



# ELI NEWS

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

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elipitt@pitt.edu

## 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, Friday  
1:00 pm-2:00 pm

## 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>

## Meeting for New F-1 Students

If you are a **new** F-1 student at the ELI, you **must** participate in a short meeting about your F1 visa status. The meeting will be located in Room 111 on Monday, January 22 from 1:00-1:15 pm. You must attend this meeting. The focus of the meeting will be:

- ❖ Rules to follow to keep your immigration status legal
- ❖ Benefits you are allowed to have as an F-1 student, such as vacation term

**If you are a sponsored student and you do not attend this meeting, your sponsor will be notified.**

## 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](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, 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.

ELI Activity:

## Tour of Downtown, Station Square and Mt. Washington New Date!

by Ece Ulus



Let's explore the city! We'll meet in the lobby of the ELI at 11 am on Saturday, January 20, and take the bus downtown. This tour was originally scheduled for last Saturday, January 13; however, it was too snowy and cold to enjoy the tour, so we had a great time at the Carnegie Museums instead. This Saturday, we will give the city tour another try. The current weather forecast says the temperature will be 43 degrees Fahrenheit (6 degrees Celsius) with a chance of rain in the afternoon. We will try to beat the rain and go to Mount Washington first, so eat a good breakfast before we meet at the ELI at 11 am. We'll take the bus downtown, transfer to the train, and then take the incline to Mount Washington, where we'll see fantastic views of the city of Pittsburgh. Finally, we will end our tour at Market Square downtown, where we will have a late lunch (everyone buys their own lunch). We should be back to campus around 4 pm, but you're free to leave anytime you wish. Don't forget, the bus, the train and the incline are all free with your Pitt student ID card! If you have any questions, please email Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu)

## 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](http://www.isoa.org) or International Student Insurance at [www.internationalstudentinsurance.com](http://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](mailto:elipitt@pitt.edu).

**The insurance deadline is Monday, January 22. If you have not already submitted it, you must provide your proof of health insurance by 12:00 pm on Monday, January 22, or your ELI registration will be canceled. Stacy is available to help with buying insurance. Email her at [sar72@pitt.edu](mailto:sar72@pitt.edu) to make an appointment if you need assistance.**



## New Student Checklist

Did you remember to:

- Activate your Pitt email address?
- Download the Duo Mobile security app so that you can access your Pitt email?
- Get your student ID card?
- Update your mailing address with the main office?
- Give a copy of your financial guarantee to the main office?
- Buy your textbooks?
- Register for a locker?

Please visit the ELI Main Office or talk to one of your teachers if you have any questions about these steps!

ELI Activity:

## Hollywood Special Effects Show

by Ece Ulus

Join the ELI as we go see the Hollywood Special Effects Show at the Byham Theater downtown on Monday, February 5 at 7:30pm. Special Effects are the images and sounds that are created for movies and TV shows.

This show will take you behind the scenes of famous movies and demonstrate the science behind these fantastic images and sounds we see and hear in movies. In this show, a team of professionals who have had experience in popular movies, such as The Dark Knight Rises and Guardians of The Galaxy, will reveal their secrets in the world of special effects.

Please be aware that this show uses a wide variety of effects. These effects may include, but are not limited to: strobe lighting, smoke and haze, airbursts, and gunflashes. If you would like to experience this exciting show with the ELI, you must pay the main office by 4:30pm on Thursday, January 25. Discounted tickets are \$15 each. The main office will begin collecting money on Friday, January 19. Please bring the exact amount. There are no refunds. If you have any questions, please email Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu).

## Withdrawal and Refund Policy

If you wish to drop one or more of your classes, you should immediately inform the ELI Main Office and the ELI Student Advisor, Stacy Ranson, in M22.

If you drop courses *before* the end of the ELI Add/Drop period on **Monday, January 22**, you will receive a full refund. This check will be mailed to your home mailing address. This takes approximately 2 weeks.

If you drop courses *after* the ELI Add/Drop period on **January 22**, you will NOT receive a refund.



## Follow Us on Twitter!

Follow us on Twitter at [@UPITT\\_ELI](https://twitter.com/UPITT_ELI)

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

## 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!

ELI Activity:

## ELI Trip to Washington, DC Information Session



Join the ELI on March 9-11 for a trip to Washington, DC! We will depart the University on Friday, March 9 at 8:30 am and return on Sunday, March 11 around 9 pm. There will be an information session on Monday, January 22 at 1 pm in M15 (the conference room next to the main office). Feel free to bring your lunch. At this information session, you will learn pricing information and more details about the places we will visit. If you cannot attend, but you are interested in this trip, please email Ece at [ecu4@pitt.edu](mailto:ecu4@pitt.edu) for more details.

## Meet Point Park University Students!

by Suzanne Meyer

Are you interested in meeting with native speakers of English? If so, you can meet students at Point Park University (PPU). Students in a PPU education class want to meet English language learners and get to know each other. You and your PPU partner will meet several times (not weekly, but 6-8 hours in total) during the spring semester, as well as attend a group activity at PPU. If you are interested in getting to know a PPU student, contact Community Outreach at [elicomm@pitt.edu](mailto:elicomm@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!

## ELI Online Calendar

When does vacation start? When is Spring Break? When are our final exams? If you have questions about the ELI schedule for this term or future terms, remember to check the ELI calendar online: <http://www.eli.pitt.edu/calendar/activities-and-events-calendar>.



## 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.

## Talk Time Conversation Groups

by Suzanne Meyer

Talk Time is a conversation group that meets for one hour each week. Each group includes a native English speaker and a group of about 4-5 ELI students. Joining a Talk Time conversation group is a great way to practice listening and speaking as well as to learn about culture!

Look in next week's ELI News for more information about Talk Time as well as details about how to register for a Talk Time group!

## 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 February 6.** 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 Class 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>.

## Sponsorship Letters

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

## 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 Rachael or Rosemary 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.

## What Can You Do With a Student ID Card?

Did you know that your Pitt student ID card gives you free access to transportation, the student computing labs, and libraries? With your valid Pitt ID you can also get discounted rates on museum visits too! Here are some of the resources available to you when you carry your Pitt student ID.

**Museums:** Free admission at the Andy Warhol Museum, The Mattress Factory, the Carnegie Museum of Art and Natural History and other museums in Pittsburgh.

**Computing Labs:** Free use of the computing labs throughout campus, including Hillman Library and the Cathedral of Learning.

**Transportation:** Free use of Pittsburgh city buses as well as University of Pittsburgh shuttles around campus.

**Other Fun Stuff:** Free admission to the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, as well as free rides on the Duquesne Incline and more!

## Flywire: International Money Transfers

The University of Pittsburgh has partnered with Flywire to make it easier for international students to transfer money from overseas to their Pitt student accounts in order to pay tuition and fees. Flywire will allow students to transfer money in their own currencies via bank transfer (in most cases) or by credit or debit card. Flywire is available through the PittPay link on <http://my.pitt.edu>.

The advantages of Flywire include: no bank transfer fees; a savings on exchange rates compared to what banks offer; reducing transfer times from 2-3 weeks down to 2-3 days; and customer service available 24 hours a day 7 days a week ("24/7"). Flywire also offers chat support and its website in Korean, Chinese (Simplified), Japanese, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

International transfer via Flywire is an option in PittPAY via [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu). Students can authorize parents or family members to pay tuition and fees for them. For more information about making a payment this way, please visit the ELI Main Office. You can also learn more at <http://www.flywire.com/pitt> and you can take advantage of its 24/7 customer support.

## Upcoming ELI Activities

**Mark your calendars!**

**Saturday, January 20:** City Tour

**Saturday, January 27:** Oakland Kazoo Fest

**Wednesday, January 31:** Ice Skating

**Monday, February 5:** Hollywood Special Effects Show

**Saturday, February 17:** Diavalo: Architecture in Motion

**Saturday, February 24:** Snowtubing

**Friday, March 23:** Pitt Night at the Opera: Moby Dick

**Saturday, April 7:** Pirates Game

## Pitt Emergency Alert System

By Stacy Ranson

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](http://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!



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on Facebook!**

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