

# The ELI Student Handbook

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## THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

The English Language Institute (ELI) provides English language instruction to students, faculty, and community members from around the world who study at Mississippi State University (MSU).

ELI **credit courses** are available for degree-seeking MSU undergraduate and graduate students to meet academic English requirements along with acquiring academic cultural awareness for university success. **Non-credit**, intensive English courses are available for non-degree seeking students who want full- or part-time courses for academic, personal, or professional reasons.

As part of its cross-cultural programming, the ELI also coordinates the Conversation Partner Program, matching ELI students with members of the MSU and Starkville communities to practice English conversation skills.

For more information, please refer to our website at [www.eli.msstate.edu](http://www.eli.msstate.edu).

### Contact Information

Main Office	116 Allen	662-325-8929
Amanda Harrison, Int. Student Advisor aharrison@international.msstate.edu	116 Allen	662-325-2648
Susan Parr, Instructor/Coordinator sparr@international.msstate.edu	114 Memorial	

### Emergency Numbers

Please contact the appropriate agency in any emergency.

EMERGENCY (Ambulance, Fire, Police)	911
Campus Police	662-325-2121
Student Health Center	662-325-2431
Oktibbeha County Hospital	662-323-4320

## THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE PROGRAM

### Course Levels

Non degree-seeking students accepted into the Intensive English Program (IEP) are tested and placed into the appropriate level based on the English language skills they already possess. Each level is one eight-week session. At the end of the session, students move to the next level based on their grades. Degree-seeking students are generally placed into courses based on their TOEFL/IELTS scores submitted with admission.

### Curriculum Components

The content of the core curriculum for each level program focuses on reading with lab, vocabulary, writing, grammar, listening and speaking, and culture. However, all skills are integrated into each class. As an intensive English program (IEP), a full-time, non degree-seeking students will typically have 18+ hours per week of language study. In addition to classes, students are encouraged to practice their skills through the free Conversation Partner Program and MSU culture activities.

Additional class features include the following:

- Small class sizes
- Experienced MSU faculty
- Classes beginning five times a year
- Community service opportunities

### Placement Exam

Upon arrival, students are given a placement exam, testing their grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. All new non degree-seeking students, including part-time attendees, are required to take the test on the given date. At times, degree-seeking students may also be required to take the placement exam. The placement exam is given only once per session. This exam lasts approximately three hours, and it cannot be retaken. The results of this exam will determine which level the student is placed. Students meet with their assigned language advisors to receive their scores and their class schedules. Students who have not taken classes for two or more consecutive sessions may be required to retest to ensure the most accurate and up-to-date placement.

### Quality Points and Grades

Students are assigned grades for each class taken and final grades are recorded at the end of every session. The ELI assigns letter grades on a ten-point scale. Full-time noncredit students' grades are assigned letter grades and quality points. These quality points are averaged for a grade point average (GPA):

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A (100-90) Excellent	4
B (89-80) Good	3
C (79-70) Satisfactory	2
D (69-60) Poor	1
F (59 and below) Failure	0

Grades determine if a student moves to the next level. Non degree-seeking students who make a 2.0 to 4.0 grade point average and no "F" final grades will be eligible to move to the next level. Students with a

grade point average higher than 2.0, but who have one or more “F” grades, will not be eligible to move to the next level unless the faculty determines that circumstances allow the student to move, which is extremely rare. Students with grade point averages below 2.0 will not move to the next level.

Degree-seeking MSU students will receive their grades through Banner. These grades may be accessed via the myState portal. MSU students receive a semester grade of Satisfactory (“S”) or Fail (“U”). A student must have an average of 70% or higher to receive an “S” grade for the semester.

### **Student Progress Expectations**

Non degree-seeking, F-1 visa holding students are expected to make progress in their language studies and make above a 2.0 grade point average each eight-week session. Not making progress may jeopardize the immigration status. Students who do not demonstrate progress each session are placed on academic probation. Academic probation policies are discussed in the *Policies and Procedures* section. Completing coursework successfully, attending cultural events, and becoming involved in the community beyond the classroom are essential in progressing in English fluency.

Non F-1 students typically progress to the next level after taking a minimum of three classes in a level. In rare cases based on instructor recommendations, exceptions can be made. However, most students are not considered eligible for progression until they have completed three classes so that students have a balance of their language skills.

### **Grade Reporting**

Non degree-seeking students receive final grades via their official MSU email account. Students are responsible for keeping their email addresses current with the main office and providing a non-Hotmail email account, but all official communication is sent to the MSU email accounts. Final grades are emailed within five days at the end of each session.

Degree-seeking, enrolled MSU students will find their grades in the MSU student information system.

### **Transcripts and Certificates of Completion**

Students will receive certificates and transcripts when leaving the ELI. The student will receive a final transcript showing all courses and grades, and the certificate will specify his or her level of completion. Certificates and transcripts are provided only at the end of a student’s time at the ELI. Non F-1 students who take a temporary break and plan to take courses in the future should wait until all their coursework is completed before requesting a final transcript and certificate. In addition, all tuition and fees must be paid in order for students to receive grades, transcripts, and certificates.

### **Faculty/Language Advisors**

All ELI instructors are MSU employees. Students will be assigned a language advisor from among the faculty members. The language advisor will assist the student by sending grades and schedules. They may also help in developing English proficiency goals and creating a strategy for these goals.

### **Academic Misconduct**

The ELI enforces MSU’s Honor Code for all students. Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are not tolerated. Students are expected to abide by MSU’s Honor Code: “As a MSU student I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.” Students may find more information on the honor code at <http://www.students.msstate.edu/honorcode/>.

## Classroom Culture

- **Attendance:** Attendance is very important at the ELI. When students are unable to attend, they are still responsible for the material covered in class, so students should ask their instructors or classmates for the information. The program attendance policy is 80% attendance for the session. Students who attend less than 80% of their classes will receive a lower grade and F-1 students will fail to maintain their status. Instructors set their own policies about make-up assignments, late work, etc., so students will need to talk to each of their instructors or check the syllabus. Instructors rarely grant excused absences.
- **Tardiness:** Being late to class is unacceptable in the United States. Students are expected to be on time for classes.
- **“English Only” Policy:** The ELI has an “English only” policy for classes. This means both instructors and students can use only English. Instructors want students to speak as much English as possible so they can learn.
- **Homework:** Students are given homework and assignments on a daily basis.
- **Participation:** In language learning classrooms, participation is very important. Students usually become friends with their classmates because they work together in groups and in pairs. Students should also pay attention to the instructor, and they should actively participate. Students should be ready to answer questions and work together with students from other countries.
- **Materials:** Students should come to class prepared. They should have all supplies that they need for each class, including their textbooks, paper, and pencils. Also, if students have a used textbook, they must erase any answers from the entire book before any homework is due. Failure to do so is against ELI policy.
- **Cheating:** Cheating is not allowed at the ELI. It is important for students to do their own work. The following actions are considered cheating: copying another student’s answers, using another student’s work, looking on another student’s paper, using a dictionary without permission, turning in someone else’s assignment, using a cell phone in class. For writing, students are required to do original writing. Copying someone else’s words is called plagiarism. This means students cannot use a family member’s writing, a friend’s writing, writing from the internet, writing from another class, or a tutor/volunteer’s writing. This is cheating. See *Academic Misconduct Policy*.
- **Questions:** If students have questions about class materials or their grades, they should schedule an appointment with their instructors. Students may also email an instructor questions.
- **Classroom Behavior:** Students must follow all classroom rules and instructors’ policies. Disruptive behavior that interferes with the teaching and learning process will not be tolerated. Current university policy states that a student who persists in disrupting a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period and can refer the student to the Associate Vice President and Executive Director of the International Institute for further action. Examples of disrupting class include but are not limited to:
  - sleeping in class
  - interrupting classmates or the instructor
  - negative attitude
  - consistently late or absent
  - inattentiveness or lack of participation
  - unresponsiveness or disengagement
  - unprepared or underprepared for class

- poor attendance or consistent tardiness
- behavior not becoming to a student
- Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy: In order to limit classroom disruptions as well as to protect against academic misconduct, the use of cell phones, messaging devices, and other electronic devices is prohibited in the classroom unless authorized by the instructor. When an instructor-approved activity is taking place, devices must be used for classwork only.

### **Tips for Classroom Success**

Students often ask for helpful hints for being successful in their language learning. Advice includes the following:

1. Attend every day.
2. Do not be late.
3. Pay attention and take notes.
4. Participate in class discussions.
5. Avoid distractions during class.
6. Do all homework assignments.
7. Study every day.
8. Speak and read English outside of class!
9. Ask questions.

### **Complaints, Problems, and Grade Appeals**

At the end of each session, students complete evaluations about classes and other aspects of the ELI. However, if a student has an immediate complaint about a grade, an instructor, or a classroom situation, the student should follow the proper procedures. The first step is always to discuss any situation with the instructor of the course. Degree-seeking MSU students will follow the MSU Policy. Non degree-seeking students may use the following process for a formal review:

1. The student should set up an appointment to meet with the instructor of the class. When making an appointment, the student should inform the instructor of the topic of the meeting. If the complaint is about a grade, students need to make the appointment within a week of receiving the grade.
2. If a student has discussed the complaint with the instructor and is not satisfied with the resolution, the student may complete an ELI Student Complaint Form. The form has complete instructions about the procedures that should be followed. When submitting the form, the student will make an appointment to see a Language Advisor. The Language Advisor will then meet with the student to discuss the complaint.
3. If the student is still unsatisfied with the resolution, the student may make an appointment to see the Director of the ELI to discuss the complaint.

## **CULTURE PROGRAMMING**

Cultural events are one of the best ways of improving English language skills and meeting new people. Each session, there are various events in which to participate and explore American culture. Announcements will be made about all events. All students are encouraged to embrace the culture and to get involved.

### **Conversation Partner Program**

All ELI students are paired with Americans for informal conversation and fun activities during the fall and spring semesters. Many partners meet for lunch or coffee and attend campus and cultural events together. Conversation Partners are typically assigned in the first two weeks of a session.

### **Other Cultural Events**

Many other cultural events will take place throughout the session. Announcements will be made about these events in classes and posted on bulletin boards. Students are encouraged to follow MSU social media sources and read the MSU webpage for information about campus and community events.

### **Student Organizations**

MSU offers many organizations for all students, including ELI students. Many of the organizations are country specific and can provide support to new international students. A listing of organizations can be found at <https://www.union.msstate.edu/student-activities/student-organizations/directory/>.



## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS/MEDICAL INFORMATION

Before each session, the ELI Immigration Specialist will collect required student documentation. This documentation is required for all students, whether a full-time or non F-1 student. Students are required to fill out a personal data sheet and submit specific immigration and health documents to the main office. A listing of those required documents and a description of each is below.

### ELI Documents

Personal data sheet

### Immigration Documents

Passport ID page

U.S. visa (from passport)

I-94 Admission Number

I-20-ID \*

### Medical Documents

X-ray

Immunization record

IGRA

Proof of health insurance

*\*Students who are not here on an F-1 visa will not have an I-20. Instead of the I-20, different immigration documents may need to be submitted.*

### **ELI Document: Personal Data Sheet**

The personal data sheet is a form that is completed during orientation. It is especially important that the local address of the student be up-to-date and correct for immigration purposes. If a mailing address is not available, then a physical address will be acceptable. It is also essential that students provide up-to-date email addresses in order to receive grades and important ELI communication. Hotmail accounts do not work with MSU's email system. Finally, the personal data sheet has emergency information in case the ELI needs to contact a student's family in the event of a crisis.

### **Immigration Documents**

#### Passport

Passports should be kept in a safe place. It is the most important document, and it must be valid at all times while enrolled as a student in the United States. Students should remember the passport's expiration date and contact the appropriate consulate or embassy if a passport needs to be renewed. If a student's passport expires, the student is considered an illegal alien and subject to deportation.

#### Visa

Visa approval, indicated by the stamp in the passport, enables students to enter, exit, and reenter the United States for a specific period of time. The date on this stamp may expire while a student is at the ELI; this is not a problem. As long as the end date on the I-20 has not expired, a student is allowed to remain legally in the United States while studying. If a student exits the United States with an expired visa and plans on reentering, the student will need to make plans to renew the visa before returning.

#### I-94 Record

If a student entered the United States before April 1, 2013, the student was given an I-94 card. It may have been stapled into the passport. This card should not be thrown away. This card will be needed when departing the country. If a student entered the United States after April 1, 2013, the student was entered in the new Customs and Border Protection's (CBP's) Electronic Arrival Departure Database. The I-94 can be retrieved and printed by going to <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94>. The ELI office will help students retrieve and print their I-94s during orientation. Please be aware that if the ELI cannot access the record, the student may have to appear in person to CBP in order to get the record fixed.

### I-20

When students enter the U.S., immigration officers at the port of entry should have stamped the I-20 document. This document provides proof of student status and that a student is legally in the country. Students should keep this document in a safe place so that it can be found easily. When students travel, they should take it with them. If a student extends his or her stay or transfers to another school, the student should still keep all old I-20s. Students should never throw away an I-20. Students not here on an F-1 visa, meaning they do not have an I-20, should speak with the International Student Advisor about any necessary documents needed instead of an I-20.

### **Medical Requirements**

MSU requires that international students have chest X-rays, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccinations, and health insurance. If students do not provide proof of MMR vaccinations by the third class day, they are required to go to the Longest Student Health Center for vaccinations on the mandatory ELI appointment date. Students may also go for needed X-rays. If students miss the required ELI group appointment, they will be charged \$25 for the missed appointment. The ELI will schedule another appointment, but students will have to go by themselves. Payments to the health center are due at the time of services.

### Chest X-Rays

All international students are required to have a chest X-ray when they first arrive on campus. This checks for signs of tuberculosis. The X-ray must be performed and read by a U.S.-licensed physician, and it must be performed in the United States not more than six weeks prior to the first day of class. The MSU Longest Student Health Center will verify documentation. The ELI will make appointments for students needing X-rays. If a student leaves the U.S. while on vacation, he or she may be required to have another chest X-ray taken upon returning to campus.

### Immunizations

Students can get the MMR vaccinations at the Student Health Center if they did not have the vaccinations before arriving on campus or if they did not bring proof of immunization within the first three days of class. The ELI office will set up a group appointment for all new students during the first week of classes. The second MMR vaccination will be due after 40 days. The ELI office can assist students in making an appointment at the Longest Student Health Center to receive the second shot.

Measles and rubella in adults are highly contagious and serious illnesses that can result in pneumonia, encephalitis, birth defects, and even death. In cooperation with the MSU Department of Health and for the protection of all students, MSU requires new students, including transfers, born after 1956 to provide proof of immunity to measles and rubella.

Immunity may be proven with documentation of two doses of MMR vaccine given after 12 months

of age and after 1956, documented history of positive measles rubella and rubella serologic titer, or physician documented history (month, day, and year) of having had measles and rubella.

Students will be extended a temporary clearance for immunization requirements if their first MMR vaccination was given in the past 45 days. Temporary exemptions are also available for pregnant women and women suspecting pregnancy. Permanent exemptions are given if the student has a disease that will cause a permanent contraindication to immunization, has documented proof of a significant life-threatening allergic reaction to this vaccine, or was born before 1957.

#### IGRA

All international students must provide proof of tuberculosis screening with the Interferon Gamma Release Assays (IGRA) test. The IGRA test must be performed by a U.S.-licensed physician to confirm negative indications for tuberculosis, and it must be performed in the United States not more than six weeks prior to the first day of class. The MSU Longest Student Health Center will verify documentation. The ELI will make appointments for students needing the IGRA test.

#### Health Insurance

All international students enrolled in the ELI are required to purchase the MSU Student Association Sponsored Student Insurance Plan which is made available through the Longest Student Health Center. Exchange Visitors with alternate health insurance will need to present proof of insurance to the ELI. Government sponsored students with insurance must show proof of coverage each session in order to be exempt from this requirement. The preferred providers for this plan are John C. Longest Health Center, Oktibbeha County Hospital, and United Healthcare Choice Plus. Permanent Residents are classified as Resident Aliens and are not considered to be an international student.

Students are not required to purchase the MSU health insurance for their dependents, but it is highly recommended.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Tuition and Fees

**Tuition and fees are due before the beginning of each session.** Non degree-seeking ELI students pay for tuition and ELI fees at the International Institute, Allen Hall 116. Degree-seeking, fully enrolled MSU students pay ELI tuition and fees as for all other classes. Please note that additional campus fees may be assessed through MSU's accounting system.

When paying ELI tuition and fees, **checks, credit cards, money orders, e-checks, and cash are accepted.** **All credit card transactions are charged a 2.7% transaction fee.** If a non-sponsored student has not paid his or her tuition before classes begin, a 1.5 % late fee will be added to their account and they will be issued a new invoice and given until the 7th day of the session to pay.

Sponsored students must submit an updated financial guaranty by the 7th day class. Students who fail to provide a financial guaranty will be required to pay their ELI tuition immediately.

Checks that are not honored by the bank on which it is drawn are considered non-payment and will result in the assessment of a returned check fee. The University reserves the right to refuse acceptance of checks presented by students who have had previously returned checks. In such cases, payment must be made by cash, money order, certified bank check, or credit card.

Upon applying for the ELI, F-1 students are required to provide proof of financial support for classes and living expenses. Failure to meet financial obligations can result in termination of class registration, negatively affecting a student's F-1 status and grades. Students are not allowed to attend class if tuition and fees are not paid, and students will not receive grades, transcripts, and certificates until student accounts are cleared. A student must accept responsibility for all costs that may not be covered by a sponsor and/or scholarship.

### MSU Student Accounts

ELI non degree-seeking students are assigned MSU student billing accounts. Expenses incurred at the university (Health Center expenses, on-campus housing charges, printing fees, parking decal fees, etc.) are posted to MSU accounts. Students are required to ensure student accounts are current before the end of each term. MSU Policy, as published in the *University Bulletin*, states that a student's account must be current to continue enrollment.

Students can pay these charges online by logging into the Banner Intranet, checking their billing statements, and making a payment using a credit card. Cash, check, or credit card payments can be made in person at the Cashier's Office in Garner Hall. Students should check their MSU email accounts at least once a month to avoid late fees. Students will receive official university emails to their MSU email accounts notifying them of account balances. To access campus email accounts, students should log onto MyBanner at <https://www.mybanner.msstate.edu/> with their net IDs and passwords.

### Non Degree-Seeking, Non F-1 students

Community members and dependents can study at the ELI. Those interested in taking courses on a part-time basis should always verify that classes will not interfere with their immigration status. Non F-1 students are treated the same as F-1 students academically, and they are eligible for all of the same student services and cultural benefits as F-1 students. Students are expected to follow curriculum components, academic honesty standards, and classroom policies. Status as a non F-1 student does not

allow for differing academic standards in the program. See the ELI website for more non F-1 student information.

### **Late Testing & Orientation Fee**

Students should arrive before the mandatory placement testing and orientation date for their session. Late students will be charged a \$100 late testing fee and must obtain special permission from the ELI to miss the scheduled orientation and testing. Students should be aware that arriving late could impact their ability to register for classes, which may result negatively on immigration status and on grades.

### **Adding Classes**

Students are registered for classes after taking the placement test. All non F-1 students must choose their classes before the first class day. Requests to change classes will be considered through the first week of the session and with approval of the instructors and director.

### **Dropping Classes**

ELI F-1 students must be enrolled in all classes due to immigration requirements. Dropping a class happens only in very rare circumstances. If a student has a question about dropping a class, the student should talk to the International Student Advisor about this request. Non F-1 students have more flexibility with class registrations. The last day for non F-1 students to drop a class is the 3rd day of class. The ELI will charge a \$50 drop fee. See the *Refund Policies* section of the handbook for more details about any refunds.

### **Withdrawing**

If students want to withdraw from the ELI, they should inform the ELI immediately because students with an F-1 visa must follow all visa regulations concerning withdrawals. Non F-1 students have more flexibility with withdrawing based on their immigration status. The ELI will charge a \$50 withdrawal fee. See the *Refund Policies* section of the handbook for more details about tuition fees, grades, and drop fees.

### **Transfer/Change of Program**

Students with full admission to MSU or who wish to transfer to another school must inform the ELI of this information prior to the first day of classes so that students will not be registered for classes.

### **Returning Students**

Students who plan to return for the next session must inform the ELI by the last day of class in the current session.

### **Refund Policies**

When students drop one or more classes or withdraw from the program, they may be eligible for a refund. No refund will be made after the 4th day of class. Please note that “official class day” refers to each day that ELI classes are held.

<b>Class Days</b>	<b>Refund of Tuition</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Drop Fee</b>
<b>1st Class Day</b>	<b>100% refund</b>	<b>No Grade</b>	<b>No Drop Fee</b>
<b>2nd Class Day</b>	<b>75% refund</b>	<b>“W” Grade</b>	<b>\$50 Drop Fee</b>

<b>3rd Class Day</b>	<b>50% refund</b>	<b>“W” Grade</b>	<b>\$50 Drop Fee</b>
<b>4th Class Day</b>	<b>0% refund</b>	<b>“W” Grade</b>	<b>\$50 Drop Fee</b>

Notification must be submitted no later than 4:00 PM on the day the student withdraws from the program. Contact an ELI staff member to obtain a withdrawal form.

### **Auditing**

The ELI does not allow the auditing of classes, nor does it allow non-enrolled individuals to attend classes.

### **Academic Dismissal**

Students on academic probation have one session to complete their current level with a 2.0 or above GPA and meet the conditions and requirements set by the coordinators to be removed from probation, or they will be dismissed from the program. A student can be placed on probation a maximum of two times during his or her time in the IEP. The third time that a student is not successful in completing a level, the student will be dismissed from the program. When a F-1 student is dismissed from the program, his or her I-20 is terminated. The student must leave the United States as soon as possible or transfer to another school in terminated status to apply for reinstatement to status.

Students who are dismissed from the program can be readmitted to the program after two sessions if they reapply as an initial student. These students will retake the placement test and may be placed in a different level. If students are dismissed from the program after re-admittance, they will be dismissed permanently from the program.

### **Emergency Situations and Closures**

In rare instances, MSU may close campus for safety or emergency situations such as severe weather conditions. The ELI follows MSU procedures in all emergency situations. When possible, students will be notified in classes and be informed of emergency precautions. At all times, students should watch for notifications distributed by MSU. These will appear on <http://www.msstate.edu>, on the news, on the radio, and through Maroon Alerts. If MSU is closed, the ELI will also close.

### **Maroon Alerts**

Maroon Alerts are emergency notifications sent out by the university through text messaging, email, instant messaging, radio, and social media. These alerts warn students of bad weather or emergency situations on campus. Students can sign up to receive Maroon Alerts at <https://www.emergency.msstate.edu/maroon-alert>. Alerts and emergency information is also available at <http://www.emergency.msstate.edu/> and through the emergency hotline at 662-325-5555, which is a phone number activated in emergency situations only.

### **Books and Supplies**

MSU and the ELI respect and obey all international copyright laws. Students at the ELI are required to adopt the same principle. Accordingly, all ELI students must purchase the required textbooks for their ELI classes, and the correct edition is required. Textbooks are required, and students should have them on the first day of class. Photocopies of textbooks are not permitted in ELI classes and textbooks cannot be shared. The MSU bookstore carries all ELI textbooks.

## **Title IX**

MSU is committed to complying with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU's educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the university, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU's Director of Title IX/EEO Programs. Additional resources are available at <http://www.msstate.edu/web/security> or at <http://students.msstate.edu/sexualmisconduct/>.

## **Harassment**

"MSU is committed to equal opportunity in all facets of the university. To that end, MSU policies prohibit unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. These are called 'protected characteristics.' Likewise, the university prohibits retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of potential discrimination or harassment." See <https://www.oci.msstate.edu/focus-areas/discrimination-harassment-reliation/>.

## **Smoke-free Campus Policy**

MSU restricts smoking and use of tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, snuff, and chewing tobacco) on MSU property. No smoking is allowed.

## **MSU Policy on Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

MSU prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on university property or as part of any university activity. Any student or employee failing to observe the drug and alcohol policy will be subject to sanctions by the University in accordance with established disciplinary procedures. For students, sanctions may include suspension or expulsion. For employees, sanctions may include disciplinary action up to termination of employment. In addition to university sanctions, any student or employee found in violation of the drug and alcohol policy may be referred to the appropriate authorities for prosecution. Legal sanctions under local, state, and federal laws may include fine, imprisonment, or both.

Under Mississippi law, it is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to consume or possess alcoholic beverages, and it is illegal to sell, give, or furnish alcoholic beverages to anyone under the age of 21. Therefore, such acts are in violation of university policy. Any student apprehended driving on campus under the influence of alcohol or another controlled substance will be arrested. For complete information on policies regarding alcohol and illegal drugs, visit <http://www.msstate.edu/students/publications-policies/drugs>.

An alcohol and drug program for university students is available through the MSU's Department of Health Promotion and Wellness. The department offers a variety of programs designed to educate students on various drug and alcohol issues.

## **MSU Policy on Possession of Firearms, Explosives, Weapons**

In accordance with university regulations and/or state law, the university prohibits (1) The possession by a student of any firearm on the campus of MSU and (2) The possession of any type of explosive, other weapon, firecracker, or the like on university-controlled property. According to MSU's Code of Student Conduct, those found responsible of violating the law or rules and regulations may receive a maximum sanction of expulsion from the university.

## **MSU Code of Student Conduct**

MSU recognizes students as adults who are expected to obey the law and the rules and regulations of the university, to take personal responsibility for their conduct, to respect the rights of others, and to have regard for the preservation of state and university property, as well as the private property of others. Those found responsible of violating the law or rules and regulations of the university may receive a maximum sanction of expulsion from the university. The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students while present on campus or at a University facility. It further applies to all student conduct that occurs in connection with a University program or activity, regardless of the location. Further, the University reserves the right to take appropriate action, up to and including expulsion, when, in the University's judgment, a student's conduct off-campus and not connected to any University program or activity: (1) indicates that the student may pose a danger to him or herself or to others; or (2) the conduct has a negative impact on the University community or the University's mission.

Although not all inclusive, some aspects of misconduct that are unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action include violations involving (1) alcohol, (2) assault, (3) assisting or cooperating, (4) disobedience to officials, (5) disorderly conduct/disruptive behavior, (6) drugs, (7) explosive devices, (8) fee payment, (9) fraud, (10) fraudulent report, (11) gambling, (12) harassment, (13) hazing, (14) national security risks, (15) ordinances of law, (16) sexual misconduct, (17) theft, (18) trespassing, (19) traffic and parking, (20) vandalism, (21) violations of the honor code, and (22) weapons.

All ELI students are expected to obey laws and the rules and regulations of the university, including following the Student Code of Conduct. More information about the Student Code of Conduct and other policies related to students may be found at <http://www.msstate.edu/students/publications-policies/student-policies/>.

## **University Admission Agreements**

The ELI and MSU have the following agreements concerning the admission of ELI students to academic (non-ELI) programs. These agreements extend to the language requirement for admission only. Other application and departmental requirements apply. Students should speak with the appropriate admission office for application deadlines and details.

### **Graduate Students**

The Office of the Graduate School has extensive admission information in its Graduate Catalog, which is online. Prospective students can access this information online, or they may visit the Office of the Graduate School in Allen Hall Room 617. Graduate options:

#### **▪ Full Admission—Graduate Students**

Prospective graduate international students must submit an acceptable language proficiency score. The university minimum for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is 79-80 for the iBT or an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6.5, but many departments have established higher or different requirements for their own students. The applicant can be considered for admission for all academic terms.

#### **▪ Contingent Admission—Graduate Students**

Prospective graduate students may be considered for admission with a TOEFL score of at least 53 for the iBT or an IELTS score of 4.5. Students admitted with a TOEFL score between 477 and 550 can be granted this admission, but they are required to enroll in ELI courses. The number of courses and the length of study in ELI courses are based on the submitted language score. Admission may not be



granted for all semesters, so prospective students should refer to the Graduate Bulletin to see if their scores are eligible for admission of the desired term and to see the score placement chart. Students who successfully complete all required ELI courses will have attained the necessary English proficiency for continued graduate study and, therefore, are EXEMPT from further TOEFL/IELTS requirements.

- **"Certificate of Completion" Option—Graduate Students**

Prospective graduate students may be considered for admission with a "Certificate of Completion" from the ELI. Students who successfully complete all required noncredit ELI courses will have attained the necessary English proficiency for continued graduate study and, therefore, are EXEMPT from further TOEFL or IELTS testing.

### **Undergraduate Students**

*The Office of Admissions and Scholarships coordinates undergraduate student admissions. Prospective students can visit the Office of Admissions in 101 Montgomery Hall. Undergraduate options:*

- **Full Admission—Undergraduate Students**

Prospective undergraduate international students must submit an acceptable score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or IELTS. The university minimum is 71 for the iBT or an IELTS score of 6.0, but many departments have established higher requirements for their own students. For more information, students should contact the individual departments or the Office of Admissions and Scholarships.

- **Contingent Admission—Undergraduate Students**

Prospective undergraduate international students may be contingently admitted to MSU without a TOEFL or IELTS score, but they are required to enroll in ELI courses. The number of courses and the length of study in ELI courses are based on the ELI placement test score. Completion of the ELI program will be considered to have demonstrated English language proficiency.

- **"Certificate of Completion" Option—Undergraduate Students**

Prospective undergraduate international students may be admitted to MSU without a TOEFL or IELTS score upon completion of the noncredit ELI program. Upon completion of level eight, these students will be considered to have demonstrated English language proficiency.

## IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS

### Staying in F-1 Status

The ELI issues I-20s and the U.S. Consulates grant F-1 visas (based on these I-20s) in order for students to study English at MSU. Therefore, it is expected that all students entering the country on the ELI's I-20s and MSU visas will attend class and study English full-time.

Students who are in the U.S. on an F-1 visa agree to follow certain rules:

1. Students must maintain a full load of academic courses while in the U.S. At the ELI, a full load consists of attending at least 18 hours of class each week.
2. Students must make steady, consistent progress. Class grades will be given to monitor student progress.

### Program Completion

Students with F-1 student visas must leave the United States within 60 days after completing their ELI program. If a student leaves in the middle of a session or is dismissed from the program, he or she is not eligible for the 60-day grace period and must leave the United States immediately.

### Annual Vacation Policy

A full-time F-1 student is entitled to an annual vacation of one session if he or she meets the following conditions:

1. The student is maintaining status.
2. The student intends to register for the term after the vacation.
3. The student has completed the equivalent of an academic year, i.e., 4 consecutive sessions, prior to taking the vacation.

Students should see an ELI Student Advisor or ELI Director to check eligibility before planning to take vacation.

### Travel

If students wish to travel outside of the United States and then return, they should see the ELI International Student Advisor to have their I-20 validated. Otherwise, students will not be able to get back into the United States.

### Employment

Students in F-1 status are permitted to work up to 20 hours per week on campus. Off-campus work or work over 20 hours per week will cause the student to lose F-1 status. Students should see the ELI's International Student Advisor with any questions about eligibility for work.

### Social Security Numbers

Students in F-1 status are permitted to get Social Security numbers only if they have already secured employment on campus. Students who meet this requirement should see the ELI International Student Advisor for assistance in obtaining the proper documentation for a Social Security number.

### Change of Address

Students in F-1 status are required to keep their address current with the ELI's International Student Advisor. Students have 10 days to report a change of address. It is a violation of the F-1 status if students do not report a change of address in a timely manner.

**Immigration Questions & Advice**

If students have any questions regarding immigration matters, they should see one of the International Student Advisors at the International Institute. Also, immigration policies may change within an academic year, so students should always speak with an advisor for the most current information.

Students should be very careful about getting advice from friends. While friends may mean well, every student's situation is different, and students may be given misinformation.

## STAYING SAFE AT MSU

### Emergency Situations

Students should remember that the **emergency phone number in the US is “911”**. They may also want to look up the emergency numbers for fire, police, and ambulance services. However, 911 will be able to coordinate all of these emergencies. For MSU emergencies, students may contact the MSU police at 662-325-2121. The MSU police has someone at the phone 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Emergency Contact Information: The ELI requires students to submit emergency contact information at orientation. Students should always have their most current emergency contact information on file with the ELI. The contact information includes a student’s local emergency contact and an emergency contact in the home country.

Contact Emergency Officials: In major emergencies, such as a fire or car accident, students will probably need to contact 911. Sometimes this is not necessary if a student is not in immediate danger, but a student should always have this information ready.

Contact Personal Emergency Contact: Students should always carry their emergency contact information with them. It is important to have a written form, and it can also be programmed into a phone. In the United States, emergency services personnel can find a person’s emergency contact in a cell phone. In the cell phone address book/contact list, students should create a contact called ICE, which stands for “In Case of an Emergency.” In an emergency situation, hospitals and emergency personnel can immediately contact someone. For more than one emergency contact, students can use ICE1, ICE2, ICE3, and so on.

### Campus Police Patrol

Students may call the MSU campus police (662-325-2121) for a police employee to assist them to on-campus cars or buildings. At the library, students may go to the front desk to request this free service. Hours of operation vary, but they typically begin at dark and last until the morning hours. It is best to walk with another person, and students should never hitchhike or accept a ride from someone they do not know well.

### MSU Security Reports

The Clery Act requires U.S. universities to post their annual crime and security reports. A complete list of reports, publications, and policies are available through the MSU website at <http://www.msstate.edu/students/publications-policies/>.

### General Safety Tips

Students should trust their instincts! Students who think that they may be in a dangerous situation should RUN and YELL FOR HELP! They should make as much noise as possible. In an emergency, call 911 or the MSU police at 662-325-2121.

### Emergency Phones

There are several blue emergency phones around campus. These emergency phones go directly to the MSU 911 emergency system. If a student picks up a phone, then the emergency campus police will automatically be notified. Even if the person cannot speak, the police will come to the location.

## STUDENT SERVICES

The following information about student services will be reviewed with students during orientation.

### **Banking:**

The Starkville community offers many good banking options for ELI students, with several branches within a short walking distance and automated-teller machines (ATMs) conveniently located on campus in the Colvard Student Union. Each bank has different policies, so students are encouraged to explore different options when choosing a bank to meet their needs. Information about different options will be provided during new-student orientation and available throughout the year.

### **Banner Intranet Access:**

To pay MSU expenses and accounts, ELI students should access the Banner system from the MSU homepage at <http://www.msstate.edu/> by clicking on the link for MyBanner (Intranet), or they can go directly to <https://mybanner.msstate.edu/> to log into the system. Students log in using their NetIDs and NetPasswords. Students' NetIDs are on their student ID cards. Students will set up their NetPasswords during initial orientation.

### **Campus Telephone System:**

MSU does not provide telephones for on-campus housing, but local phone service, voicemail, and caller ID are available for an additional fee. Students may contact ITS for information on how to establish telephone service.

### **Computer Labs & Printing:**

There are four main computing labs on campus. These labs are for use by students, faculty, and staff of MSU. Students can check email, use the Internet, work on assignments, and print. These labs are located in Griffis Hall 407, the Learning Center (Allen 262 and 264), and the Library's Computer Commons. Lab hours are available at <http://www.its.msstate.edu/services/labs/>. Printing is available in these computer labs. The cost varies from \$.10 per page for black and white and \$.40 per page for color. These charges will be posted to MSU student accounts.

The ELI's computer lab is located in 115 Memorial Hall. This lab is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Printing is not available in the ELI lab.

### **Dining Services:**

There are many dining options on campus. The Marketplace at Perry is the main cafeteria on campus. The cafeteria offers continuous dining throughout the day in an all-you-can-eat buffet. The Colvard Student Union offers a food court, Starbucks, and a convenience store. There is also a Burger King located in the Roberts Building. Other popular dining options include Subway, RFOC at Templeton, Fresh Food Company, and Moe's Southwest Grill. The Cullis Wade Depot, located beside the football stadium, contains a Barnes and Noble store with a coffee shop and café. Other dining options exist throughout campus. For more information about dining options, meal plans, and hours of operation, visit the Dining Services web page at <http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/CSS/MSSStateDining/>.

### **Driver's Licenses:**

Driver's licenses are available from the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, located in the MSU Troopers Office on Highway 82 East. Non-U.S. citizens can get a one-year renewable license for \$10.

Students must complete an application and show valid Department of Homeland Security papers (passport, I-94 record, I-20, etc.), notarized proof of residency (an apartment lease or a residence hall contract), and their original birth certificates with a notarized translation on university letterhead. Only students who have obtained Social Security cards must present their cards. A computer test and road test are usually required. Students may only obtain a driver's license if they have more than 180 days before their I-20 expires.

### **Email Accounts**

All ELI students are assigned an MSU email account, which is the email that the ELI uses for all official communication. The email is the student's NetID + @msstate.edu. Students are responsible for checking their MSU email accounts for announcements, grades, schedules, and billing. Email can be accessed through Gmail.

### **ID Cards:**

All students at MSU are issued a student identification (ID) card during the initial orientation, and ELI students are issued an affiliate ID card. Student ID cards are important because they allow students to check out materials from the library, use the Sanderson Center facilities, and attend some MSU cultural events without charge. Students arriving after the scheduled testing date will need to get an ID memo from the ELI Main Office and go to the Campus Card Office (Allen Hall 108) to have their ID cards made. The first ID card is free, but if the card is lost or destroyed, the student must pay to have it replaced.

Once students receive their ID cards, the ELI will assist students in setting up NetPasswords. This password allows access to student accounts and to computer labs on campus, which is explained more fully during new-student orientation.

### **Immigration Issues:**

Contact the International Institute Immigration Advisor for assistance with immigration questions, including information about Social Security cards, travel signatures, and immigration regulations.

### **ITS (Information Technology Services) Assistance:**

The ITS Department at MSU assists students with obtaining free wireless access on their electronic devices, installing a telephone in their residence hall rooms, and various other technological issues. For these issues, students should visit 108 Allen Hall on Monday-Friday between 8 a.m.-4 p.m. For ITS assistance related to student ID cards and NetPasswords, students should see an ELI Coordinator for help.

### **Mail Services:**

The post office on campus is located in the Roberts Building. Students can rent a P.O. Box for one year for a minimal cost. Students should not have mail sent to the ELI. Students who are at MSU for only 4 weeks as part of a short-term program may have their mail sent to the ELI's address if they sign a waiver saying that the ELI is not responsible for any mail that is lost or stolen.

### **Mitchell Memorial Library:**

Students may access library materials for free using their student ID cards. To use the computer lab in the library, students must first log in using their NetIDs and passwords, which they receive during initial orientation. The library's hours of operation are available online at <http://www.lib.msstate.edu>.

### **MSU ID Numbers, NetIDs, & NetPasswords:**

Every student at MSU is issued an MSU ID number and a NetID. The MSU ID number is a set of 9 digits starting with the number "9." The NetID is a combination of a student's initials and a number. For example, the NetID for a student named John Smith could be js123. The MSU ID number and the NetID can be found on the front of the student ID card. The NetPassword is a series of letters and numbers that the student creates by logging into myState (Intranet) and selecting the link for net password maintenance or by going directly to <https://www.ssl2.msstate.edu/NetPassword/Maintenance>. An ELI coordinator will assist students in setting up passwords.

### **myState Mobile**

MSU's app, myState Mobile, is the official app for the university. It includes a list of events, the campus map, and many other resources.

### **On-Campus Housing:**

ELI students wishing to live on campus should talk to the ELI about the procedures for applying for housing. Contracts are for 9 months (August – May) with separate contracts for the summer. Students leaving school before the contract ends will be able to break the contract without a problem. The Office of Housing and Residence Life is located on the first floor of Dogwood Hall, but ELI students should discuss the process first with the ELI.

### **Parking Registration:**

All students must have an MSU parking decal to park vehicles on campus, and they are responsible for knowing all campus parking regulations. Students with vehicles should go to the Allen Hall 116 to obtain a letter that will allow them to purchase a parking decal. The parking decal denotes where students are permitted to park on campus, which is divided into various parking zones. Students may park only in their assigned zone. Students should contact the ELI main office if they have any problem registering or getting a decal. If a student uses an alternate vehicle on campus or has a visitor, students may register for a visitor parking pass online with MSU parking operations.

Students with bicycles must also register them with Parking Services. Bicycle registration is free and protects students in the event that their bicycles are lost or stolen.

### **Recreational Sports:**

The Sanderson Center is a 150,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art recreational complex. To use the facilities at the Sanderson Center, ELI students must sign waivers and do an initial access setup at the Sanderson. Students will need to have their ID cards and passwords for the initial access, and they can swipe their ID cards at the front turnstiles and place their hands into the scanners. Within the first two weeks of each session, an ELI Coordinator will provide a tour of the Sanderson Center and assist new students with access.

### **Student Account Services:**

Noncredit ELI students pay for tuition and ELI fees at the ELI. However, additional campus fees are assessed through MSU's accounting system.

Charges that ELI students incur at the university (such as Health Center expenses, on-campus housing charges, printing fees, parking decal fees, etc.) are posted to MSU student accounts. Students can pay these charges online by logging into the Banner Intranet, checking their billing statements, and making a payment using a credit card. Cash, check, or credit card payments can be made in person at the Cashier's Office in Garner Hall. Students should check their MSU email accounts once a month to avoid

late fees. Students will receive official university emails to their MSU email accounts notifying them of account balances. To access campus email accounts, students should log onto MyBanner (<https://mybanner.msstate.edu/>) with their net IDs and passwords. If they wish, students may forward their university email accounts to their personal email accounts.

### **Student Counseling Services:**

Student Counseling Services is a center with trained professionals who help individuals, couples, and groups. The center has psychologists, social workers, and counselors. The staff is trained to handle issues such as eating disorders, relationship problems, grief, adjustment issues, sexual identity issues, anxiety, depression, diversity issues, stress management, roommate problems, conflict resolution, family matters, and more. These services are free to ELI students. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.health.msstate.edu/scs/>.

### **Student Health Center:**

Students can make an appointment to see a doctor at the Student Health Center if they are seriously ill. The ELI can arrange appointments for students who are having problems doing it themselves. ELI students are considered private patients and pay private patient rates. Payment is due at the time of service. For some minor illnesses, students may not need medical attention and may want to try non-prescription medicines, such as cold and cough medicines.

The Health Center is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. except on Thursdays, when it opens at 9 a.m. The Health Center closes for lunch on these days from 12-1 p.m. If students get very sick or are badly hurt after hours or on the weekend, they should go to the nearest walk-in clinic or hospital.

### **Taxes:**

International students must file simple taxes every year, whether or not they worked in the United States. MSU provides assistance through a free web-based service. Information is sent to all international students when the service is available each year. It is not meant to substitute for professional tax advice.

### **Transportation:**

Starkville and MSU provide shuttles to help students get around campus and in the community. These shuttles run daily Monday through Saturday with varying times and with stops around campus and Starkville. Detailed lists of the shuttle routes and a map of the stops can be found online at <http://www.smart.msstate.edu>. Live tracking of the SMART Shuttles is also available. Please note that shuttle schedules often change during holidays and during certain weekends. Always check websites for the most recent information.

Several private taxi services are also available in Starkville. For more information, visit <http://international.msstate.edu/esl/student/local/>.

### **Wireless Access:**

Students who want assistance for free wireless access on their laptops and other electronic devices should visit 108 Allen Hall on Monday-Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. If students have problems with their wireless access, they should return to 108 Allen Hall for assistance. Students may also use wireless access by logging onto msu1x with their NetIDs and passwords.



## Notes

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Information in the ELI Student Handbook is subject to change.  
In rare instances, policies and rules may change within the academic year.  
Therefore, students may check with the ELI staff to verify information and ask questions.