
ELP STUDENT NEWS

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Letter from the Editor

Brian Arnold, Editor, *ELP Student News*

Hello and thank you for reading the *ELP Student News*!

This newsletter is written primarily by current and former English Language Program students. The students that have written articles in this edition of the *ELP Student News* have done a fantastic job! I'm sure that you will agree after you have read this edition. Please take a moment to congratulate the writers for their gift to the international community here at VCU!

Because international students are interested in learning more about how other international students have adapted to moving to the United States, *ELP Student News* is always interested in finding international students who would like to tell their story. Do you have a story?

If you are an international student and would like to write an article for *ELP Student News*, then contact me at btarnold@vcu.edu. I would be delighted to discuss your ideas and help you get started on an article for the Spring 2007 edition. Thanks and see you around campus. Brian

Your Voice Can Be Heard at VCU!

By: Kiffy Johnson

The Student Government Association (SGA) is a student led organization that represents students' needs and opinions to the VCU Administration, Richmond Government, and the VA State Government. We work on many issues like housing, safety, tuition costs, and meal plans.

The Board of Visitors often invites students to come have lunch and speak with them about the concerns and needs of the students on campus.

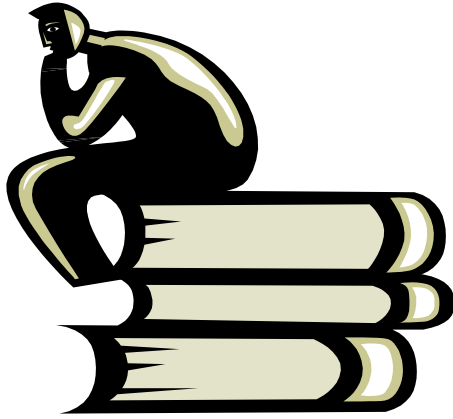
The Board of Visitors is the voting body of Virginia Commonwealth University. Each year, the governor of Virginia appoints members to the board. They are an extremely important group, and this is a great opportunity to have your voices heard!

If you are interested in attending one these meetings, please contact Dr. Rodriguez, the Associate Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, at rbrodriguez@vcu.edu.

The SGA has an office on the second floor of the Commons. Stop by anytime to talk to someone about a problem or need that you want us to do something about. You can also e-mail your concerns to students@vcusga.com. If you are interested in getting involved, please send an e-mail to address just mentioned or stop by the office.

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Take care who you follow

By: Sadik Nabil, Ethiopia

First, studying in an American University is one of the best opportunities you could ever get. The knowledge you get from an American University is valued everywhere in the world. Studying at an American University also gives you the opportunity to explore the culture, society and the environment. That is why VCU is one of the best American universities. There is one thing that you need to remember about studying at a large university: peer pressure.

VCU has many students, so you have to take care about what you do. Not because of the large amount of students, but because of how there could be peer pressure put on you. Peer pressure is when your friends try to make you do something you don't want to do, but you do it anyway just to be cool with them. Peer pressure can cost you your life. I have been in a situation where my friends wanted me to do wrong things, but I refused because I knew it could cost me my own life. So, be careful when you are deciding what to do with friends because it is not always easy to get out of a problem situation once you are in it.

In conclusion, VCU is a good university that has many ways for students can improve their life. Be careful that peer pressure to do wrong things, like drugs and violence, does not cost you your life. In general, we have to be careful and look out for ourselves. We also have to be careful of what kind of friends we choose. It is good to have good friends and have fun together, but be careful not to follow your friends to a bad place trying to be cool.

Don't always stay with people who speak your language

Ali Alsinan, Saudi Arabia

I have been studying at VCU for one year, and I realized that all international students prefer to stay with people who speak their native language, more specifically, with the people from their country. From my own experience, I would like to share some advice that could help any foreigner who studies at an American university. I believe that all international students shouldn't stay just with friends from the same country or region. I believe that when the international students make some American friends, it will help them learn English much easier and faster.

Last year, when I moved to the United States I used to live with students from Saudi Arabia. I was speaking in Arabic all the time except while I am at school. What made it worse was that the whole building was packed with Saudi's. The reason was that each one of them wants to be close to people who are from his country. They are always together playing cards and video games. I didn't like that situation, and fortunately I moved far away from the Arabic speakers. I realized that if I stayed there I would not learn English and I will speak Arabic all the time. Now, I am very happy and my English is getting better everyday because I am practicing it with some American friends. I believe that speaking English with people who speak English as a first language is the best way to learn English.

In conclusion, I would like to say to all international students that they shouldn't encircle themselves with people who speak their native language. It will be much easier and faster for them to learn English if they make some friends who speak English as a first language.

Attention International Students!!

Studying in a foreign country is exciting but can also be a *stressful* experience.

VCU Counseling Services

provides many different services related to emotional and mental well-being, and teaches learning skills to facilitate VCU students' academic and personal goals.

When might you consider counseling? When you are feeling overwhelmed by life, anxious about school, struggling in your relationship or just need to better manage your stress.

We are here to help you!

It is a safe and pleasant place to talk without worrying about your English skills. Counselors at UCS are well trained to be aware of **cultural and language differences.**

How do I make an appointment? Simply call us at **828-6200** or stop by the office, Room 225 Student Commons. We will help you to schedule an initial appointment.

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/counsel/students.html>

Benefit of Studying ESL

By: Sung-Sil Lee, South Korea

Many international students are coming to America to study English. They often think that just by coming to America, they can speak English like a native English speaker. But that's not true. Just being in that country is not enough to learn a second language. To learn a language, we have to try as hard as we can. I have studied English in the English Language Program at VCU for three months. The ELP has helped me a lot with English as a Second Language.

Basically, ELP classes give you the chance to practice English. Before I came here, I thought that I could speak English with Americans all the time. But it's not that easy. You can say "hi" on the street, but sometimes it's more difficult to speak with unknown people for a long time. Speaking in the class is the easiest way to improve in English.

ELP also provides you a variety of ways to learn English. From ELP classes, we can learn not only speaking, but also reading and writing. Methods to learn English usually concentrate on parts, and ELP methods have balance. Each part has a strong relationship to one another so they help each other. Improving reading skills is also helpful for writing and listening skills. So rather than practicing one way, practicing ESL in a variety of ways like VCU's English Language Program is far better

ELP TESTING AND SESSION DATES

Sessions	Placement Test Dates	Class Start – End Dates
Winter, 2007	January 8	January 16 – March 2, 2007
Spring, 2007	March 13	March 19 – May 1, 2007
Summer, 2007	June 18	June 25 – August 3, 2007
Fall I, 2007	August 14* & 21	August 27 – October 11, 2007
Fall II, 2007	October 17	October 22 – December 7, 2007

* THE AUGUST 14TH TEST DATE ACCEPTED TO VCU ACADEMIC STUDY.

CONTACT VCU'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR MORE INFORMATION... EMAIL: OIE-ELP@VCU.EDU

Time is Success

By: Manar Aldjaei

The most important thing for success in an American university is the respect of time. Time is very important for all the western people especially Americans; the foundation stone in any American's day is time. American people are very conscious about time and they expect that from others.

American professors are the biggest part of the American society who cares about time. Those professors expect all of their students to always be on time for class. If a student works hard during class time, the professor will take notice of this student. The professor will keep in mind that this student really cares about the class and this student is a hard worker. Therefore the student will do better in the subject and pass the class. Students who show respect for the class by being on time and using their time well will earn the American professor's respect.

By respecting time, the student will estimate the value of time. In this way the student will learn to arrange his/her time correctly. The student will also make use of every single minute in their day. By this way the student will study hard and get good marks. Also by the right arrangement of time the student will get a lot of free time for doing researches that is very important in all the American universities. Actually the right arrangement of time is the key of success in any college in the world especially in the United States.

There is a famous saying that "Time is Money." We can restate this by saying time is success in academic life. Respecting time is not only important in academic life, but it is also important for career life. In other words to be successful and respectable person in the world, a person has to be very aware of time.

TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Winter and Spring 2007

February: Skiing the Virginia mountains

We will go to the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains to Wintergreen Ski Resort to have some winter fun. Dress warmly and don't worry about equipment. The resort has ski's, snow boards, and tubes for rent.

March: New York City trip

ELP students will go to visit New York City, or "The Big Apple" as many Americans call it. Be sure to sign up early for this very popular trip to one of the USA's most popular travel destinations.

April: Country Cookout

Come to the countryside to get out of the city, relax, and have fun. Play volleyball, take a leisurely walk and then have dinner with friends.

Opportunity to Expand Your Knowledge



By: Selam Alemu

VCU has a lot of opportunities for students who want to build their education. There are different possibilities to help you reach your goals, and the variety of majors at VCU is a big benefit for students.

VCU offers many majors for students to study different things. There are more than twelve different schools at VCU such as Engineering, School of Medicine, etc. This is a good opportunity for students. When many students apply for college, they don't know what to study.

Some students choose undecided for the major section. They choose majors during their first or second year of college. For example, my major was undecided when I came to VCU. However, after I got here I read the bulletin and went down to the MCV campus and talked to the different departments. This gave me a clear image on the fields. Therefore, I chose to study dentistry.

Now I am volunteering at VCU's School of Dentistry to observe what a dental hygienist

does. Because VCU has so many different students trying to get into the school of dentistry, I thought it would be a good idea to volunteer to help my chances of getting accepted when I apply.

Students have a better chance to get accepted by the school in which they want to major by volunteering to help. Students can choose their major, but to get their first choice of study at VCU might take a little extra work. By volunteering, you show the school where you want to study that you are really serious about working hard and meeting your goals as a student.

VCU gives students a chance to choose from a variety of majors. Because of the different kinds of majors, a student's chance to choose their interest does not have any boundary. This is a big advantage for students. I personally advise all students who are seeking a college degree to think carefully about what they want to do and to volunteer in the school if possible. If you do your best and work hard, you will reach your goals.

Seriously studying at University

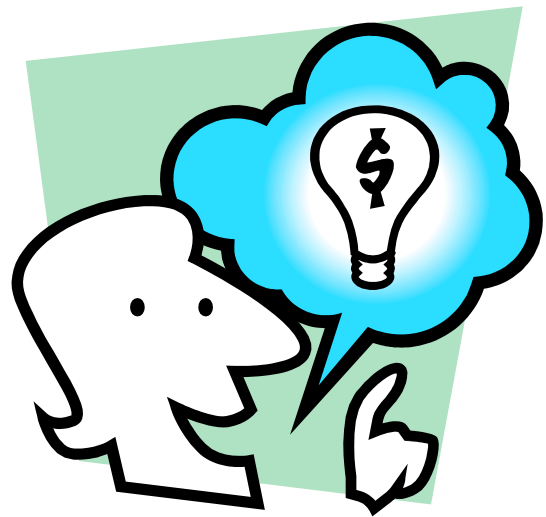
By: Enass Nawab

Studying at an American university is not as complicated as it looks. It depends on you. You have to be serious. When I came to study at VCU for the first time, nobody told me anything about how things are at an American university. So right now, I am about to complete and finish my first year studying at VCU and I can give you an idea about living and studying at an American university. Being successful in your academic and university life depends on being serious. Being serious about university means being respectful and working hard.

Respect is an important point to pay attention to when you are a university student. Being respectful can make your life easier. By being respectful to yourself, it will make your thoughts and ideas very clear about what is you want for yourself. Start by making sure that you know who to talk to about your education. Your teachers and professors are the ones who want to help you and are the most important people whom you should be respectful to. If you respect what your teachers tell you, you will learn as much as you deserve. Respecting the right things at an American university means a lot for students who want to be successful. Being respectful is important but not enough.

Working hard is also a very important thing if you want to have a successful life at an American university. You have to prove to yourself and to your teachers that you deserve to be at a university. Do your homework, listen to your teachers and attend your classes. Do what you have been told to do first and then put your touch on it to make it talk about you. To be successful in an American university you have to think very serious, and working hard will show that you are serious.

A respectful student has a chance to be more successful than a disrespectful student. A hard working student also has a better chance to pass and graduate. I think studying at an American university is simple. You only have to do what you are expected to do, and you are expected to be serious, work hard and have respect.



Do you have any ideas for the next *ELP Student News*?

What do you want to know more about in Richmond?

E-mail your ideas to Brian:

btarnold@vcu.edu