



STUDENT HANDBOOK

AMERICAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

American Language Program, Columbia University
School of Professional Studies
Website: <http://sps.columbia.edu/alp>
Email: alp-advising@columbia.edu

Welcome!

Dear Student,

Welcome to the American Language Program at Columbia University! We are so happy that you have chosen to study English online with us this summer.

In this Student Handbook you'll find lots of useful information about studying in our program and being a member of the Columbia virtual community.

The ALP offers a unique educational and cultural experience. You are studying remotely at an Ivy League university, and we hope that you will make the most of your time with us. You can of course expect to study hard, but we have also worked to build a community to connect students all over the world that we hope you will be part of.

We hope this online course will be a way to help you achieve your language goals and to also find some sense of routine in these uncertain times.

This handbook has all the information you need to make your English studies at the ALP useful, enjoyable and memorable. It also explains how to follow the rules and how to make the most of the virtual activities at the University this summer.

If you still have questions after reading it, we're here to help!

Kind regards,

Mary Pickett

Director, American Language Program



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What to expect

Studying at a University in the United States

In the American education system, students are encouraged to participate and get involved. This may be different from the education system in your country. American instructors expect their students to speak, ask questions, and give their opinions. Responsibility for learning is not just on the teacher – it is also on the student!

Studying at the American Language Program

At the ALP we focus on teaching you academic English. You will learn language and skills to help you survive at an American university, such as essay writing, presentation skills and note-taking. However, the language and skills you will learn are useful in any English context, including the workplace.

Communicating in English is the only way to improve fluency. Maybe you know the grammar rules in the book, but can you use them? In our classes, expect to speak a lot and to do lots of work with your classmates in pairs and groups. Working together is a great way to practice English and learn from each other.

Also expect your teacher to correct your English. Making mistakes is okay – it's part of learning! Your teachers will not only correct your speaking and pronunciation, but also your writing. They will help you to identify your most common grammatical errors so you can learn to correct them yourself. You will learn pre-writing techniques and revising skills. You will learn how to write for an American academic audience.

Your Teachers

All our instructors are professionally trained experts in teaching English as a second language. They all have a minimum of a Master's degree and years of experience working with learners of English. Many have written textbooks and speak at professional conferences. All are passionate about teaching, and want to help you reach your goals.

Your Classes

Our intensive English classes are taught by a team of two teachers. They work closely together to teach the course. You will have class every day, and also some extra small group or one-to-one meetings each week to help you make progress. In addition, there will be plenty of homework. You will need to complete this every day in order to keep up with the class.

Columbia University

You are studying at an Ivy League university. This offers you many opportunities, from virtual access to world-class libraries to interesting lectures by Columbia professors and thought leaders. Take part in ALP virtual activities and see what virtual events are taking place – we can help you find what is available.

Week One: Important things to do

There are several things you must do in the first few days of the session:

1. Start checking your Columbia email
2. Become familiar with Zoom
3. Check your E-bill
4. Complete SEVIS registration (if you are an F-1 student)

And if you are living on campus and studying 8 points or more:

5. Confirm your enrollment in the Columbia University Medical Insurance plan

1. Start checking your Columbia email

All new ALP students get a Columbia University email account using LionMail (part of Google).

With your Columbia email you will receive messages from:

- your teachers
- the ALP Office
- Student Services Online (your E-bill)
- the Columbia community

Make sure you check your Columbia email every day!

When your application was processed, you received a UNI (University Network Identification). Once activated, this UNI becomes your Columbia University email address: yourUNI@columbia.edu.

It is very important that you “activate” (= start) your new email account. The university will ONLY use your Columbia email account to contact you, not your personal email address.

If you have not activated your Columbia email account, please do so:

1. Go to <http://uni.columbia.edu>. Click **“Activate UNI or Email.”**
2. Read the “Computer and Network Use Policy.” Click **“Accept.”**
3. Read “Your Responsibility on the Columbia Network.” Click **“Accept.”**
4. Enter your UNI (University Network ID) and click **“Continue.”**
5. Enter the following information (below). Then, click **“Continue”**
6. Select and answer 5 security questions and click **“Save.”**
7. Create a password.
8. Check your Columbia email at lionmail.columbia.edu.

TO SET UP EMAIL ON A MOBILE DEVICE

If you would like to set up your Columbia email on your phone, follow the instructions on the [CUIT website](#).

Have a problem with email? Call the Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT) Help Desk at (212) 854-1919 or [submit a ticket to the Service Desk](#).

2. Become familiar with Zoom

All ALP classes in Summer 2020 are online. You will need:

- a laptop or tablet with a webcam/selfie camera
- headphones
- Zoom installed on your computer
- a quiet place to participate every day

Become familiar with Zoom before orientation and classes [here](#).

You will find links to your Zoom classes in Canvas. Log into Canvas with your UNI and password [here](#). If you need help with Zoom, find the **Help** or **Call Us** link in Canvas to talk to someone.

Take a tour of Canvas [here](#).

Know the Virtual Class Policies:

- Join on time or a few minutes early
- It's better to use a laptop or tablet than your phone
- Use headphones if possible
- Mute your microphone when not talking (especially if you are not in a quiet place)
- Please don't wear pajamas to class or lie in bed 😊
- Use video so everyone can see your face
- Stay off social media and your phone during class
- Stay focused and "present" in the Zoom classroom

3. Check Your E-bill

You will receive your University bill for tuition, fees, and other charges *after* the semester begins, according to the Columbia monthly billing schedule. You will receive an email in your Columbia account that will tell you your E-bill is ready.

You can find your E-bill at Student Services Online (SSOL): <https://ssol.columbia.edu/>

For information on how to make payments online for tuition and fees, see the 'Paying for the ALP' section.

4. Complete SEVIS Check-in (F-1 students only)

If you have an F-1 student visa, you must complete the online [SEVIS check-in form](#) found online. To report your arrival, you will need to

- i) Log in to Compass using your UNI and your password.
- ii) Complete the registration form
- iii) Upload a copy of your visa and I-94 card.

Important note: If more than 7 days have passed, the government will consider you out of status, so do this step quickly.

See [page 24](#) for more important visa information regarding students with an I-20.

Email Tomasz Tuleja with any questions: t.tuleja@columbia.edu

If you are living on campus and studying 8 points or more this summer:

5. Confirm Your Enrollment in the Columbia University Medical Insurance Plan

All ALP students studying 8 points or more (Summer A+B, B+C, A+C, AAP) on campus are required to have Columbia Medical Insurance. It is not possible to waive (= not pay) the Insurance charge. Visit [Columbia Health](#) for details. Log onto [Student Services Online](#) and follow the instructions. You must do this by the deadline.

The only exception: SACM students with government sponsored insurance can submit a waiver request to remove the Columbia medical insurance plan.

See [page 23](#) for more information on medical insurance.

Note: Students studying fewer than 8 points (Summer A only, Summer B only, Summer C only) are not required to have Columbia Medical Insurance.

Paying for the ALP

1. Tuition & Fees

Students are charged tuition and various fees for each session. Students studying 8 points or more will also be charged a \$300 Columbia Health Fee. See [page 22](#) for more information on the Health Fee. You can find a full list of summer tuition and fees on the [ALP website](#).

2. E-bills

Columbia bills you for tuition, fees, and other charges after the semester starts. E-bills are sent once a month. See the [E-Bill schedule here](#). You will find your E-bill in [SSOL](#).

You may have new charges on your E-Bill each month, so after you pay, check each monthly statement to make sure your balance is 0.

Payments must be **made in full by the due date** or you will have late payment charges.

For questions about your E-bill, contact:

Student Financial Services

Tel: (212) 854-4400

Online Q&A tool: <http://askus.columbia.edu>

3. Ways to Pay

You can find full information on paying your Columbia E-bill [here](#).

**Note: Columbia does not accept credit cards or cash.*

Students may make tuition payments in the following ways:

1. Payment by Online E-Check

If you have a U.S. bank account, you can pay your E-bill online with an E-Check. In SSOL, click **View E-bill**, then **Make Payment**, then choose Online E-check. Enter your account number and routing number.

2. Payment by Wire Transfer

If you only have a foreign bank account, you can pay your E-bill online with a Wire Transfer. In SSOL, click **View E-bill**, then **Make Payment**, then choose International Payment. You can use either Western Union or Flywire to pay. Follow the instructions for adding your home country's bank information.

3. Sponsored Students

- Sponsored students are those whose studies at Columbia University are funded directly by a Third Party, or sponsor. Examples of sponsors are an employer, educational institution, government agency, foundation, grant, embassy, or other institutional source.
- If you are a sponsored student, you need to set up Third Party Billing, so that your sponsor will receive an invoice for your tuition and fees. For instructions to set up Third Party Billing, visit the [SFS website](#).

Withdrawal Procedures

1. Refund Policy When Dropping Entire Program (Withdrawal)

Sometimes students decide they cannot continue at the ALP and need to withdraw during the session.

Withdrawal = quitting all classes in one session. Note: telling an instructor that you will no longer attend class or sending them an email does not mean you have withdrawn. You must withdraw officially with the ALP office.

How to Withdraw:

- (1) Contact Jana Quigley, Assistant Director of Student Life: jmq2107@columbia.edu.
- (2) Submit the completed "Notice of Withdrawal" form online.
- (3) F-1 Student Visa holders: Contact Tomasz Tuleja about your visa status and travel plans:

t.tuleja@columbia.edu.

- (4) Pay the \$75 withdrawal fee in SSOL.

- (5) You will receive an email confirmation of your withdrawal from the Office of Student Life.

Deadlines for dropping individual courses vary by school. If you are not a Professional Studies (SPS) student, please refer to your home school's academic calendar for dropping individual classes.

What happens if you do not complete the drop or withdrawal process?

- Result in a mark of UW (unofficial withdrawal) for the course = looks very bad on your record and may result in academic probation or dismissal = unable to continue classes at Columbia.
- You are charged full tuition for the course = still need to pay for a course you did not attend.

A 100% refund is only given during the first week of classes.

Note the different deadlines for dropping individual ALP courses. See the schedule below.

2. ALP Withdrawal and Tuition Refund Schedule

Summer Sessions	
8-Week and 12-Week Courses	
<i>Withdrawals Received:</i>	<i>will be refunded:</i>
during week 1	100%
during week 2	50%
after week 2	0%
4-Week Courses	
<i>Withdrawals Received:</i>	<i>will be refunded:</i>
during week 1	100%
after week 1	0%

Academic Matters

1. Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. Certificates of Attendance are given to those students who attend 90% or more of the classes.

Attendance is reported on the final grade reports.

Lateness

Students are expected to join all classes on time. If a student is more than 10 minutes late, they will be marked an hour absent for that hour.

Absences

Students may miss up to 10% of classes without penalty. See below for the number of permitted absences in each session:

- Summer A, B, and C (4 weeks each) - 10% = 7 hours
- Advanced Academic Preparation (8 weeks) - 10% = 14 hours

Whatever the reason, an absence is an absence: there are no 'excused' absences. Every absent hour counts towards your permitted absences, so use them carefully.

However, given the current global health situation, if there are circumstances that prevent you from joining your class please communicate with your teachers, preferably before class.

End of Week:	90% attendance - Absent no more than:	End of Week:	Total hours of absences:
1	2 hours	2	4 hours
3	5 hours	4	7 hours
5	9 hours	6	11 hours
7	13 hours	8	14 hours

2. “Good Standing” in the American Language Program

OK	Attending at least 90% of a class at all times* Doing class work and homework Good academic behavior Making progress Receives a final grade of B- or better	ALP is happy! There are no problems with your studies.
First Warning	Missed 11-14% of class at ANY point in the session OR Not doing class work and/or homework	ALP is worried. We are watching you closely. You must improve or you will be put on Academic Probation.
Academic Probation	Missed 15% or more at ANY point in the session OR No improvement since First Warning OR Not completing class work and/or homework at an acceptable level OR Inappropriate (=very bad) academic behavior OR Received final grade of C- (Spring, Fall, A AP) OR No significant progress in English after 2 semesters*	ALP is not happy. You must improve or you will be dismissed from Columbia (this means you will need to leave.)
Dismissal	No improvement since Academic Probation OR Missed 20% or more of classes at ANY point in the session OR Received final grade of UW, D or F OR No significant progress after 3 semesters	ALP does not want you in the program. You must leave immediately. If you are in University housing, you must move out. You cannot return to the ALP in future. F-1 Student Visa holders: your SEVIS record and I-20 will be terminated. You need to leave the US immediately.

*Significant progress = a level promotion at the end of the semester. Two semesters = Fall + Spring or Spring + Fall. [ALP summer is considered different because of the shorter sessions, and because the main focus is not a level promotion. However, grades and level may be taken into consideration for students studying the full summer: ABC or A+AAP.] If there is no significant progress in the third semester, the student may be asked to **withdraw** or may face **Academic Dismissal**. Making progress with your English is very important. Students on F-1 Student Visas are required to show they are making regular progress in their studies.

Academic Dismissal means that the student is required to leave the University and may not enroll in any future courses at the American Language Program. The dismissal will remain on the student’s permanent University record and may affect future acceptance into any other program at Columbia University. A student may be dismissed at any point in the semester.

At any time, a student may be placed on Academic Probation and may face Academic Dismissal if the student demonstrates disrespect for University behavioral standards and academic discipline.

3. Grading

Summer Intensive courses (A, B, C) have a “Pass/Fail Only” designation in the University Registrar’s system.

ALP registrants in summer **Advanced Academic Preparation (AAP)** have the choice of **Letter Grade** or **Pass/Fail**.

Some ALP courses have a “Letter Grade Only” designation in the University Registrar’s system. The ALP courses for which a letter grade is the only option are:

- English for Professional Purposes: SIPA (EPP: SIPA)
- Advanced Academic English for Graduate Students (AAEGS)

For students taking AAP, AAEGS and EPP: SIPA an explanation of ALP letter grades:

A = excellent; exceeds Student Learning Objectives for the level; grade of 90-100

B= good; masters Student Learning Objectives for the level; grade of 80-89

C = fair; partially masters Student Learning Objectives for the level; grade of 70-79

D = poor but passing; shows little or no mastery of Student Learning Objectives; grade of 50-69

F = failing; has failed to meet attendance, work, and/or progress requirements for the class

UW = unofficial withdrawal; has not attended any teacher’s class for 2 weeks or more, without explanation.

Letter grade is the default (normal) setting - teachers always submit a letter grade. However, if students want Pass/Fail, they have to formally choose to do so by completing a [Registration Adjustment Form](#).

Approval is required to make the change. Talk to the ALP Advisor for help with the process. After the switch, the letter grade submitted by the teacher will be automatically changed to Pass/Fail by the Registrar.

Check the [Academic Calendar](#) for the deadline to submit a Pass/Fail request.

Non-ALP registrants (in GS, CC, SEAS, GSAS, Law, Business, SIPA etc.) must take their ALP course(s) for a Letter Grade Only, with the exceptions for “Pass/Fail Only” courses listed above. Non-ALP registrants must take Letter Grade Only if they are in:

- Academic Writing

Visit the SPS website for more information on grades for [more information on grades](#).

4. Levels

The ALP has 8 levels of instruction. Level 2 is pre-intermediate ability and level 9 is advanced. A student who reaches level 10 has completed the program.

ALP Level	Level Description	Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)
2	Pre-intermediate	A2
3	Intermediate	B1.1
4		B1.2
5		B1.3
6	High intermediate	B2.1
7		B2.2
8	Advanced	C1
9		C2.1

For complete information on all ALP levels and student achievement, check the Canvas site for your class (left menu, 'Student Achievement Scale')

5. Placement

Student placement is initially determined by scores on the Oxford Online Test (OOPT).

Your teachers will check your placement during the first week of class and recommend adjustments if needed, and if the levels permit.

6. Level Promotions

Promotion decisions are based solely on each student's proficiency in the various language skills. In general, oral fluency and listening comprehension are the most important skills to consider at the lower levels, while writing becomes increasingly critical from Level 5 or 6 upward. (Promotion decisions are not based on a student's effort, attitude, attendance, or participation, which tend not to be good indicators of the student's ability to handle the academic challenges of a particular level.)

A "typical" promotion in the intensive program is considered to be one full level (4b to 5b, for example) after 14 weeks of solid progress. For part-time students in the 6-point program, Academic Writing for International Students, a full-level promotion is possible, but anything more than that is exceptional.

There are no level promotions after individual four-week sessions. It is not enough time to make progress to handle a new level

Students who have completed A+B+C (12 weeks) may be eligible for a level promotion. Promotions (if any) will be based on a final exam and instructor recommendation. This is the only way students can receive a full level promotion. Students taking Advanced Academic Preparation may receive a level promotion if they choose to take the optional Qualifying Exam, but this is not the main aim of the course, and there is no guarantee enough progress will be made to receive a level promotion after only 8 weeks.

Sometimes students need more time at a particular level in order to receive a promotion and to make progress - this is particularly the case in the upper levels of our program, where the standard required for promotion is very high. This means repeating a level may be necessary. The ALP understands that every learner is different, and works to support

students who need more time at a level. Repeating a level once is not uncommon. Repeating a level two or three times is cause for concern - see the section on, 'Good Standing'. Note for F-1 student visa holders in the ALP Intensive: regular progress is required for you to maintain good status.

7. Program Completion

1. Intensive language program applicants who, upon arrival at the ALP, test into ALP Level 10 may study for one term only in the highest intensive level available at that time; normally, this is a class at Level 8-9.
2. Students who are taking the Fall or Spring ALP Intensive Program or part-time Academic Writing course at Level 7, 8, or 9, and who are not current Columbia degree candidates must take the ALP's end-of-term Qualifying Exam to be considered for a level promotion. The promotion score on that exam will determine the ALP level the student may take in the subsequent term of study.
3. Columbia University degree candidates referred to the ALP for language instruction in the ALP Intensive Program or part-time Academic Writing course regardless of current level must take the ALP's end-of-term Qualifying Exam. The promotion score on that exam will determine whether the student has met the English proficiency requirement set by his or her degree program, or whether a subsequent term or terms of study will be required.
4. Students who are promoted to ALP Level 10 at the end of an intensive class have completed the ALP program. This is a great achievement and demonstrates a very high level of English proficiency. Students who have completed our program may not repeat intensive level 8-9 in fall and spring, but may be permitted to take summer intensive and/or AAP classes.

8. Placement or Promotion Appeal Policy

Initial Placement into ALP Classes

- Placement into ALP classes is double-checked by course instructors during the first week of classes.
- Official re-assignment of level is done only by the Director in consultation with the lead instructor for the course.
- Students who believe they are in the wrong level should speak with their instructors.
- Changes of level are not possible beyond the first week of classes.

End-of-Term Course Promotions

- End-of-Term promotions are the product of careful consultation among faculty members and are based on work done throughout the semester and final exams.
- Only in the most unusual of circumstances may appeals be made to the ALP Director by email, and then only within one week of the student receiving official notification of results.

9. Academic Advising

The ALP can help you if you have questions about your studies.

Advising about your English studies:

Your teachers know most about your abilities in English. We first recommend you talk to them if you have questions, or would like extra help.

If you have other questions or would like more advice about your English learning and your classes at the ALP, please make an appointment to talk with the Director, Mary Pickett: mp3045@columbia.edu.

Advising about going to university in the U.S.:

If you have questions about applying to university in the US, we are happy to help you. Please contact Jana Quigley, Assistant Director of Student Life, to make an appointment: jmq2107@columbia.edu.

10. Academic Dishonesty

Columbia University expects students to act honestly. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be accepted and will result in serious action.

Because the School of Professional Studies takes matters of intellectual honesty very seriously, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Cheating on examinations, including the American Language Program placement test.
- Making up (inventing) information in any course or laboratory work.
- Misrepresenting (giving incorrect information) about one's academic record at Columbia or elsewhere.
- Plagiarizing (copying) another's work or one's own, including the submission of work prepared by or purchased (bought) from another.
- Helping others in plagiarism.
- Lying in connection with any academic matter, including applications for admission or financial aid.
- Creating, changing or misusing University documents.
- Improperly using libraries or the materials they contain.

Academic misconduct carries severe penalties. Plagiarism (copying someone else's writing, or your own writing), whether intentional or not, can result in a failing grade on the assignment and in the course. For degree candidates, this could mean immediate dismissal from their program of study. The ALP takes plagiarism very seriously and it is always addressed, but the program's role in helping international students understand U.S. educational norms means that our approach does not usually lead to dismissal in the first instance.

Ignorance of (not knowing) the School's policy concerning academic dishonesty is not a defense in any situation. The American Language Program and the School of Professional Studies hold each member of the community responsible for understanding these rules and for following them.

11. Disciplinary Charges

Students who have concerns about a student's behavior, specifically about his/her academic integrity, can submit a report online to the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#).

For students found guilty of academic dishonesty or misconduct, the sanctions (punishment) range from warning to probation (given a trial period to improve), suspension (must leave school for a period of months), or dismissal (must leave school permanently).

The student may appeal the decision in writing within two weeks. Appeals concerning suspension or dismissals must be addressed to the Dean of the School; all other appeals should be addressed to the Committee on Academic Standing.

For more information regarding disciplinary hearing procedures see the [Standards and Discipline document](#).

Academic Integrity Pledge

Every ALP student signs the Academic Integrity Pledge in Canvas at the beginning of each session.

Columbia University | School of Professional Studies

Columbia University expects students to act with honesty and proper behavior and to respect the rights of others at all times, both on campus and off. Any academic dishonesty in any form, or any personal behavior that disrupts the life of the University or hurts members of the University community will not be accepted and will result in serious action. Because the School of Professional Studies takes matters of intellectual honesty very seriously, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. It is punishable by suspension or dismissal from the School.

Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating on examinations**, including the American Language Program Placement test.
- **Making up** (inventing) information in any course or laboratory work.
- **Misrepresenting** (giving incorrect information) about one's academic record at Columbia or elsewhere.
- **Plagiarizing** (copying) another's work or one's own, including the submission of work prepared by or purchased (bought) from another.
- **Helping others in plagiarism.**
- **Lying** in connection with any academic matter, including applications for admission or financial aid.
- **Creating, changing or misusing** University documents.
- **Improperly using** libraries or the materials they contain. The School also prohibits behavior that interferes with the operation of the University or with the activities of other members of the University community. Examples of these behaviors include but are not limited to:
 - **Smoking** in any indoor area and any area with signage indicating that smoking is prohibited.
 - **Harassing** (annoying) or **intimidating** (scaring) others.
 - **Making rude, abusive, or insulting comments** about another person's gender (male/female), race (skin color), nationality/culture, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.
 - **Interfering** with research or instruction.
 - **Improperly using** (not using correctly) University services, equipment, or facilities, including University e-mail and telephones.
- **Failing to follow** (not following) a legitimate order of the University authority.

Academic and behavioral misconduct carry severe punishment. Plagiarism (copying someone else's writing or one's own writing), whether or not it is intentional, results in a failing grade on the assignment and in the course. For degree candidates in the School of Professional Studies, it also means immediate dismissal from their program of study. Students enrolled through other divisions of the University, if accused of any of the offenses mentioned above, may be referred to their home schools for disciplinary hearing and possible suspension or dismissal.

Ignorance of (not knowing) the School's policy concerning academic dishonesty is not a defense in any situation. The American Language Program and the School of Professional Studies hold each member of the community responsible for understanding these rules and for following them.

By signing your name on the pledge, you state that you have read and understood the document, and intend to honor the principles of the academic integrity central to the Columbia University community.

Academic Resources

1. Canvas

You can find everything related to your course on Columbia University's course management platform [Canvas](#). Take a tour of Canvas [here](#).

You can also access Canvas by searching for it on the homepage of the [Columbia University website](#). To log into Canvas, use your UNI and password.

Canvas is also where you can find links to your Zoom classes. If you need help with Zoom, find the **Help** or **Call Us** link in Canvas to talk to someone.

2. Technical Support

If you are having trouble with LionMail, your UNI or password, you can contact CUIT:

- Call 212-854-1919 or
- Submit a ticket to the [Service Desk](#)

3. Libraries

Columbia University Library is ranked as one of the five best academic library systems in the United States. It has 22 specialized libraries with over 10 million volumes and 100,000 current journals. Columbia's libraries have converted over 40% of their content to digital. [Visit their website](#) for access to books, magazines, academic journals, and music.

4. Your Academic Record

Proof of Enrollment

Sometimes students need to prove (show) that they are a student at the ALP. There are three ways to do this:

(1) Academic Certification

Academic certification shows dates of attendance and student status (full-time or part-time) by term. Students usually need this for health insurance, visa, employment and credit reasons. This service is free. Click [here](#) for information about requesting an academic certification. You can make a request for academic certification by going to [Student Services Online](#) (SSOL) and logging in with your UNI.

(2) Official Columbia Transcript

A transcript is an official record of a student's entire time of study at Columbia. It shows all the courses you attended at the University and your grades. You may need this if you are applying to undergraduate or graduate school in the US.

You can make a request for a transcript by going to [Student Services Online](#) (SSOL) and logging in with your UNI.

(3) Enrollment Certification Letter

An enrollment certification letter is a special letter written by the ALP Immigration Officer. It notes your status as a full-time student and gives the start and end dates of the ALP session for which you are registered. You may need this to apply for a driver's license or open a U.S. bank account before classes begin.

If you need an Enrollment Certificate letter, please contact Tomasz Tuleja at tt2422@columbia.edu. Your letter will be ready in 1-2 business days. This service is free.

Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows you to keep your student record (your courses and grades) private. While parents/guardians/spouses/sponsor organizations and others may have an interest in your record, Columbia University will not release your educational record to them unless you agree in writing. Students may choose to complete and submit a “FERPA Release Form” to allow access or release of their educational record. You may request a FERPA Release form from alp-advising@columbia.edu. Once submitted, the form is kept on file at the Student Life Office. Additional information may be found at the [U.S Department of Education website](#).

Connecting to Columbia and NYC

Although we are all at home, it's still possible to create a community and to get involved with activities at Columbia.

1. ALP Activities and Workshops

The ALP offers virtual activities and workshops so that students can connect, make friends, practice English and try new things together. Check your email and the ALP Student Life Canvas site, and listen for announcements from your teachers.

2. Columbia University Events

Even during remote learning, there are a variety of Columbia events and lectures students can attend virtually. Topics range from Climate Change to International Politics. For a calendar of events, see the [Columbia events page](#). Be sure to check if RSVP is required.

3. Virtual Tours at NYC Museums

Right now, many museums are offering free “virtual tours.”

Examples of NYC museums you can “visit” from your home:

[Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)

[Museum of Modern Art](#)

[Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum](#)

[Whitney Museum of Art](#)

[The Frick Collection](#)

[The Met Cloisters](#)

[American Museum of Natural History](#)

4. Religious Communities

Columbia University is a secular university, not a religious one. However, there is a diverse religious community at Columbia, and Campus Ministries provides ways for students to get involved in various religious groups. For information on connecting remotely with a faith community this summer, visit their [website](#).

Religious advisors are available for counseling and care. Email chaplain@columbia.edu or eb3334@columbia.edu to make a virtual appointment.

Community Standards of Behavior

1. Cell Phone and Social Media Policy

The ALP requires that all students switch their cell phones to 'silent' or 'off' during class time. The no cell phone policy applies to texting, email, calls and social media. It is disrespectful to use your cell phone while in class. Your instructors will ask you to put it away.

2. Behavioral Standards

Columbia University expects students to behave properly and to respect the rights of others at all times, both on campus and off. Any personal behavior that disrupts the life of the University or hurts members of the University community will not be accepted and will result in serious action.

The School prohibits behavior that interferes with the operation of the University or with the activities of other members of the University community. Examples of these behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Harassing (annoying) or intimidating (scaring) others.
- Making rude, abusive, or insulting comments about another person's gender (male/ female), race (skin color), nationality/ culture, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Interfering with research or instruction.
- Improperly using (not using correctly) University services, equipment, or facilities, including University e-mail and telephones.
- Failing to follow (= not following) a legitimate order of a University authority. Behavioral misconduct carries severe punishment.

3. Protection against Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Columbia University is committed to providing a learning, living, and working environment free from discrimination, harassment and gender-based and sexual misconduct.

The university and government take complaints about sexual harassment and discrimination (based on race, national origin, religion, disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected status) very seriously. It provides students who believe that they have experienced conduct or behavior of this kind with ways to report it and complain.

If you believe that someone has acted inappropriately towards you, you can [report it online](#).

This includes:

- Sexual harassment or misconduct by a student or University employee
- Discrimination (i.e. age, race, nationality, religion, disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected status) by a student or a University employee

Your report will be reviewed and referred to the appropriate University office.

Gender-Based Misconduct Office

[Sexual misconduct complaints](#)

For more information, read the [Gender-Based Misconduct Policies for Students](#)

Dean's Discipline Process

All other student-based discrimination complaints follow the [Dean's Discipline Process](#). The Associate Dean of Student Affairs for the School of Professional Studies will investigate.

Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

The [EOAA](#) office handles complaints relating to, and made by, University employees.

For more information, read the [Employment Policy and Procedures on Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking](#).

If you file a formal complaint saying, for example, that someone touched you inappropriately or treated you differently because of your race, there will be an investigation by campus agencies.

Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against any student or employee who violates the University's policies against harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct.

Please talk to the ALP Advisor or your teachers if you have questions or concerns. Note: Columbia University employees have a 'Duty to Report'. This means if you tell your teacher or the Advisor that something bad has happened to you, we must report it. We cannot keep it a secret. This is to keep you safe.

Columbia offers several confidential resources to students who believe they were subjected to discrimination, harassment or gender-based or sexual misconduct.

Counseling and Psychological Services	(212) 854-2878
Sexual Violence Response Support Center	(212) 854-HELP
Office of the University Chaplain	(212) 854-6242
Medical Services	(212) 854-2284

4. More Essential Policies for the Columbia Community

[Essential Policies for the Columbia Community](#) lists Columbia University policies on a broad range of topics, including policies about attendance, alcohol and drugs and leaves of absence. As a member of the Columbia University community, you are responsible for following the University's policies, as well as local, state and federal laws. These policies are in place so that all members of the Columbia community can safely and successfully focus on studies and take part in campus life.

Complaints

We hope that your time at Columbia is productive and enjoyable. If you are not satisfied, please tell us. We will try to make it right.

If you have a problem with your class, talk first to your instructor. If required, you can then contact Mary Pickett, ALP Director, at mp3045@columbia.edu

If you have a non-academic problem, please contact Jana Quigley, Assistant Director of ALP Student Life, at jmq2107@columbia.edu. You will be directed to the right person.

Usually, a meeting will solve the problem. If, however, you are still not satisfied after your meeting, you may make a formal complaint in writing.

Students who are facing roommate issues are encouraged to email residential@columbia.edu if they would like to resolve conflicts through mediation.

To make all other complaints, write to: Mary Pickett, ALP Director (mp3045@columbia.edu)

Your complaint must include full details, including names of any people involved (if applicable). The complaint will be reviewed and you will receive a response within 24 hours. Further action, if and when necessary, will be taken by the University within 7 days.

Columbia Health Fee

NOTE: This section is only for students studying 8 points or more. Skip this section if you are only studying 4 weeks.

Any student studying 8 points or more will be charged the \$300 **Columbia Health Fee** (whether you are on campus or remote). This includes:

- Summer AB, BC, AC, and ABC
- Advanced Academic Preparation

The Columbia Health Fee allows students to access Medical Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, Disability Services and Alice Health Promotion at no additional cost, wherever they are in the world.

1. Feeling sick?

If you have paid the Columbia Health Fee, you can call Columbia Medical Services to talk to a doctor/nurse if you are feeling sick: (212) 854-7426.

If you live in the US: In the US, *people only go to the hospital when they have an emergency*. The Emergency Room is a very expensive way to see a doctor. **So, if it's not an emergency, call Medical Services first.** They will tell you if you need to see a specialist (= a doctor who can help with particular problems) or get other help.

2. Counseling & Psychological Services

Counseling and Psychological Services supports the psychological and emotional well-being of all Columbia students with counseling and crisis intervention. In the US, it is very normal to talk to a counselor, and there is no shame or disgrace about doing it. Many people see psychologists or psychiatrists, and they can be very helpful.

If you are sad, depressed, anxious, cannot concentrate, have trouble sleeping, and/or have changed your eating habits, you may want to talk with a counselor. Anything you tell the counselor is strictly confidential; s/he cannot tell anyone without your consent. In some cases, a counselor in your native language may be available. To learn more, watch their informative [video](#).

Students can also join workshops with topics such as self-care and dealing with anxiety. A list of events is [here](#).

3. Office of Disability Services

If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). They help students with accommodations or support services for any disability. If you have documentation of a learning disability, you may be permitted to get extra time on exams. If you think that you may have a learning disability, ODS can schedule a consultation or diagnostic testing and help you find a provider. Talk to Jana Quigley for more help.

Throughout the semester, Disability Services provides several workshops in the areas of study skills, note-taking, test preparation and time management for students with disabilities. Contact: disability@columbia.edu

4. Alice! Health Promotion

Alice! Health Promotion connects students with information and resources on many topics involved health and well-being. You can ask questions confidentially about things you want to learn more about, such as eating disorders, coping with stress, or sexual health. Contact: alice@columbia.edu or (212) 854-5453.

Medical Insurance

NOTE: This section is only for new transfer I-20 students living on campus AND studying 8 points or more. Skip this section if you are only studying for 4 weeks or if you are in your home country.

1. Medical Insurance Requirements

ALP students living on campus and taking 8 points or more are required to have **Columbia Medical Insurance** and pay the **Columbia Health Fee**. This includes:

- Summer AB, BC, AC, and ABC
- Advanced Academic Preparation

If you are NOT living on campus and/or you are only taking a 4-week class, you are not required to have **Columbia Medical Insurance** or pay the **Columbia Health Fee**. This includes:

- Summer A only, B only, or C only

Columbia Medical Insurance helps pay for visiting specialist doctors off campus (outside of Columbia Health), for hospital stays, and for prescription drugs. The Columbia plan is managed by **Aetna Student Health**. For more information on benefits and claims [visit their website](#).

It is not possible to waive (=not pay) the **Columbia Medical Insurance** unless you are sponsored by the Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission (SACM). Students must submit a waiver request before the deadline. Students who do not submit a waiver request before the enrollment deadline will be charged for Columbia Medical Insurance. Students who waive Columbia insurance must still pay the Columbia Health Fee.

Columbia Medical Insurance charges will automatically be added to your first **E-bill**. If your waiver request is accepted, the insurance charge will be removed from your account.

2. Columbia Student Medical Insurance Cards

You need your medical insurance card to prove (show) you have health insurance when you visit a doctor.

Aetna Student Health will not send you your Columbia medical insurance card. It is available online after you confirm your enrollment. To print your card, visit the [Aetna Student Health website](#), choose Columbia University, click Morningside Students, and enter your UNI and birthdate.

ALP Visa & Immigration

NOTE: This section is only for students with an I-20. Skip this section if you are in your home country this session.

1. Overview

The Office

The Office of Immigration Advising provides immigration services for new and returning ALP students. It can help with requests for student visas and with questions about maintaining your status. It can also help with questions about travel abroad, extension of study, transfers and immigration obligations while you are a student at Columbia's ALP.

Contact

Telephone: 212-854-3586, E-mail: alpvisa@columbia.edu

Visit the [ISSO website](#) for helpful information for international students.

Maintaining visa status is your job

You must take full personal responsibility for learning about and following the law.

The ALP must tell the government if you withdraw from the program, stop coming to class, register for part-time instead of full-time study, or simply do not register at all.

Being “out of status” is serious — You may be deported and it may be difficult to return to the United States in the future.

The ALP takes your visa status, and your studies, very seriously. The program will track if you are attending regularly, and if you are making satisfactory progress with your English. These are requirements for maintaining your F1 status. For more information on attendance and progress requirements, see the “Academic Matters” section of the handbook.

You must complete the online SEVIS check-in form at the beginning of the session.

2. While You are Studying at the ALP

Update your SEVIS information at the beginning of each session. You must give us your new address every time you move. Update your address using your [Compass account](#).

If you don't give us the information to keep your SEVIS record up to date, you may be deported or may have problems getting another visa in the future.

Keep all of your I-20s the whole time you are in the U.S.

Keep your passport valid. Always make sure that your passport is valid for at least six months into the future. If your passport will expire in six months or less, contact your country's consulate in New York or its embassy in Washington, DC for help.

Extend your I-20 before it expires. If you want to continue at the ALP beyond the end date on your I-20, you must extend your I-20 before it expires using your [Compass account online](#). Please use the 'Extend your I-20' link on the website. Remember that all extensions require you to provide new financial documents. A new bank statement and sponsor letter template are available on the website.

3. If You Want to Leave and Come Back

Avoid trouble if you need to travel outside the U.S. during the time that you are a student here:

- 1) have your I-20 re-certified before you leave the country
- 2) carry your I-20 with you when you travel
- 3) carry your financial documents with you when you travel

Avoid problems during vacation. After you have studied full-time for a minimum of 6 months in a row, you have the option of taking a vacation during which you may remain in the United States without studying if and only if you will be returning to the ALP after your vacation. You must notify the ALP International Student Advisor that you will be on vacation so that your SEVIS records can be updated. Whenever you travel outside New York, be sure to have your passport and your original I-94 with you—as well as a re-certified I-20 if you plan to leave and re-enter the country.

4. When You Finish Your Studies at the ALP

Leave the U.S. within 60 days after your studies are completed. When you finish studying at the ALP, you have 60 days to leave the United States, to transfer to another school, or to change to another immigration status. If you stay in the U.S. longer than 60 days after you have finished studying, you will be considered out of status and may have problems returning to this country in the future.

Leave the U.S. within 15 days if you withdraw from the program before the end of the course. You can withdraw during a course if you are planning to return to your home country immediately. We will report the withdrawal to SEVIS.

5. If You Wish to Transfer out to Another Institution or Withdraw

Follow the procedures listed below to transfer the supervision of your visa/status to another institution:

1. If you registered for ALP courses this session, but wish to withdraw from the ALP this session:

See page 9 for complete instructions on withdrawal procedures.

2. If you are registered for ALP courses this session, but wish to transfer out to another school this semester:

Choose the 'Transfer-out Request' link [here](#). Follow the instructions on the page and upload the necessary documents in support of your transfer.

3. If you have completed ALP courses this session, but wish to transfer out to another school:

Click [here](#) and choose the 'Transfer-out request' link on the website. To complete your transfer, you will need to upload: a) Admission Letter from your new school, b) Transfer-in Form from the school to which you wish to transfer. Your transfer will be processed within 7 business days upon successful submission of your request via Compass.

6. Important Terms You Should Know

SEVIS – The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is an internet-based government system that keeps track of international students, scholars, and their dependents. SEVIS communicates with schools and universities, U.S. Embassies and Consulates, airports and other ports of entry into the U.S., the Immigration Service (USCIS), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I-20 – The I-20 (also called the certificate of visa eligibility or visa certificate) is created by schools and universities through SEVIS. Your I-20 and electronic updates in SEVIS are permanent records of your activities as a student in the U.S.

F-1 Visa – The U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad gives you your visa and stamps it into your passport. Visas are never issued or extended by schools or universities. After you are in the U.S., it does not matter if your visa expires; permission for you to be in the U.S. will remain current for the whole time written on your I-20, if you are attending classes on a full-time basis, and if you are registered in SEVIS each term. If your visa has not expired and then you leave the country, you may use it to return. If your visa expires while you are here and then you leave the country, you will need a new visa in order to return. You will need to apply again at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for a new visa.

I-94 is your most important immigration document because, together with your valid I-20, it proves that you are in this country legally. The notation “D/S,” which means “duration of status” refers to the period during which you may remain in the U.S. on your current I-20. The I-94 is also a record of your arrivals and departures. NOTE: To print your I-94 go to this link: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html>.

7. Some Helpful Resources

You may visit the following websites if you wish to learn more about U.S. immigration regulations. These links may change at any time. Please contact the ALP if you have trouble finding these sites.

- U.S. embassies/consulates abroad:
http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/info/info_3830.html www.usembassy.gov/
- Fees for visa services:
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/information/fees.html>
- Visa denials:
<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/denials.html>
- US-VISIT:
www.dhs.gov/files/programs/usv.shtm
- Department of Homeland Security:
www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/
- The United States Citizen and Immigration Services:
www.uscis.gov/
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement:
www.ice.gov
- Study in the States website for prospective and current international students:
<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>