

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

English Language Center

Student Handbook

Academic Year 2013-2014

WELCOME TO THE VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY English Language Center

The Vanderbilt University (VU) English Language Center (ELC) provides excellent language instruction in a friendly, supportive atmosphere. Students from all over the world have been studying English at the ELC since 1978 in order to prepare for academic study or employment in a VU department, center, or institute. The VU ELC serves Vanderbilt students, faculty, and staff.

We hope you will be very pleased with your experience as a student here. If you need any assistance, please let us know. To help you understand our language center better, we have provided important information in this student handbook.

SCHEDULE

The VU ELC has 2 semesters: the fall semester and spring semester, which are 12 weeks each. We offer discipline-specific language instruction during the summer, before students matriculate into professional-school programs. Most classes meet 1.5 hours a day, 2 days a week, Monday through Friday.

CALENDAR

For important VU ELC dates see the [Calendar](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/elc/calendar/). < <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/elc/calendar/> >

PLACEMENT TESTING

All students entering the ELC are required to take assessment tests. These tests are designed to help us assess each student's English proficiency. Testing typically lasts for an hour and a half.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

VU ELC students who are enrolled in academic programs and interested in enrolling in [English for Academic Purposes \(EAP\)](#) courses, must use the VU ELC online registration on our website to sign up. < <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/elc/programs/english-academics-professionals/index.php> >

ITAs who are so required by their department advisors must sign up via the online ITA [registration form](#). < <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/elc/programs/english-academics-professionals/ITA.php> >

FEES

Matriculated VU students:

VU ELC students enrolled in academic programs are eligible for one tuition-free course per semester, pending availability and scheduling. These courses are funded by the University Provost's office.

Tuition Assistance & Discounts for VU students¹, faculty, staff, & VU-affiliated² individuals:

The VU ELC provides tuition discounts for *bona fide* faculty, staff members, and students. Assistance and discounts apply to courses taken at the VU ELC during Fall and Spring semesters only. Tuition assistance and discounts apply to courses taken at the VU ELC only. VU ID cards must be presented.

Eligibility

For VU Faculty and Staff:

You are eligible to participate in the following assistance and discounts if you are faculty or staff.

You are eligible for one discounted ELC course (50%) per semester with application, testing, and tuition fees waived.

Tuition Assistance and Discounts

Individual	Application Fee	Testing Fee	Tuition Fee
VU Faculty/Staff	Waived	Waived	50% discount (1 course)
VU Student	Waived	Waived	Waived (1 course)

All registration is pending availability in courses - contact elc@vanderbilt.edu for availability information.

Please note:

Tuition discounts do not apply to discipline-specific English-language courses/programs offered in conjunction with VU schools and departments.

Textbooks and Materials

Textbook and/or materials fees depend on which textbooks and/or materials a student needs. ELC students may purchase all necessary textbooks and materials at the Barnes & Noble at Vanderbilt Bookstore. Although you are not required to buy books from this bookstore, we cannot accommodate any late purchases of books from non-campus vendors. Whether you choose to rent your books or to purchase new, used, or digital e-books) through this bookstore, you are guaranteed to get the correct textbooks and course materials. If you drop a course, you may return your textbook for a full refund during the drop/add period at the beginning of the semester. There is a "materials charge" for any ELC class that does not use a specific textbook. If a student does not wish to keep certain textbooks, s/he might be able to sell them back to the Barnes & Noble at Vanderbilt

¹ "VU Student" refers to all matriculated, degree-seeking students. Proof of status must be presented for enrollment.

² "VU affiliated" includes all other individuals, including non-degree-seeking students, scholars, postdocs, and researchers.

Bookstore at the end of a term. The bookstore will buy back books only if there is a need for the same textbooks the following semester and you present a VU Bookstore receipt of purchase.

PAYMENT

Fees must be paid during registration, before class attendance. Students who do not pay course fees in full will not be allowed to attend classes. Payment is made at the ELC Office (Rm. 106). Each student is responsible for keeping his/her receipt to verify payment of ELC fees. In the event that a check is returned by the bank because of insufficient funds in a student's account, or for any other reason, an additional fee of \$50 will be charged. And full payments must then be made in cash. ELC fees for VU students who are enrolled in degree programs may be charged to their student accounts.

ELC COURSES

See **Programs** < <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/elc/programs/english-academics-professionals/index.php> > for **course descriptions**.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT, GRADES, & FEEDBACK

Enrollment

In order to maintain your course enrollment, a minimum of 75% attendance is required. Course grades and rate of class attendance are very important. All grades and attendance become part of a student's permanent record at the ELC and may be published on VU ELC transcripts. When you are required to take courses by your department, grades are reported to your department.

Grading Criteria:

Assuming your enrollment requirement is met and upon completion of a course, you will receive a Pass or Fail grade. Your progress is based on the following criteria:

- Achieving course objectives
- Assessment (demonstration of proficiency development based on tests, projects & presentations)
- Attendance (including punctuality) & participation
- Assignments (in-class & homework)

For grading in each course, please see the specific course syllabus given by the instructor(s).

CLASS CHANGES (DROP/ADD DEADLINES)

Dropping or adding a course may take place only within the first week of classes each semester. If you wish to drop a course, you must so notify your instructor immediately.

DO NOT CHANGE CLASSES BEFORE YOU RECEIVE A WRITTEN APPROVAL.

WITHDRAWAL, REFUND OF FEES

For VU degree students:

Failure to notify your instructor and withdraw within the drop/add period may jeopardize your placement in future tuition-free VU ELC courses.

For faculty and staff:

Faculty and staff who are required to pay tuition for VU ELC courses must officially withdraw by completing the Application for Withdrawal available in VU ELC Room 106. Faculty and staff may officially withdraw from classes (regardless of the date he/she stops attending class) any day during the first week of a term in order to receive a refund of 100% of the course-fee payment. (A refund does not include other charges.)

There will be no refund for withdrawing from classes after the first week of a term. A check-request form for the amount of the refund will be sent to the University Accounts.

Payable Office, which will then mail a refund check to the ELC. This process should take a minimum of three weeks. No refund is given to students who unofficially withdraw from class.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is an ELC course requirement. Any student whose class-attendance rate drops below a projected 75% (overall percentage for the semester) at any time during the semester may lose Blackboard/OAK access for the affected course(s). Students must communicate promptly with their instructor(s) whenever they must miss a class or if their course status changes.

The ELC Assistant Director and VU departments will be informed if at any time during the semester a student, who is required to take an ELC course (ITAs and others), has a class-attendance rate that drops below a projected 75% for the semester.

A student will be deleted from Blackboard/OAK if:

- s/he officially withdraws by the drop/add period
- s/he unofficially withdraws after the drop/add period by communicating with the instructor
- s/he stops attending after the drop/add period and does not respond to two communication attempts by the instructor to verify her/his enrollment status
 - e-mail attempt 1: after 1 week of absences
 - e-mail attempt 2: when the student cannot achieve 75% for the semester with any additional absence

CLASS ABSENCE

At the VU ELC, class attendance and punctuality are very important. All students should do their best to avoid unnecessary absence from class. If special circumstances prevent you from arriving at class on time, you should discuss the difficulty with your teacher (in advance if possible). If the situation is recurring, you should discuss it with the Assistant Director, Lee Martin (Room 203). Regarding attendance, being late 3 times is equal to a 1-hour absence.

If you must miss class due to illness or injury, inform your instructor promptly.

OTHER MATTERS

Food and/or Drinks Students may have hot or cold drinks in class as long as they do not disturb others.

Smoking: VU is a smoke-free campus. Smoking is **prohibited** in all buildings on campus, including University residence halls and Greek chapter houses, and on the grounds of the campus with the exception of designated outdoor-smoking areas.

Locations of designated smoking areas for students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors may be found on the map on the website: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/info/smokingpolicy/>.

Locations of additional designated smoking areas for campus residents may be found on the Housing and Residential Education website: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/ResEd/main/housing/housing-policies/smoke-free-policy/>.

Designated smoking areas will be marked with signs and include cigarette urns for disposal. VU is committed to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment and offers several resources for smoking cessation.

There is no smoking in or around the ELC buildings.

Mobile Phones Students should not answer or make phone calls or text messages during class. If you have a cell phone or beeper, please keep it turned off or on vibrate while you are in class.

Bicycles should be locked in the bicycle racks in the rear of the ELC building only.

STUDENT ACCESS COMPUTER & EQUIPMENT

The VU ELC computer (Rm. 107) is available to all ELC students from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Students with a VU ID card also have access to the computers in VU computer labs and in the university's libraries. Students are responsible for their own faxes or photocopies.

LEAVING THE ELC EARLY

VU matriculated students who unofficially withdraw from classes may be unable to enroll in VU ELC courses in future semesters.

EVALUATIONS

Course evaluations are done through the VU online-evaluation system (VOICE) in each class at the end of the term. Notifications will be sent out via email. We ask you to take a few minutes to complete these forms honestly, accurately, and fully. They help us make the ELC a better place to study.

CERTIFICATION LETTERS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Certification letters are available on request (see Irene Race, VU ELC Room 106). VU ELC transcripts are also available to students at the completion of a semester. The ELC cannot send out grade reports or transcripts without a written permission from the student. If you wish to have one sent, you must obtain a consent form from Irene Race (Rm. 106). Unofficial transcripts are for students' personal use. They are stamped "unofficial" and are free of charge. Only official transcripts are sent directly to other institutions.

For additional information for international students at VU, please see the **International Student and Scholar Services Student Handbook**: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/iss/resources-2/>