



# English Language Training Institute (ELTI)

## *Student Handbook*

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## Welcome

Dear Students,

Welcome to another session at the ELTI! If this is your first time with us, you will want to pay special attention to the information in this handbook. If you are a returning student, you may want to review this information. Whether new or returning, it is my hope that you will find this information useful and beneficial during your time at the ELTI.

I am delighted and honored that you have chosen the ELTI above all other program options. While we are proud of our excellent reputation as the longest-standing intensive English program in the Carolinas, I know that there are many choices out there. Know that you have chosen well, and we at ELTI are committed to providing you with quality instruction and excellent support as we fulfill our mission to prepare you to be successful members of the U.S. academic community while promoting intercultural understanding and a global perspective.

I sincerely hope that you benefit from and enjoy your time spent here on UNC Charlotte's beautiful main campus. Please do not confine your learning to the ELTI classroom—get out there and enjoy all that the University and surrounding City of Charlotte have to offer. Like Norm the Niner, the University's official mascot, look for opportunities and settle for nothing less than the gold standard.

Remember, no matter where your future travels take you, you will always have a home at UNC Charlotte and the ELTI.

Warm regards,

Nicole I. Ianieri, ELTI Director

## Tips for Being Successful

- Attend all classes.
- Arrive on time to all classes - Students who arrive to class more than five minutes late, or who leave class early, will be counted absent. See Attendance Policy for more details.
- Participate in class, do all homework and assignments thoroughly, and use English as much as you can.
- Complete assignments by the due date.
- Understand the [UNC Charlotte Academic Integrity Policy](#). Cheating, copying, or other acts that violate UNC Charlotte honor codes and general rules of fairness are not acceptable. Students will learn the cultural norms around these practices in their classes.
- Respect your teachers and fellow classmates.
- Check your UNC Charlotte email daily.
- Make payment arrangements or submit all financial guarantees by the end of the first full week of classes. Students who have not paid the ELTI in full or given us a valid financial guarantee will not be allowed in classes after the first full week of classes.
- If you are here on a student visa, follow all visa regulations: study full-time, no employment off-campus, and keep your passport, visa, and I-20 up-to-date.

## Semester Dates

You can find the current semester's dates on the [ELTI website](#).

## Tuition & Fees

You can find the current semester's tuition and fees on the [ELTI website](#).

- Health insurance is required for all students. The cost is not included in the ELTI tuition or fees and will vary depending on what plan you select. You can buy your own plan as long as it meets University requirements, or you can purchase the University's plan. Current pricing is found [here](#).
- ELTI students pay full university fees, so you will have access to the gym, health center, light rail, and all other services that any other UNC Charlotte student has access to.
- Housing, meals, parking, and textbooks are not included in the ELTI tuition or fees.

## Important Numbers & Emergency Services

Name	Phone	Email/Website	Location
ELTI Office	(704) 687-7777	<a href="mailto:elti@charlotte.edu">elti@charlotte.edu</a> <a href="http://elti.charlotte.edu">elti.charlotte.edu</a>	CHHS 267 (#63 on <a href="#">campus map</a> )
Police (on campus)	<u>Emergency:</u> (704) 687-2200 <u>Non-emergency:</u> (704) 687-8300	<a href="mailto:police@charlotte.edu">police@charlotte.edu</a> <a href="https://police.charlotte.edu/">https://police.charlotte.edu/</a>	9151 Cameron Blvd (#55b on campus map)
Emergency Services (off campus)	911		
Student Health Center	(704) 687-7400	<a href="https://studenthealth.charlotte.edu/">https://studenthealth.charlotte.edu/</a>	9524 Poplar Terrace Dr. (#65 on map)
Center for Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)	(704) 687-0311	<a href="https://caps.charlotte.edu/">https://caps.charlotte.edu/</a>	#91 on campus map
Weather Hotline & Niner Alerts	(704) 687-1900	<a href="#">Operating Conditions</a> <a href="#">Niner Alerts</a>	

\*If there is inclement weather, you can call the Weather Hotline to find out the status of classes\*

## Whom to Talk To

### **Come to the ELTI office if you have a question about...**

- Daily life in Charlotte
- Driver's license information
- ELTI course schedule
- On-campus resources (Housing, Health Center, CAPS, and others)
- On-campus employment
- Payment problems
- Plus One Program or University recommendations
- Student visa matters (I-20 document, signature for travel, address changes)
- Transcripts
- Transfer or withdrawal from ELTI
- UNC Charlotte admissions
- Anything you're not sure about. We will point you in the right direction.

### **Talk to your ELTI instructors about...**

- All questions related to ELTI classes, books, tests, and grades
- Level changes
- Your attendance and absences



## Curriculum and Achievement at the ELTI

### Our Mission

The English Language Training Institute, a unit of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Office of International Programs, prepares English language learners to be successful members of the U.S. academic community while promoting intercultural understanding and a global perspective.

### Curriculum

The purpose of all ELTI classes is to instruct and guide students to increasingly more advanced use of English as an additional language in order to function effectively in daily life in the U.S. as well as to succeed in the university environment. The ELTI curriculum is an integrated system consisting of the following classes across all levels:

<b>Reading/Writing</b>	This course focuses on reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary.
<b>Listening/Speaking</b>	This course focuses on listening, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary.
<b>Academic Language</b>	This course focuses on the language skills, U.S. academic conventions, and cultural content specific to university life.

The ELTI does not place students in different levels for different skills. We believe that it is better for students to be in the same level in all of their classes.

## Placement

During the first week of classes, instructors review each new student's placement and the instructors may recommend moving students to a lower or higher level. Students who will be moved into another level will be notified of the change.

Students who feel that they are placed in the wrong level should speak directly with their teachers.

## Class Schedule

Full-time ELTI students attend class 18 instructional hours each week. See the [Program Dates and Schedule page](#) on the ELTI website for the current class schedule.

F1 students must be enrolled full time. Other students may have the option of full- or part-time enrollment.

## Registration and Payment

The ELTI staff registers students in their courses. New students are registered during orientation, and returning students are registered before classes begin. New students receive UNC Charlotte ID cards and activate email accounts after they are registered for classes.

Students must pay their tuition and fees in full when they are registered, or, in the case of sponsored students, provide a valid financial guarantee. All students should have either paid their tuition in full or [enrolled in the UNC Charlotte payment plan](#) by the end of the first full week of classes or the established deadline, whichever comes first.

## ELTI Refund Policy

After the established payment deadline, there are no refunds.

## Attendance Policy

A student is absent when not in class for any reason. The ELTI does not have “excused” absences. A student is considered absent when arriving more than five (5) minutes late to class or misses more than five minutes of class.

While students will be marked absent if arriving late, they should still attend the class in order to learn as much as possible and not fall behind in class work. If arriving late, students should enter the room quietly and take a seat.

If you stop coming to class or have nine (9) absences in any one class during the semester, you will be dismissed from the ELTI. Students can appeal the dismissal and should follow instructions they receive in their dismissal notification email. Instructors and staff do not have the ability to make exceptions to the policy.

IMPORTANT: Reading/Writing and Academic Language classes meet for three hours each with a 15-minute break. Because these are longer class blocks, each class counts as two absences if it is missed. This also means that if you are five minutes late after the beginning of the class at 9:00 am, you will have one absence, and if you return five minutes late after the 15-minute break, you will get another absence. THEREFORE, IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE TWO ABSENCES IN THESE CLASSES IN ONE DAY.

If you need to be absent for any reason, please inform your instructors by email. Remember, you will still be counted as absent, and you are responsible for completing any missed work. Whether you can make up for a missed test or other work is the teacher’s decision.

### Policy Enforcement

1. The attendance policy is explained to each student during the New Student Orientation. During the first week of classes, the instructors also review the attendance policy in each class when they discuss the syllabus. Additionally, each student is required to sign an agreement stating that they understand the attendance policy.
2. When a student has four, five, and six (4, 5, 6) absences in any class, s/he will receive an **Attendance Warning** via UNC Charlotte email. **The student must meet with an administrative staff member.**
3. When a student reaches seven and eight (7, 8) absences during the semester, s/he receives a **Final Attendance Warning** from the director, also via UNC Charlotte email. **The student must meet with an administrative staff member.**

4. At nine (9) absences in any class during the semester, the student receives a ***Dismissal Letter*** from the director via UNC Charlotte email stating that the student is dismissed from the program. The student must then follow instructions in the notification, **which includes a meeting with an administrative staff member** to discuss necessary next steps.
5. Students can complete the ***Student Appeal Form*** which is linked to the dismissal email if they would like to appeal the decision (ask for the decision to be changed). The student completes the form and returns it. A meeting will then be scheduled between the student, the director, one instructor, and another member of the ELTI faculty/staff team. This group will make a final decision about the appeal after reviewing the student's case. In most cases, the student is immediately notified about the appeal decision. After a decision is made, the student is unable to appeal the committee's decision.

## Serious Illness

We understand that sometimes an unexpected serious illness may prevent a student from attending classes for several days or even weeks.

If you have a serious illness or condition, talk to a member of the ELTI staff about your options.

As a reminder, the ELTI does not recognize excused absences even for serious illness or other conditions.

## Textbooks

You must purchase the assigned textbooks for your courses. Do not purchase used textbooks. If the UNC Charlotte bookstore does not have the textbooks you need, please go ahead and place an order through Amazon or other online book seller. You should make sure that the books will arrive as quickly as possible.

Keep the receipt for all textbooks in case you are approved for a level change. Students must have all textbooks available for use in the classroom no later than five class days after the first day of class. After the deadline, students without textbooks will be asked to leave class to purchase their books at the UNC Charlotte bookstore and will be counted absent for the class time missed to do so.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an important part of university life in the United States. Practicing academic integrity means that you agree to be responsible for your own work and will not use the work of others inappropriately. It also means that you will not let others use your work, whether on an assignment or a test. Using the work of others without giving credit to the original source, or using

the work of others as your own, is called “plagiarism” (a noun), and the verb is “to plagiarize”. Cheating is a specific form of plagiarism when you use the work of someone else as your own or look at someone else’s paper in a testing situation. It is also cheating to let someone copy your work, even with your permission.

There are many forms of plagiarism and cheating. Your instructors will tell you more about these and how to avoid them in your work.

You can read more about UNC Charlotte’s definition of plagiarism and learn more about academic integrity at the University by reading the [UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity](#).

## University Conduct

The ELTI strives to provide a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment for each ELTI student, faculty, and staff member. ELTI students receive instruction about culturally appropriate behavior in US academic institutions and any other academic expectations from the ELTI Student Handbook, class syllabi, and ELTI instructors.

Students who exhibit disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the class and meet with the Director. Students who continue to display such behavior may be dismissed from the program.

## Grades

The grading scale used in your ELTI classes is as follows:

A: 90-100% (excellent = you are exceeding proficiency in all of the learning outcomes)  
B: 80-89% (good = you are exceeding proficiency in some of the learning outcomes)  
C: 70-79% (satisfactory/average = you are demonstrating proficiency in the learning outcomes)

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D: 60-69% (unsatisfactory / failing)  
F: Below 65% (very unsatisfactory / failing)

It is important for you to understand that a “C” letter grade is considered acceptable. A “C” means that you are meeting the basic expectations for completing the level.

Other grades:

W: Withdrawal: If you need to leave the program early, you will be given a “W”. If you decide to return to the program, you will need to repeat the course.

S/U: Although ELTI classes do not carry academic credit in the university system, ELTI grades are also recorded on your official UNC Charlotte academic transcript at the end of the semester as an “S” (satisfactory) or “U” (unsatisfactory) for each class in every level. An “S” is equivalent to an A, B, or C grade. A “U” is equivalent to a D or F grade.

## Level Progression

ELTI students must complete all courses in a level with a C (70%) grade or higher in order to progress to the next level of the program. Students are allowed to repeat a level one time. If they are not able to pass the level after a second term, they will be advised to look for a different program that may better meet their needs.

Therefore, the maximum number of semesters that a student would be allowed to continue in the program is 12, assuming that a student began at the first level of instruction (Basic).

At the completion of each semester, students who have straight As, or who have 2 As and 1 B, and who wish to skip a level can sign up to retake the placement exam with incoming students during new student orientation. While students do not need special permission to retake the placement test in order to skip a level, they should let ELTI staff know so that they can be added to the placement list. It is important for students to understand that retaking the placement test does not guarantee skipping a level.

## Plus One Program

Plus One is a program which allows students who have completed one term of ELTI to take one UNC Charlotte course while they are taking Level 5 ELTI courses.

To qualify for Plus One:

- You must have a B or better average in all courses;
- You must be enrolled in Level 5 along with your Plus One class;
- You must be recommended by your ELTI instructors and have the approval of the ELTI Director.

Plus One is available only to students after their first semester of study in ELTI. In the final weeks of each semester, the Director will inform all students in Level 4 about joining Plus One for the next semester. Students who take part in Plus One need to be aware that the grades they receive in the credit-bearing course goes on their official transcript.

Plus One students must pay for both the credit-bearing course they select as well as their ELTI tuition for two courses. They must also pay full-time student fees.

Admission to the Plus One program does not guarantee admission to a UNC Charlotte degree program. (See Applying to UNC Charlotte later in this handbook). Students who enroll in the Plus One program have no obligation to continue their studies at UNC Charlotte after the ELTI.

## **Complaints About an Instructor or Class**

Students who have a complaint about an instructor or a class should first talk to their instructor about the problem. Directly speaking with your instructors about concerns is a common practice in U.S. academic culture.

If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome after speaking with the instructor, they should make an appointment with the ELTI Director.

Most concerns will be kept private and confidential. However, if the Director determines that either the student or others are in danger because of the issue, the concern will be shared with others on or off campus as appropriate.

## **Student Concern/Complaint Form**

Any student enrolled at the English Language Training Institute has the right to register a formal complaint concerning any issue. A formal complaint is one made in writing and usually about a serious issue. Students can file a formal complaint by completing the digital Student Concern Form available in the ELTI front office. This form will be reviewed by the Director and/or other staff as appropriate. All formal complaints will be followed by a meeting between the Director and the student in an attempt to resolve the issue.

Again, most concerns will be kept private and confidential. However, if the Director determines that either the student or others are in danger because of the issue, the concern will be shared with others on or off campus as appropriate.

## **Student Portals and Canvas**

ELTI students have access to many resources designed to support them in their learning journey. The following three resources are accessible via the ELTI website. Students need to have an active NinerNET account to access these resources.

### **SIMMS**

SIMMS is the online student portal for ELTI students to view their attendance, enrollment verification, grades, and transcripts. Students are also able to print both enrollment verification statements and transcripts directly from SIMMS.

### **My UNC Charlotte**

My UNC Charlotte is the university's student portal. Students can directly access their UNC Charlotte email and the Canvas learning portal, view their class schedule, pay their tuition and fees, add money onto their ID card, and much more.

### **Canvas**

Canvas is UNC Charlotte's Learning Management System (LMS). All ELTI courses use Canvas. Students can use Canvas to view course syllabi and assignments as well as grades. Your instructor will tell you more about Canvas in class.

## **Employment**

F1 students cannot work off campus. It is illegal to do so and can result in deportation. However, ELTI students may seek on-campus employment after their first semester of study here. Students who work on campus are expected to maintain good grades and attendance in order to remain in status.



Taking a part-time on-campus job may be a good way to earn some extra spending money, practice your language skills, and meet new people. However, it is not a good way to fund your English language studies. You should speak to a member of the ELTI staff if you are interested in an on-campus job.

## Photos

Instructors, students, and staff frequently take photos at ELTI events. This is very common in American culture, but we understand that not everyone is comfortable having his or her picture taken. If you would prefer not to be photographed, please avoid posing in group pictures taken by ELTI faculty or staff. You should also be sure to indicate that you do not want your picture taken on the photo waiver form that you received at Orientation.

## Smoking

Smoking (including vapes) is not allowed inside any buildings on campus.

You can smoke outside on campus, but only in special designated smoking areas. These are marked by signs. Do not smoke in any outside area that does not have a sign.

Where smoking is allowed (please refer to the campus map for the following locations):

- ✓ Between Mebane Hall and the Student Activity Center (SAC), in the designated smoking area only. (There are benches and an ashtray.)
- ✓ Anywhere else you see a “Designated Smoking Area” sign.

Where smoking is NOT allowed:

- ✗ Any other place where there is no sign - especially near our building (such as outside of the doors on the 2nd floor of our building)
- ✗ Inside any campus building
- ✗ While walking from one building to another

Important: Do not throw your cigarette ashes (known as “butts”) on the ground. Never put ashes in a trash can—they can start a fire.

## Alcohol

It is illegal to purchase or drink alcohol if under 21. It is also illegal to serve someone alcohol who is under the age of 21. If you are at a party where underage drinking is taking place, you can be arrested even if you have not drunk anything. Be careful.

You should never drink and drive, nor should you get a ride from someone who has been drinking. Call a ride share or use public transportation if you have been drinking.

## Immigration & Social Security

If you are here on a student (F-1) visa, you must obey the immigration laws of the United States. If you have a question about your immigration status, please speak to an ELTI staff member.

These are the guidelines you should follow to remain in status:

- Attend school full time. English language students may take summers off from studies, but should be enrolled full time in both fall and spring semesters. Reduced course loads are possible under very limited circumstances. If you stop attending your classes, you could lose your immigration status and be deported.
- Don't work. You may be able to work in a part-time job on campus only. However, we don't suggest you look for a campus job while you are in the ELTI. You will have enough to keep you busy with your studies. Also, a part-time campus job is not a realistic way to support yourself financially. You will not make much money
- Check the expiration dates on your I-20. **YOU CANNOT LET YOUR I-20 EXPIRE WHILE YOU ARE IN THE U.S.** If your I-20 expires while you are in the U.S., you have lost your status and will need to return home immediately. It is your responsibility to ask for an I-20 extension if you need one.
- Make sure you get a travel signature on your I-20 before you leave the U.S., even if you are only traveling to a neighboring country for vacation. You should make an appointment with ELTI staff at least a week before your travel plans.
- If you have finished your studies at the ELTI and do not plan to return, you have 60 days after the completion of the program to leave the U.S. If your I-20 is terminated for any reason, you may have up to 15 days to leave the country, but in some cases, you will need to leave immediately.

### Documents

- Never carry important, hard-to-replace documents such as your passport with you, and never leave them in your car. Make copies of what you need and carry these with you; leave the original documents in a safe and secure place.

- If your visa expires while you are in the U.S., this does not impact your immigration status. However, when you leave the United States for any reason, even vacation or a short trip to your home country, you will need to be sure to make an appointment to renew your visa.
- I-94 Arrival/Departure Record: The I-94 is a document that may be needed to show to other government agencies (such as the driver's license office). We recommend that students print out their I-94 cards: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/assets/pdf/I94-EN.pdf>
- Passport: If your passport is going to expire, contact your embassy or the nearest consulate. You are responsible for keeping your passport valid 6 months into the future. For passport renewal, your embassy may need a letter verifying that you are a full-time student. You can print an enrollment verification letter from SIMMS.

I-20 form: Be aware of the "program completion date" on the I-20. If you plan to study here longer than the completion date listed, it is your responsibility to contact the ELTI office and ask for a program extension. If you are issued a new I-20 due to updates or changes, make sure to continue to keep the old versions of your I-20 and be sure to bring them with you whenever entering the country.

## School Transfer

If you are going to transfer to another school, you must let the ELTI staff know and complete a required transfer-out form, which ELTI staff will provide. You also must provide proof of admission to the new school before the ELTI staff will transfer your immigration record. It is illegal to begin studies at a new institution before your immigration record has been transferred.

## Students on Other Visa Types

The ELTI office may be able to help with questions/problems related to other visa types or will connect you with those who can best help you.

## Social Security

The Social Security number is a sort of identification number used in the U.S. Many times, such as when trying to rent an apartment, open a bank account, or buy a cell phone, people may ask you about your social security number.

Unless you are working on campus, you will not have a social security number. If someone asks for your Social Security number as a form of ID, you should reply that you are an international student legally in the U.S. on an F1 visa and do not have one.

Banks, stores, and other businesses should accept other forms of identification. If you have a question about this, please ask the ELTI staff.

## Applying to UNC Charlotte

If you have already been conditionally admitted to a UNC Charlotte degree program, congratulations! If you would like to learn more about conditional admission, read on.

Being admitted “conditionally” means that you cannot begin a degree program until specific conditions are met. For our students, there is generally one condition, which is to successfully meet the University’s requirements for English language proficiency. There are two ways to do this:

By passing the final level of the ELTI; or

By submitting required test scores or other measures before you complete the ELTI.

If you do not meet this condition, the University won’t allow you to take classes.

The ELTI staff can connect you with admission staff for both undergraduate and graduate programs at any time.

## Get Involved on Campus

There are many ways to get involved with University life both within the ELTI and across the broader campus community. There are hundreds of student organizations which you can explore based on your lifestyle, hobbies, and goals. Please see the following website for activities and other ways to fully participate in student life:

Campus Life: <https://www.charlotte.edu/landing/campus-life>.

Student Organizations: <https://studentorgs.charlotte.edu>

Campus Activities Board (CAB): <https://cab.charlotte.edu/>.

## Health

### Immunizations

While immunizations are not required to participate in ELTI classes, you must have them before living in campus housing or enrolling in credit-bearing courses. This is a requirement of the state of North Carolina, and if you do not have the required vaccinations before published deadlines, you will need to get them or will be required to leave your campus housing and/or be dropped from your credit-bearing classes.

The ELTI staff will help with uploading your immunization records so that you don't have to worry about them in the future.

## Health Insurance

In the U.S., it is very expensive to go to a doctor or to the hospital. The ELTI requires all students to have health insurance by the established deadline.

Important: all students will automatically be enrolled in the University health insurance plan. You will see this charge on your account, but it will be dropped IF you process a waiver. To process the waiver, you must provide proof of your own insurance, and it must meet the University guidelines which were shared in your admission letter.

The ELTI staff will help you with processing your health insurance waiver, but if you do not process the waiver by the deadline, you will be charged for that expense, which is over \$1200 USD.

If the ELTI discovers that you bought health insurance and then cancelled it after showing the policy to us, you may be dismissed from the program.

You must show your insurance ID card to be admitted to a hospital. Put your health ID card in your wallet or save it on your phone and do not lose it.

## Hospitals

Remember that in the U.S., people do NOT go to hospitals for normal medical care; they go to doctor's offices or clinics/urgent care centers. Hospitals are for EMERGENCIES only. Remember, the Student Health Center is an inexpensive and convenient option for you, and is located right on campus. However, if you have a life-threatening health emergency, please go to the hospital or call 911.

## Driving in NC

You can drive in North Carolina using your license from your home country, but you cannot drive on an International Drivers' License, or IDL. It is not recognized in the state.

However, if you plan to stay in the United States for more than a few months, we strongly recommend that you get a North Carolina driver's license. Remember that law enforcement personnel may interpret rules differently; it is safer to have a state driver's license if you plan to do a lot of driving. Some interpretations of law state that you should plan to get a state driver's license within 60 days of your arrival.

## Road Rules

- You are responsible for obeying all traffic laws even if you are unaware of them. Educate yourself about local and state laws.
- Everyone in the car must use a seatbelt.
- Children younger than age 8 or who weigh less than 80 pounds must be properly secured in a child restraint or booster seat. Children less than age 5 or less than 40 pounds must be in the rear seat if the vehicle has an active passenger-side front air bag and a rear seat.
- If followed by police, pull over.
- Don't ignore traffic tickets if you get one.
- Car insurance is required to drive a car.
- Drunk driving is illegal. Be safe—get a ride if you've been drinking.
- Don't text and drive.
- Obey the speed limit.
- If you are stopped by a police officer, never offer money to get out of the situation. This is illegal and can lead to your arrest.

## Parking on Campus

You must have a permit to park on campus.

You will be able to purchase a permit after you have been registered for your classes.

Check to be sure that you understand where you are allowed to park. If you park in a place where you are not allowed, you will get a ticket that you will have to pay.