English as a Second Language Program

Student Handbook

**Spring 2017**

ESL Website: [www.govst.edu/esl](http://www.govst.edu/esl)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/GSUESL/>

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# ESL Program Mission Statement

Governors State University’s ESL Program is designed to serve the needs of international and domestic students that have an interest in improving their English language skills to further their academic success. The curriculum is designed and taught by professional faculty to prepare students academically, socially, and culturally for success as university students.

# Faculty and Staff

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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# Arrival and Orientation

It is your responsibility to arrive to campus on time for all scheduled classes and orientations.

## OIS Orientation

The Office of International Services will inform you of a mandatory new international student orientation. This is held the Friday before each term begins. <http://www.govst.edu/About/International/International_Students/Admitted_Students/Orientation/>

## ESL Program Orientation

The ESL Program will also have an orientation during the first day of class. Each new student will be notified through an email for the date and time prior to arrival.

For Spring 2017, the first day of class is January 17, 2017.

These are some topics discussed at orientation:

* Registration & Schedule
* Faculty and Mentor
* Immunization
* Banking
* Events
* Transportation
* Program Policies
* University Policies

## Placement Testing

Placement testing will be given to students. This will help the program director will determine course placement.

* This test will be given during orientation. It will cover all main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
* There are no extra placement test fees for ESL students.

## Courses

REQUIRED courses:

* Reading and Writing
* Listening and Speaking
* Multi-modal Literacy
* Campus Seminar
* Language Lab

Elective Course (no extra charge):

* TOEFL test preparation (including one official TOEFL test) Dates: 1/27, 2/10, 2/24

## Class Schedule

This will be provided to the student on the first day of class.

## Textbooks

Textbooks will be provided for you.

**Placement Test**

All the students will be given a placement test to determine level placement. There are four levels in the ESL at GSU. At times, due to lower enrollment, the levels may be combined to ensure successful communicative language learning experiences for the ESL students.

Split level is available to those who qualify. This means that if the student places higher in one skill while lower in another, the student will be allowed to be in two levels at the same time. This will be determined on an individual basis, and the student will be assessed not only through the placement test but also by interviews with the faculty. The ESL director will make the final decision.

## The end of the semester examinations

There will be a final exam during the last week of the term. This exam will count towards your final grade. Your final grade will be a composite of all work in each course. For conditionally admitted students, you must get an A or a B on the final exam as well as in every course during the term.

## TOEFL test

Governors State University offers the certified TOEFL test on campus several times throughout the year.

The test dates for Spring 2017 are:  1/20, 3/3, 4/21

# ESL Policies

You are expected to focus on learning English as your first priority and make every effort to improve your English proficiency both in and outside class. Attend every class, be on time and stay alert. Be prepared for class by arriving with any required assignments completed per the requirements of the course.

## ****Classroom Behavior****

Behavior that interferes with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. The class is composed of students from widely diverse backgrounds with different values. You are expected to treat your classmates, student mentors, and the instructor with respect and be open-minded to the differences around you. Electronic devices such as cell phones and laptops should be used for academic purposes only while in class.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is required and attending every class is essential to improve your English skills. Also, coming to class late or leaving early are not acceptable. When students are not in class, it is more difficult to advance in English language proficiency. Students will be assessed on continuous learning and not just on exam or quiz days. The student’s overall performance will be hindered when the student is not in class. Attendance must be at 90% for EACH ESL course in order to pass each course.

Lateness Policy

Each faculty member will determine their lateness policy. Please read their syllabus for their lateness policy.

For every three late marks, you will receive one absence. Also, more than 20 minutes late equals one absence.

## Plagiarism Policy

Academic honesty, integrity, and plagiarism: Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity and behavior that violates these standards are not acceptable. The unacceptable conducts include using and copying the unauthorized material and the work of another student. These conducts not only are penalized but also prevent you from improving your English skills.

## Make-up Work Policy

Please discuss with each faculty member about their make-up work policy.

Extended absences**:**When a student’s extended absences are documented, the student’s absences may be excused. Contact the ESL director if you encounter such a situation.

Religious holidays**:**Governors State University will make reasonable accommodations for students who are absent from the university in observance of religious holidays. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the faculty in writing of their intention to be absent from class one week prior to their day(s) of religious observance. The instructor will work with each student’s request in a reasonable manner. See attendance policy for further information.

**Grading policy:**

The following grading scale is used in the Intensive English Program:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5 [A] | 90-100% | (Excellent) | (Pass) |
| 4 [B] | 80-89% | (Good) | (Pass) |
| 3 [C] | 70-79% | (OK) | UG and ESL (Pass)  GR (No Pass) |
| 2 [D] | 60-69% | (Poor. Must repeat) | (No Pass) |
| 1 [F] | Below 60% | (Failing. Must repeat) | (No Pass) |

**IMPORTANT:**

* Attendance must be at 90% for EACH ESL course in order to keep active status in the program.   
  In order to pass a class and advance to the next level, students must meet the listed learning outcomes with 70% proficiency.
* Conditionally admitted students must pass each class with an A or a B. Please refer to the University’s English Language Proficiency Policy 9.

## Grievance Policy

A “grievance” is a complaint that a student may have because of an action by a university faculty or staff member that is in violation of campus policies or procedures. Prior to filing a grievance, the student must seek informal resolution of the issue with the faculty member or administrator directly involved in the issue/incident of concern within 15 days. If the concern is not resolved, you may file a written grievance to the Intensive ESL Program Director within 30 days. The Director of the Intensive ESL Program and the Executive Director of the School of Extended Learning will respond in writing to the grievance. The grievance must state exact circumstances of the event and the desired outcome. Please refer to the University’s Policy 5: <http://www.govst.edu/policies>

Students with special needs**:** If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, contact the ESL coordinator as soon as possible so that Disabilities Services can be notified and assist in developing a plan to address your academic needs in this course. 

# Student Services

Part of the mission of the ESL at GSU is to assist the student in successfully completing the course in the ESL as well as furthering their education at GSU or beyond.

The ESL as well as GSU provides several programs to assist the students, and the following is a short description of the services as well as contact information for each service:

## Tutoring

Students should turn to the faculty member first when needing extra help in their courses. However, if the student feels that he or she needs extra assistance beyond that of the faculty member, they may be assigned a student mentor or assigned time with the program director. Please contact the program director for this service.

## Student Mentors

We are fortunate to offer student mentors to the ESL students. These mentors work in the classroom with faculty. They also work outside the classroom to assist students in navigating the university as well life in the US. The mentors also attend field trips with the students. The mentors proctor language lab and host conversation café.

## Advising

Conditionally admitted students are assigned two advisors: their intended program advisor and the ESL coordinator advisor. However, their primary advisor while in the ESL is the ESL director.

All other ESL students will be advised by the ESL director only.

Please reach out to the ESL director about any curriculum issues you may have or any questions you may have about your educational career at GSU.

## Academic Resource Center (ARC)

The ARC is located in the main building near the cafeteria. There students can get tutoring in math and science and other core subjects. It is also where the immunization office is located and the Writing Center.

## Writing Center

The writing center provides writing assistance through one on one sessions with students.

## Immunization

All students must have current immunization records reported to GSU. This is an Illinois state law. The immunization office is located in the ARC.

## Library

At GSU, The University Library is often considered the campus living room. Here, it is possible to find a quiet corner to study or group study rooms where students can work together. It's also where students, faculty, staff and the community can find study areas surrounded by art.

The resources of the Library are extensive, including membership in the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois. This gives you access to I-Share, the catalogs of 86 libraries across the state. If you're new to accessing books or information, one of our librarians will be there to guide you. You can even send a query online.

## Recreation Center

Staying fit can help keep you at the top of your academic game. When you are a student at Governors State University, you’ll find fitness and recreation opportunities that suit your style – and your schedule – from the Athletic and Recreation Center’s free weights, exercise machines and cardiovascular equipment to a 167,000 gallon Olympic-style lap pool, gymnasium with full-sized basketball court and racquetball court. There are also team sports, special events and classes to keep you moving. GSU students have free green fee access to the University Golf Club.

## Language Lab

The ESL requires students to spend two hours per week attending Language Lab. At language Lab, students will work on a computer learning certain computer skills and practicing English language pronunciation. Headphones will be provided. Students will be assigned to which day they must attend Language Lab.

## Service Learning

Students are given opportunities to serve in the GSU community as well as in the community of University Park. Examples of service include: reading to children at the Family Development Center, acting as an usher for the Center for Performing Arts, and helping out at a local farm.

## Academic Field Trips

The ESL provides educational field trips that provide language learning opportunities for the students as well as community bonding. Some of these trips include: Art Institute, Museum of Natural History, Iron Oaks, and many other fun and educational locations.

## Calendar

Each week, the ESL provides a calendar of events around the university. Students can attend some of these events if they wish. For some of the events, attendance will be required.

**Facebook**

The ESL hosts a Facebook page. This includes photos of all the events and other interesting facts about GSU and GSU’s ESL. We encourage all students to ‘like” the GSU’s ESL Facebook page.