

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 next edition. Thanks and see you around campus. Brian

Richmond and International Students

By: Mishaal Al-romaih, Saudi Arabia

It is well known that moving to a different country is a hard thing. One of the things to do to make your moving easier is choosing a good place to live in. International students should move to Richmond to study.



Richmond is a good city with nice weather and lots of things to do. But what is most important about Richmond is VCU. It is a well known college with a good history. What international students like most about VCU is three things. First is the English Language Program. It is a good start or a warm up for the international student and it will make him ready for the academic classes. The second reason is the students that study at VCU. They are nice and most of them are international, so they will help you anytime you need. Finally, the respect that the people show towards your culture and traditions will make you feel welcome no matter where you are from. VCU has an international festival every year.

In conclusion, even though moving to a new country is hard, it will be easier if you moved to Richmond. International students must move to Richmond if they are going to study abroad.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from the Editor & Richmond and International Students
- 2 Living With a New Culture & Coming to VCU
- 3 Attention International Students & ELP Placement
- 4 Dates to Remember /Welcome to VCU/Preparing Psychologically
- 5 Life in Richmond



Living with a New Culture

By: Jessica Mayer, Germany

To move to a foreign country has many advantages and also some disadvantages. For some people it is easy to adjust to a new way of life, but other people have a hard time with that. Therefore, it can sometimes be challenging to live, study or work in a foreign country.

Moving into another country means to face and to deal with a completely new culture. Every country has its own history and past. Therefore, every country has its own values and habits. Foreigners recognize that a lot of things can be different in a new country, for example the life at a college or the relationship between the people. It is a very big task for everyone to accept and learn these new things. One big and important part of a culture is the language. It can happen that people have to learn a new language when they move into another country. This is important because the language is the key to a successful conversation and therefore big part of the daily life. People have to accept that some things can be misunderstood because every language is different and uses different ways to express feelings. Also the personality of the people in the new country can be very different. Foreigners have to learn how to interact with the inhabitants and maybe it is a new way. New people have to accept that they may have to change something of their own habits in order to adjust to the new surroundings.

To face a completely new way of life can sometimes be hard but also easy. The people who move into a foreign country have to learn new things in a new culture.

Coming to VCU

By: Thamer Khojah, Saudi Arabia

VCU is located in the heart of the south in a small city called Richmond. There are about 30,000 students at VCU. It is a nice place to focus on studying because it is a smaller city and there aren't many activities to do like in big cities. Studying in a new place can be a very good experience especially for international students.

Studying at VCU can be very different from studying in a local university for international students. Students get to explore a new culture and learn about the style of life in this country. Richmond has different cultures in it because a lot of people from different places have moved to Richmond. People in Richmond are friendly in most neighborhoods.

International students are required to take English classes if their English is not good enough for the academic level. Focus is a student's weapon of success in passing any class at VCU. Teachers in the English program want students to show their hard work in academic classes, so students should listen carefully to the professor and take notes as much as they can. Attendance is very important at VCU in both academic and English level, not only for learning reasons but for immigration reasons too.

VCU is the best place for students who like to focus most of their time on studying.



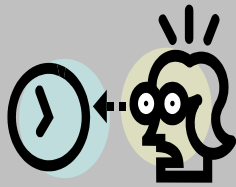
Attention International Students!!

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!

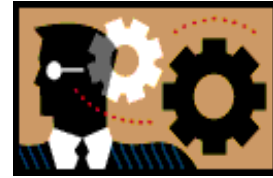
It is a safe and pleasant place to talk without worrying about your English skills. Counselors at UCS are well trained to be aware of **cultural and language differences.**

How do I make an appointment?

Simply call us at **828-6200** or stop by the office, Room 225 Student

ELP Placement

By: Mishal Alshammasi, Saudi Arabia



VCU is one of the schools which have a placement test for all students who don't speak English as a first language. The strategy of the placement test is to put students in their right level. Studying for the placement test might be the best way to get into the right level.

On the first day, all new ELP students take the placement test. There are some tips for every student to do before the test in regards to getting a better score on it. Each student should review Grammar, Writing, and Reading short stories. Then in the test, the student must read each question carefully. By doing these easy steps, students will get a better score and they might even exit some ELP classes.

Two days later students can see their score and know their levels. Students who exit two or more ELP classes will be asked to go and register for academic courses. On the other hand, some people think that students should not study for the ELP test so you know what your real level.

In conclusion, I think that each student should study for the test. This will help a lot and might save you one or two semesters.

ELP TESTING AND SESSION DATES

Sessions	Placement Test Dates	Class Start – End Dates
Summer, 2007	June 18	June 25 – Aug. 3, 2007
Fall I, 2007	Aug. 13* and 21	Aug. 27 – Oct. 11, 2007
Fall II, 2007	Oct. 16	Oct. 22 – Dec. 7, 2007
Winter, 2008	Jan. 7, 2008	Jan. 14 – Feb. 29, 2008
Spring, 2008	March 10, 2008	March 17 – April 29, 2008

* AUG 13 TEST DATE FOR STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR VCU ACADEMIC CLASSES

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

Welcome to VCU

By: Abdulrahman Aldujayn, Saudi Arabia

Knowing a new countries’ language will make your life easier when you move there. The USA is one of the best countries to study in because it has the top rated universities in the world. I would like to congratulate you for the scholarship that you got recently, and would love to give you advice from my experience at being a student at VCU for more than 14 months. Studying English before getting here would be a great first step for you. This is also an important thing for you to do when you begin attending classes. You will be required to get a certain score on the English Placement Test. If you pass this test, you can start taking academic courses. Otherwise, you will take classes in the English Language Program. ELP for me has been helpful and taken the majority of my time. If you study at home it will save you time though.

Studying in a new country could help you to budget your time and a lot of useful things. Studying English before moving to the US would save you time and make your life easier. VCU is a nice university to study at if you plan before you step forward. Welcome to the US and VCU.

Preparing Psychologically

By: Abdullah Almuways, Saudi Arabia

A student says to his parents “I don’t want to study in the USA because I don’t understand their society.” Some students who are from different countries study outside their countries in order to get a better education. Some researchers detected that a student who does not prepare his/her self psychologically may not get as good of grades as a student who prepares his/her self. Students should prepare themselves psychologically after they come to study in the USA.

Students learn how to live in another environment by making friends and learning their habits. Because students cannot adapt in another environment easily, they have to make friends in order to adapt. If a student lives with an American family, the student might be able to adapt more quickly. For example, if a student lives between the American students, he/she can learn the language and understand their society. Learning how to adapt in another environment easily can help students to survive their lives.

Learning the English language is very important in order to learn the people’s culture. In fact, some international students don’t understand the Americans culture as soon as they arrive to the USA. Because students may misunderstand the USA’s culture such as their traditions and religion, they need to



read some books that can explain the American culture. Because American culture is very important to the American people, students need to respect it.



Life in Richmond



By: Yi Huang, China

Richmond is a beautiful city and VCU is located in Richmond. VCU is one of the more famous universities in the USA. But before you come to America to study, here are some suggestions which might help. You need to get information about the weather and the building location of classes.

At first, you must check the temperature everyday because the weather in Richmond always changes. Sometimes you can feel spring, summer, fall and winter all in one week. Maybe today you wear a t-shirt but tomorrow you need to wear a coat. That is why I always get a cold in the winter and spring. The temperature between day and night can also be different, just like summer and winter. So checking the weather in Richmond is very important.

The second suggestion is to buy a map. A map of Richmond is very useful. Every freshman should have a Richmond map after they arrive here. You need to know the buildings' locations and the street names around VCU. For example, my friend lost his way one time without his map. So having a map is very important. Take one with you when you go out in Richmond.

To sum up, getting more information about the weather and the building location is very important for you to study at VCU. I hope you enjoy your life after you arrive here.

Ideas for the next ELP Student News?

Want to know more about Richmond?



E-mail ideas to Brian:

btarnold@vcu.edu