 18. You can find more information at <https://www.facebook.com/events/244623212831436/>.

### Thanksgiving Dinner with a Local Family

GlobalPittsburgh arranges Thanksgiving dinners with local host families. If you are interested in being invited for a holiday dinner with the local host family on Thursday, November 22, please contact Nadya Kessler at [nkessler@GlobalPittsburgh.org](mailto:nkessler@GlobalPittsburgh.org) by Thursday at 12pm. The cost of this activity is \$25.

### Thanksgiving Potluck with GlobalPittsburgh

GlobalPittsburgh brings together our members and friends for a traditional Intercultural Thanksgiving Potluck dinner on Saturday, November 17, from 5-7 pm. At a potluck dinner, everyone brings a dish that serves 6-8 people and the meal is shared together. To learn more and to register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/GP-Potluck-Nov2018>. This event is free and open to all friends of GlobalPittsburgh. Advance registration is required.

Follow us on  
Twitter  
**@Upitt\_ELI**



## Letters of Recommendation

Many of you will need to ask Stacy for a letter of recommendation if you are applying to other institutions. There are two important things to remember when making a request for a letter. The first factor is that letters of recommendation are based on your performance at the ELI. Stacy uses your grade reports as a resource for information about your performance. If you miss a lot of classes and don't do your work, your letter of recommendation will not be very strong.

The second important factor is time. Please remember that it takes approximately one week to receive a letter of recommendation. Stacy has many letters to write, and she cannot provide them immediately when you ask for them. **This means that if you need a letter before the semester break in December, you should request it by Monday, December 3. If you request a letter after this date, or during the break, you will have to wait until after the next term begins.** Please plan ahead when making your requests.

## Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Attention all thrill seekers! Join Pitt Program Council for an afternoon of fun at the world's first indoor trampoline park! Jump, fly, and flip from a trampoline runway into a pit filled with 10,000 foam cubes. Dunk like a pro with trampoline launch pads that bounce you ten feet into the air or combine regular dodge ball with Sky Zone's wall to wall trampolines to get the world's most awesome sport-Ultimate Dodgeball! Only \$10 a ticket, sign ups begin October 24th, 2018 in the WPU Ticket Office. Only two tickets per person. The trip is on November 18th, 2018 at 3:00pm. The bus will leave the Union at 2:00pm! All Pitt Program Council events are open to all Pitt undergraduate students with a valid (Oakland) Student ID.

## ELI Writing Contest

The ELI is holding a competition for students in all writing classes. There will be one winner in each level (3,4,5,6), and the winners will be announced at the ELI Closing Ceremony.

If you have written a good composition in your writing class this semester, you should tell your writing teacher that you would like to enter it in the writing contest. Your teacher will then submit your paper for you. Your entry will be read anonymously by judges (your name will be removed from the paper, so they won't know who you are). The judges will choose the best composition from each level.

The deadline for entries is Thursday, November 29 at 12:00 pm.

If you are in level 4, 5, or 6, your entry must be an essay that you wrote in class this semester. If you are in level 3, your entry can be a shorter composition, even a single paragraph. Each student can enter only one composition.

Good luck!

## Activities and Events on Campus

Take advantage of the resources below to find activities where you can use English outside of the classroom, make friends, and explore campus and the city:

### University Events Calendar:

<https://calendar.pitt.edu>

### ELI Activities Calendar:

<https://www.eli.pitt.edu/calendar/activities-and-events-calendar>

### Pitt Global Ties Events:

<https://www.facebook.com/Pitt.GlobalTies/>

### Pitt Program Council Events:

<https://ppc.pitt.edu/upcoming-events/>

**Pitt Arts** (free museum visits and cheap seats):

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittarts/>

**Pitt Serves** (volunteer activities):

<https://volunteer.pitt.edu/>

**Pitt Student Organizations:**

<https://pitt2.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>

## ELI Idiom of the Week

An **idiom** is a phrase or expression whose meaning might not always be clear from the words that make it up.

*“Heard it through the grapevine”*

An expression used to refer to information that is passed between people who are not directly in connection with the source. The information may be true or may just be a rumor; the important thing is that the source is not necessarily verified and the information cannot be relied upon as being accurate.

For example: **“I heard it through the grapevine** that teacher Ece is giving a surprise quiz on Friday.”

## Mark your calendars! Upcoming ELI Activities

**Wednesday, November 28:**

ELI Night

**Saturday, December 1:**

Volunteering with CHS

**Saturday, December 1:**

Cookie Tour



### Coffee Talk on Fridays!

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