

*English Language Institute*  
Missouri State University

# Student Policy Handbook

## Spring & Fall Semesters

Welcome to the English Language Institute at Missouri State University! You have chosen an excellent program in which to improve your English skills and to prepare for study in an American university. The following information will answer many of your questions about the ELI.

### History of the English Language Institute at MSU

In the spring of 1996, planning began for the development of the English Language Institute, an intensive English program at Missouri State University. The English Language Institute (ELI) was initially designed to serve the needs of international students seeking admittance to graduate programs either at MSU or at other universities. The first eight-week session of the ELI was held during the 1996 summer semester, with five full-time students enrolled. As a result of continued growth, the English Language Institute now serves the needs of graduate, post-baccalaureate, and post-secondary ESL students through five levels of study. Through an intensive twenty-three hours per week, students have the opportunity to prepare for the language challenges of American classrooms. **The mission of the English Language Institute is to equip ESL students with the necessary language skills to achieve success in the degree program of their choice and to enhance their potential for future employment after graduation.**

Students entering the ELI with a bachelor's degree are referred to as **graduate students**. They may study in any of the five levels, depending on their placement scores. Students who have completed high school and plan on entering the university as undergraduates are referred to as **undergraduate students**. Undergraduate students may study in Levels 1-4, depending on their placement scores.

### English Language Institute Levels

ELI courses are divided into three to four components, depending on the level. In each of the components, instructors endeavor to follow a communicative model, to use authentic materials, and, especially in the upper level courses, to design assignments that correspond in nature to assignments given in the students' future academic courses.

#### Level 1

Students who come into the ELI as basic learners are placed in Level 1. Level 1 courses consist of Writing/Grammar, Reading and Speaking/Listening. These courses focus on building English vocabulary, learning the parts of speech and their function in written and spoken English, and establishing communicative skills on a basic level.

## **Levels 2 and 3**

Levels 2 and 3 require correspondingly higher proficiency in communication. Level 2 is considered appropriate for advanced beginner to low intermediate learners, while Level 3 is for intermediate learners. Both levels provide instruction in writing and grammar taught as one component and reading taught as one component. In Level 2, speaking and listening are taught as one component, while in level 3, speaking and listening are taught separately. Vocabulary is taught throughout the curriculum; however, students will focus on vocabulary more intensely in the reading class.

## **Levels 4 and 5**

Levels 4 and 5 are designed for high intermediate to advanced level students. Level 4 is open to both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate or graduate students, while Level 5 is open only to **post-baccalaureate or graduate students**. In both levels, writing and grammar are taught as a unit because of the interrelatedness of the two components. Students are exposed to the principles of American academic written discourse, research techniques, and diverse reading and writing experiences that develop critical thinking skills. Emphasis is placed on the writing process, including multiple revisions and editing workshops. Major writing assignments include article summaries, short synthesis essays, and a major research paper/project.

In both Level 4 and Level 5, the writing and grammar component also addresses ESL-related problems that occur in both written and spoken language. Students are given the opportunity to learn the "rules" of English grammar as they work within the framework of their own written texts and as they interact through verbal tasks.

For both levels, speaking and listening skills are taught separately. Academic Speaking Skills class offers pair and small group practice in pronunciation skills, individual oral reports and group presentations, role-playing, and discussions based on cultural studies and idiomatic usage. In the Academic Listening Strategies class, note-taking and summarizing from academic lectures are emphasized.

The reading component presents reading strategies and study skills necessary for critical reading within an academic context. Course content focuses on reading for meaning, building vocabulary, and increasing comprehension and speed, while incorporating the skills of scanning, drawing inferences, recognizing cohesive links, and summarizing.

## **Pronunciation Lab**

At the beginning of Academic Speaking Skills courses, students will participate in an in-class standardized pronunciation assessment. Instructors will work with individual students to assess target pronunciation areas. Based on these target areas, students must choose 10 pronunciation class sessions to attend (which must relate to their target areas). Each student has a contract for which they are responsible and must hand in to their speaking instructor after the completion of the requirement. Additionally, the instructor of the pronunciation class will take attendance in each session.

## **Spelling, Phonics and Vocabulary Class (Levels 3, 4, and 5 Only)**

The ELI provides a supplemental spelling, phonics, and vocabulary class for students with spelling challenges. All level 3, 4, and 5 writing students will be given a spelling proficiency test at the beginning of the semester. Students whose scores are lower than 75% will need to attend the spelling class until they are able to demonstrate adequate improvement, either at the midterm or final tests.

## **Learning Enhancement Opportunities**

**An Onsite Computer Lab** is open to students every day after classes for academic and personal use. The PCs in the lab allow full internet access and are equipped with Office 2007 products including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. They also offer a variety of motivating and challenging software for English learners.

**The Academic Lecture Series** provides ELI students with an opportunity to experience real university lectures from a variety of departments. Each semester, ten to fifteen professors visit the ELI and give lectures from the classes they teach at Missouri State University. This series is an important part of the Academic Listening Strategies classes at the ELI (levels 3-5).

**The Conversation Partners** program pairs ELI students with English-speaking faculty, staff, and fellow students at Missouri State University for weekly one-on-one conversations to practice English and share ideas and information about the global community.

**Language Exchange** program pairs ELI students and other students enrolled in modern language classes at Missouri State University. Weekly one-on-one conversations create opportunities to practice communicating in both English and the modern language being studied, which may include Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, or Spanish.

**Field Trips** are occasionally organized as part of the curriculum of a class to enhance a lesson or as a whole group activity to expose ELI students to historic places and cultural events.

**Community Educational Outreach** allows ELI students to share information about their countries and cultures with students in elementary and secondary schools in Springfield. For example, presentations might be given by ELI students at local schools or an international fair with booths representing each country or region.

**Community Social Outreach** encourages ELI students to meet members of the MSU and Springfield communities in a variety of informal social settings. Examples of activities might include a bi-weekly international night hosted by a local music/art venue called The Belmonte, or an afternoon coffee and tea break with members of the local Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (R. S.V.P.).

## **ELI Policies**

### **ELI Course of Study and SEVIS Compliance**

In order to maintain SEVIS status, ELI students who hold F-1 visas must be enrolled in full-time studies in the ELI until they have completed the appropriate exit level. If a student completes some but not all of his or her classes in the exit level, that student may be enrolled for one semester in only the remaining classes needed to complete the ELI. If the student chooses to begin academic classes while completing the remaining ELI courses, he or she must obtain permission from the ELI Director who will give the student a Temporary Clearance Form to allow the student to register for a limited number of Missouri State University classes.

Students who fall outside the category of admission-seeking student (such as members of the community, student or faculty spouse, etc.) may enroll in one or more components of the ELI as non-credit electives. However, F-1 students seeking admission to the university cannot enroll in university classes as a special student if they do not meet the admission standards of the university.

In addition to complying with all U.S. immigration regulations, ELI students must comply with all other regulations concerning admissions, student visa status, health insurance, and other university regulations established by the office of International Student Services (ISS).

### **Evaluation Policies and Procedures**

#### **Placement Tests**

All ELI students take the Michigan English Placement Test (EPT) and the Listening Comprehension Test. (The EPT score cannot be used for admission to Missouri State University or any other university.) In addition, all ELI students write a placement essay and participate in an oral interview. Levels are determined based on placement test scores. Placement for returning students is determined by their final evaluation of the previous semester's coursework.

#### **Grade Reports**

Students are given grade reports for each class at the midterm. At the first and third quarters, instructors hold one-on-one conferences with students to discuss their progress. Final grade reports are given at the end of the semester. These reports include course grades and final exam results.

### **Exit Criteria for Undergraduate and Graduate Students**

At the end of the term, Level 5 and Level 4 students participate in post-tests closely corresponding to the placement tests. The SPEAK test, an oral interview, a reading comprehension test, listening test, and a writing portfolio are evaluated, again according to the standard scales used for each of the assessments at the beginning of the session. If the

student does not meet the exit criteria of a component, he or she must repeat the course. Graduate students in Level 4 must meet all exit requirements for Level 4 before moving on to Level 5.

Proficiency in each component is indicated by the following scores:

	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>
Academic Speaking Skills	Score of 39-40 on SPEAK plus pass oral interview <b>OR</b> score of 41 or above on SPEAK; <b>and</b> 75% on course work	Score of 44-45 on SPEAK plus pass oral interview <b>OR</b> score of 46 or higher on SPEAK; <b>and</b> 75% on course work
Academic Listening Strategies	75% on course work which includes the final exam	75% on course work which includes the final exam
Academic Writing and Grammar Skills	75 or higher on Portfolio with a minimum score of 70 on in-class essay <b>and</b> 75% on course work	75 or higher on Portfolio with a minimum score of 70 in in-class essay <b>and</b> 75% on course work
Academic Reading and Vocabulary Skills	75% on course work which includes the final exam	75% on course work which includes the final exam

Students in levels 1, 2, and 3 must score 75% in their coursework in order to pass to the next level. Levels 1, 2, and 3 Writing/Grammar students also must receive a minimum score of 70 on their in-class final essay and a 75% average on the portfolio.

### **Partial Completion Policy**

Students who successfully complete part of their ELI classes may be eligible to take one or two courses at Missouri State University while completing the ELI requirements. They are still considered by the University to be ELI students and are not fully admissible to degree programs until the entire ELI program is completed. Students who may be eligible for part-time study at the University must have permission from the ELI Director to register for academic classes.

Students who are repeating ELI classes on a part-time basis are not required to enroll in Missouri State University classes. They will be considered full-time for immigration purposes while finishing ELI classes.

Successful completion of the ELI satisfies the English proficiency requirement for admission to Missouri State University. Other options for proof of English proficiency are listed below:

<b>Test</b>	<b>Minimum Score For Undergraduates</b>	<b>Minimum Score For Graduates</b>
TOEFL-PBT (paper based)	500 or more	550 or more
TOEFL-CBT (computer based)	173 or more	213 or more
TOEFL-IBT (internet based)	61 or more	79 or more
IELTS	5.0 or more	6.0 or more
MSU/ELI	Completion Level 4	Completion Level 5

*Source: (MSU 2007-2008 Undergraduate Catalog, page 19)*

## Attendance Policy

The ELI strives to help students achieve their educational goals and develop good habits for the future. ELI instructors expect students to be in class on time every day for the following reasons:

1. Regular class attendance is very important when learning to speak, listen, read, and write in a second language.
2. Being in class gives students the opportunity to practice English and to ask questions.
3. Being late disrupts the class and is disrespectful to classmates and instructors.
4. Students who are absent too many times or drop a course without prior approval are in danger of losing their student visa status with U.S. immigration.
5. In the United States, university professors and employers require regular attendance.
6. Students spend a lot of money to come here to study English, so they need to get the most for their investment!

The ELI Attendance Policy, therefore, is designed to encourage students to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. **Any student who is absent more than seven times for any reason will fail the course. A student who is more than 15 minutes late for class will be counted absent. And a student who is late 6-15 minutes will be counted tardy; three tardy arrivals equal one absence.** There are no exceptions to this policy.

## Bearmail (University Email) Policy

Like any students enrolled at Missouri State University, ELI students receive an email account (Bearmail). ELI students are required to activate their Bearmail during the first week of class. Being an active Bearmail user is critical for all University students, including ELI students. Important communication to and from ELI instructors and administrators will only take place through Bearmail. In addition, International Student Services will periodically use Bearmail to contact ELI students.

## English Only Policy

Students and instructors are expected to speak **only English** in the classroom buildings, including the hallways and labs. Likewise, **only English** will be spoken at all ELI-sponsored activities outside of class.

## Summer Students

Students who have not completed the ELI in the spring semester should plan to attend classes during the summer semester. Taking a three-month break from the language program is very detrimental to a steady improvement in communication skills.

## **Civility Statement**

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on behalf of the student and the instructor. The instructor, as well as the students, should not be subjected to any student's behavior that is in any way disruptive, rude, or challenging to the teacher's authority in the classroom. A student should not feel intimidated or demeaned by his / her classmates or instructor, and students must remember that the instructor has primary responsibility for maintaining control over classroom behavior and academic integrity. The instructor can order temporary removal or exclusion from the classroom of any student engaging in disruptive conduct or conduct violating the general rules and regulations of the institution.

## **Student Academic Integrity Policy**

People in every country around the world have a different idea of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism. Because students at the English Language Institute come from all over the world, it is one of our goals to teach them what cheating and plagiarism mean in the United States in order to ensure their academic success not only at the ELI, but also at the university level. Therefore, the following policy defines what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and describes the consequences of committing an act of academic dishonesty while attending the ELI.

### **Definitions** (Source: Missouri State University's Student Academic Integrity Policy)

**Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating and/or plagiarizing

**Cheating:** The term "cheating" refers to using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

**Plagiarism:** The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work or sections of a work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. This means you must give credit to any source that you use in any assignment. This includes any material copied directly or paraphrased from the Internet. The unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials, including material taken from or ordered through the Internet, also constitutes plagiarism.

**Facilitating academic dishonesty:** Assisting or attempting to assist another to violate any provision of this Academic Integrity Policy, whether or not that action is associated with any particular course, is considered academic dishonesty.

### **Acts of Academic Dishonesty**

(Please be aware, this is NOT a comprehensive list.)

1. Refer to materials or sources or use devices not authorized by the instructor (e.g., computer disks, audio recorders, camera phones, text messages, MP3 players, cheat sheets, calculators, solution manuals, materials from previous classes, commercial

research services) or commit any other act of cheating (looking at another's paper, etc.) during a test or assignment.

2. Depend on the aid of others, including other students or tutors, in connection with any test or assignment to the extent that the work is not representative of the student's abilities.
3. Provide inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any test or assignment, including the unauthorized use of camera phones, text messages, photocopies, notes or other means to copy or photograph materials used or intended for testing.
4. Engage in plagiarism by copying any amount of material from another source without giving credit to that author.
5. Use materials from the Internet or any other source without full and appropriate attribution.
6. Permit your work to be submitted by another person in connection with any test or assignment.
7. Claim credit for or submit work done by another.
8. Sign an attendance sheet for another student, allow another student to sign on your behalf, or otherwise participate in gaining credit for attendance for yourself or another.

### **Consequences of Academic Dishonesty at Missouri State University**

The following are the penalties that can be imposed on a student who commits an act of academic dishonesty at Missouri State University:

1. An instructor can give a zero on an assignment or examination, require additional assignments or examinations, lower the student's course grade, issue a failing course grade (F), issue a failing course grade of XF (indicates that the failing grade was due to academic dishonesty).
2. The university can also deny a student the privilege of holding an office in any student organization, deny the privilege of representing the university in any intercollegiate activity, require service to the University, suspend or expel a student or recommend to the Provost that a degree already granted be revoked, even if all degree requirements are met.

### **Consequences of Academic Dishonesty at the English Language Institute**

Because we are aware that not everyone understands clearly what constitutes academic dishonesty, we apply a more lenient policy intended to help students learn how to avoid committing these acts before applying severe punishment.

The **first** time a student commits an act of academic dishonesty in a class, the instructor will meet with him/her and will issue a written warning, which will go into the student's file. **The instructor will have the option of giving a zero on the assignment or test in question or of allowing the student to make up the assignment or test.**

The **second** time a student commits an act of academic dishonesty in a class, that instructor will inform the Assistant Director or Director, who will then call a meeting with the student and instructor to discuss the situation. The student will be given a second formal warning, which will go into the student's file. **The student will also be given a zero on the assignment or test in question.**

The **third** time a student commits an act of academic dishonesty in a class, the instructor will inform the Assistant Director and Director of the ELI, who will then call a meeting with the student. A third formal warning will be issued and placed into the student's file. **The student will automatically fail the course in which he/she committed the act of academic dishonesty.** To maintain F-1 visa status, the student will still be required to attend the class.

The **fourth** time a student commits an act of academic dishonesty in a class, the instructor will inform the Assistant Director and Director of the ELI, who will then call a meeting with the student. At this time, **the student will be dismissed from the English Language Institute** and advised to return home so as not to be out-of-status.

**In addition, a clear pattern of academic dishonesty which occurs in multiple classes or from semester to semester can result in dismissal from the ELI at the discretion of the Director.**

### **Appeal Procedure**

If a student is not satisfied with how his/her case is handled by either the instructor or the Assistant Director or Director of the ELI, he/she may request a hearing from the Academic Integrity Panel at Missouri State University.

### **Credit**

Parts of this policy were adapted from Arizona State University's Academic Integrity Policy.

### **ELI Appeals Procedure**

The following appeals procedure has been established for students who have reasons that can be substantiated to request grade changes.

1. The student must first write a formal letter to the instructor. In the letter, the student must provide the following information: name and social security number; course number, title, and section; semester and year taken; name of instructor; and a clear statement of the grade change request and reasons which justify the request.
2. If the instructor does not deem it necessary or appropriate to change the grade, the student may appeal next to the ELI Program Administrator. The student must present a portfolio of his/her work to the coordinator, and, upon request, the instructor must provide a letter and support documents to justify the grade.
3. If, upon review of the student's case, the Program Administrator does not deem it necessary or appropriate to change the student's grade, the student may appeal to

the ELI Appeals Committee. The committee members, appointed by the Dean of the College of Continuing Education and the Extended University, will review the student's appeal and make a recommendation as they deem necessary or appropriate.

4. If the ELI Appeals Committee does not deem it necessary or appropriate to change the student's grade, the student may appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who may refer the appeal to his/her designee for a hearing and a recommendation.

### **Instructor and Tutor Qualifications**

Instructors for the Institute have master's degrees in English, TESOL, or a related field of study, and/or they have completed the TESOL curriculum. Graduate assistants in the Institute are TESOL-certified or currently in the TESOL course of study. Both instructors and graduate teaching assistants are approved by the ELI Director and Assistant Director.

Tutors are upper-level undergraduate or graduate students with TESOL training. Tutors are approved by the ELI Director and Assistant Director.

### **Tuition and Student Fees, Insurance, and Parking Permits**

Tuition for the ELI is due prior to the beginning of classes. Students will not be enrolled in classes and will not be allowed to attend classes until their tuition is paid in full. Tuition must be paid at the English Language Institute office by check made payable to "MSU," by credit card, or with cash or traveler's checks. If payment is made by cash or travelers' checks, it must be in the exact amount. (Note: The tuition fee does not include books, living expenses, campus parking, or health insurance.) **Tuition is non-refundable and must be paid in full before registration.**

New students arriving after the placement tests are given will be assessed a \$50 late fee. Returning students arriving after the day tuition fees are collected must pay a \$50 late fee. Students will be required to purchase at a bookstore several textbooks for the Institute. Full-time students should budget \$150 for the semester.

International students are required to purchase health insurance from the university. A bill for the insurance will be mailed after the beginning of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to pay the insurance charges on campus at the Bursar's office upon receipt of the bill.

Parking permits may be purchased at the Parking Administration Office, 700 E. Elm (see map), after you are issued a ZipCard.

### **ZipCards**

The Missouri State University student identification card is called a ZipCard. New students may obtain a ZipCard at the ZipCard Office, Campus Union, Room 128, during ELI Orientation. The ZipCard Office requires international students to present their original admission letter with student identification number and a passport.

## **Your Success in the Institute**

The English Language Institute offers more than just an opportunity to improve English skills: it provides the experience to interact with students from all over the world. Your classmates come from a variety of cultural, ethnic, racial, economic, religious, and political backgrounds. It is an exciting situation because you can learn much from each other. However, you must also realize that with a variety of backgrounds, differences of opinion are common. Please be considerate of those who are different from you as you study together in this program.

In addition to the variety of cultural backgrounds, ELI students come with varying experiences and abilities in communicating in English. Factors such as motivation to improve, participation in classroom activities, attendance, speaking English outside of class, and your native language all play important roles in the rate at which you will improve your English skills. Our experience has been that students who make an effort to speak only English while they study in the United States and who attend class on a regular basis have a much higher success rate than those who do not. If at all possible, live on campus with an American student or with an international student whose native language is different from yours so that you have to use English only. We are committed to helping you achieve your academic goals. We will work with you to see those goals fulfilled, but **you** are ultimately the determining factor in your success.

## English Language Institute Student Policy Handbook

My signature certifies that I have read the English Language Institute Student Policy Handbook and I understand its contents, including the attendance policy and the exit criteria for the courses in which I am enrolled.

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Student signature

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Student printed name

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ID #

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Date

*Please return this page with your signature, ID#, and date to the English Language Institute office by January 25, 2008.*