



STUDENT HANDBOOK

AMERICAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

504 Lewisohn Hall

Website: sps.columbia.edu/alp

Contact us: 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 with us this session.

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

The ALP offers a unique educational and cultural experience. You are studying at an Ivy League university on a beautiful and historic campus here in Manhattan, and we hope you will make the most of your time with us. You can of course expect to study hard, but we also try to build a community to connect students that we hope you will be part of. Furthermore, you are living in an amazing city with so much to see and do. While we of course hope you will study hard, we also hope you will explore New York and learn what an incredible city it is.

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, how to participate in activities at the University this semester and how to make the most of facilities on and around campus.

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. Instructors in the U.S. 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

- 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. 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.
- Expect your teacher to correct your English. Making mistakes is okay – it's part of learning! Your teachers will correct your speaking and pronunciation and also your writing. They will help you to identify your most common grammatical errors so you can learn to correct them yourself.

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. 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 or three teachers. They work closely together to plan the course. Every day you will have at least one class, and sometimes you will have two. Our classes have a 'university style' schedule – this means you may have classes at different times each day, rather than the same time every day.

Books

In Fall and Spring, some levels will use textbooks, some will not. You can expect to spend up to \$150 on books if your class is using them. You can purchase the books in the Columbia Bookstore in Lerner Hall – or online if you prefer. Your instructors will tell you which ones to buy during the first week. You should have your textbooks with you for all classes. You might use several books within a two or three-hour class. In summer our courses do not use textbooks.

Columbia University

You are studying at an Ivy League university. This offers you many opportunities from world-class libraries to interesting public lectures. Go to campus events; interact with other students in campus cafes and the fitness center; join clubs to experience American college life. There are details about activities and much more in this handbook, and make sure you check email to find out what is happening around campus.

New York

You are in one of the most exciting cities in the world! There is so much to see, do and experience. We hope you will expand your learning beyond the campus. Your teachers will help you learn about US customs and NY culture, and as a class, you may make a field trip. As a Columbia student, you can receive discounts at movie theaters, concert halls, restaurants, and get free admission into many museums. Look for some suggestions later in this handbook. Enjoy your time in the city that never sleeps (but don't forget to study too!)

Week One: Have you completed this checklist?

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

1. Get/revalidate your Columbia ID card
2. Start checking your Columbia email regularly, and learn your UNI and Password
3. Add Your Emergency Contacts in SSOL
4. Update your local mailing address in SSOL
5. Complete SEVIS registration (if you are an F-1 student)
6. Submit your Pre-Registration Immunization Form (if you have not already done so)
7. Confirm your enrollment in the Columbia University Medical Insurance plan (Intensive only)

1. Your Columbia ID Card

New Students

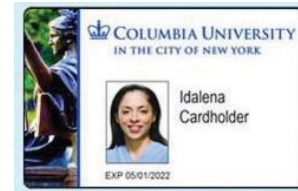
On arrival at the ALP, you will be given your student ID card. This is your official university identification card. Most new students will receive their ID at orientation. If you do not receive your card at this time, the ALP's Admissions Advisor, Joel, (jc3303@columbia.edu) will help you get it.

ID Center

111A Uris (temporary home for summer)

(212) 854-5883

Monday-Friday: 9:00-5:00



You can use the card to:

- access university buildings
- use university libraries (see page 27)
- get FREE or discounted admission to museums and galleries (see page 29)

Note: the number on the back of the card is NOT your Student ID number. See 'Payment Procedures' below to find out your Columbia ID number.

Continuing Students

In week one, stop by the ALP office to get a new sticker for your card to show that you are a current student. This "revalidates" your ID.

Don't lose your ID card! You will need to pay \$20 to get a new one!

2. Start checking your Columbia email, and learn your UNI and Password

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.

You should already have “activated” (= started) your UNI and email account before you arrive at Columbia, but if not, instructions are in the Welcome Packet in Slate. Ask us if you need help.

The university will ONLY use your Columbia email account to contact you, not your personal email address.

SET UP EMAIL ON A MOBILE DEVICE

To access your Columbia email on your phone, follow the instructions on the [CUIT website](#).

LEARN YOUR UNI AND PASSWORD

You will need your UNI and password to access all University systems. Learn both of them!

And make sure you have [Duo Mobile](#) on your phone (‘push’ notifications are easiest). You will need it every day!

HAVE A PROBLEM WITH EMAIL, UNI OR PASSWORD?

- Call the [CUIT Service Desk](#) at (212) 854-1919
- [Submit a ticket to the Service Desk](#)
- [Make an in-person appointment](#) at the CUIT Walk-In Center in 202 Philosophy Hall.

3. Add Your Emergency Contacts

It is very important to list emergency contacts in Student Services Online ([SSOL](#)). This is the only way Columbia can contact “next of kin” (= family, friend, guardian) in an emergency.

To add this information:

1. Log into [SSOL](#) using your UNI and password.
2. Click the “**Addresses**” column on the left.
3. Under “Other Contact Information,” add “**Emergency Contact Address.**”
4. Add “**Next of Kin Address.**”
5. Add “**Missing Student Contact Address.**”

In an emergency, Columbia is ONLY able to contact the people you list here, so please complete it fully.

4. Update Your Local Mailing Address

As an international student, you **must** update SSOL with your **local New York home address and phone number**.

To update your local address in SSOL:

1. Log into [SSOL](#) using your UNI and password.
2. In the “**Your Data**” column on the right, click “**Address: View and Update**”. Your Permanent Address is listed here.
3. If your Local Address is different from your Permanent Address, click on “**Add Local Address**” in the “**Other Contact Information**” section.
4. Complete the form and click “**Submit**”.

5. 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](#). To report your arrival, you will need to

1. Log in to [Compass](#) using your UNI and your password.
2. Complete the registration form

3. 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 12 for more important visa information regarding students with an I-20.

Contact

Email alpvisa@columbia.edu if you have questions. You can also visit the ALP Office, but our visa officer, Tomasz, is remote or in a different office on some days, so it is best to email first.

6. Submit Your Pre-Registration Immunization Form (If You Have Not Already Done So)

All ALP students must follow the Columbia Health office's requirements for immunization. There are two New York State requirements:

1. All students must show proof of **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination**.
2. All students must decide if they want vaccination against meningococcal meningitis. This vaccination is not required, but you **ARE** required to **certify (=show) your meningitis decision** to the University.

You should have completed these requirements before arrival at Columbia and submitted the [Pre-Registration Immunization Form](#) in the [student patient portal](#) under "Upload Immunization Files."

If these items are not complete, you will need to take action during the first week of classes. We cannot register you for classes if you are not compliant.

Meningitis Decision

To certify your meningitis decision you will choose the following options:

- Yes, you will get the vaccination. **If you choose yes, you must submit vaccination documentation.**
 - No, you decline the vaccination
- OR
- You already have it. **If you already have it, you must submit official vaccination documentation in English.**

If you are not sure you have had the meningitis vaccination or if you do not have the proper documentation, and you do not want to get it now, **choose "I decline."**

Results

Columbia Health will update your patient portal. MMR and Meningitis need to be 'green' and compliant. If you are 'red' and not compliant, they will send you a message with information on what is missing. Check your messages in the portal to stay updated on your status.

If Columbia Health does not approve your MMR documentation, you can make an appointment with Medical Services in John Jay Hall (212-854-7426) for MMR dose 1 or 2, or for a blood (titer) test that can check for MMR immunity. **Note: You will have to pay \$180 for this.**

For more information see here: [Immunization Requirements](#)

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

All Intensive ALP students are required to have Columbia Medical Insurance. Visit [Columbia Health](#) for details. Log onto [Student Services Online](#), click "Miscellaneous, then "Health Insurance Enrollment." Follow the instructions to enroll.

Students with comparable U.S. health insurance can submit an exception request to remove the Columbia medical insurance plan. Do this in the [student patient portal](#) before the enrollment deadline. **Note: if you do not submit an exception you will be charged health insurance.**

Medical Insurance

The US health care system is probably very different from the one in your own country. There is no “national” health care system here that the government pays for. Without medical insurance, costs can be very, very expensive.

Medical Insurance Requirements

All Intensive students in the U.S. are required to have **Columbia Medical Insurance**.

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](#).

Students are automatically enrolled in the Columbia plan.

There are no exceptions to the Columbia Medical Insurance requirement unless you 1) are sponsored by Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission (SACM) or 2) have a US-based, Affordable Care Act-compliant plan that meets all of the waiver criteria on the [Columbia Health website](#). Students in one of these two categories must submit an **exception request** in the [patient portal](#) during the first week of classes. Students who do not submit an exception request before the enrollment deadline will be charged for Columbia Medical Insurance. **This charge will not be removed, no exceptions.** Students who do not need Columbia insurance must still pay the Columbia Health Fee.

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

Students who continue from Fall to Spring: Columbia Medical Insurance automatically transfers to the new semester. Students who study in Spring: Columbia Medical Insurance automatically includes Summer.

Columbia Student Medical Insurance Cards

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

Your Columbia medical insurance card from Aetna Student Health will be available online several days after you confirm your enrollment. To print your card, visit the [Aetna Student Health website](#) and click on Get Your ID Card.

Columbia Health & Related Services Fee & Health Resources

All students will be charged **Columbia Health & Related Services Fee**.

The fee you are charged depends on the course you are taking. For health fee rates and dates see the [Columbia Health website](#).

The Columbia Health & Related Services Fee allows students to access the following services for free:

Medical Services

You can call [Columbia Medical Services](#) to talk to a doctor/nurse if you are feeling sick. You do not need to pay; the Columbia Health & Related Services Fee covers the cost. Columbia Medical Services is in John Jay Hall, 4th Floor.

Log into the [patient portal](#) to schedule an appointment.

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm

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.

If you have an emergency on campus, call (212) 854-5555 for Columbia University Emergency Medical Service. If you have an emergency off campus, call 911.

If you need help after Columbia Medical Services is closed, you can

- Call the after-hours clinician: (212) 854-7426
- Visit an urgent care clinic nearby:

Cure Urgent Care

103rd & Broadway
2689 Broadway, New York, NY 10025 (212) 776-4320
Monday-Friday: 8:00am-8:00pm
Saturday-Sunday: 9:00am-8:00pm

CityMD

104th & Broadway
2710 Broadway, New York, NY
10025 (212) 658-0676
Monday-Friday: 8:00am-8:00pm

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 first 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](#).

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.

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

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.

ALP Visa & Immigration

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.

Our main Visa Compliance officer is Tomasz Tuleja.

Contact

Phone: 212-854-3586, email: 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.

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](#). 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. Not letting your I-20 expire is extremely important at the moment, as getting a new I-20, leaving and returning is made more difficult because of the pandemic.

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.

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.

If You Wish to Transfer to Another Institution

To transfer the supervision of your visa/status to another institution you will need to submit a [Transfer out request in Compass](#)

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.

If your ALP classes are not complete and you are transferring during the session you will need to formally withdraw from the program (See [Withdrawal Procedures](#) for complete instructions).

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](#).

Some Helpful Resources

Visit the following websites to learn more about U.S. immigration regulations.

- [U.S. embassies/consulates abroad](#)
- [Visa services, forms, fees and appointment wait times](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [The United States Citizen and Immigration Services](#)
- [Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#)
- [Study in the States website](#) – information for international students

Paying for the ALP

Tuition & Fees

Students are charged tuition and various fees for each session. You can find a full list of tuition and fees on the [ALP website](#).

E-bills

Columbia bills you for tuition, fees, and other charges after the semester starts. You do not need to pay on day one. 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

Temporary location during Fall: 113 Uris Hall

[Online Q&A tool](#)

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 an international 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 more information, visit the [SFS website](#).

4. Tuition Exemption (For Columbia Employees only)

- All Columbia employees must check with their Human Resources benefits officer or their department to see if they are eligible for the University's tuition exemption benefit policies. The School of Professional Studies cannot do

this for you. You may also visit the [HR website](#) for more information.

- If you have tuition exemption, submit your Tuition Exemption form (signed by your supervisor) to tuitionexemption-students@columbia.edu.
- The tuition exemption benefit only covers the course tuition. It does not cover any course fees, such as the materials or instructional fees. You are responsible for making the payment for such fees. Please make these fee payments on time, so that you may avoid any late payment charges. See below for information about the nonrefundable fees.

Withdrawal Procedures

Withdrawals and Drops

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.

Dropping = quitting one class, but keeping others (at the ALP, this generally only happens in summer. A student enrolls for A+B+C but then decides to drop C)

How to Withdraw from the Program

- (1) Contact alp-advising@columbia.edu
- (2) Submit the completed “Notice of Withdrawal” form [online](#).
- (3) Pay the \$75 withdrawal fee in SSOL
- (4) F-1 Student Visa holders: Contact Tomasz Tuleja: alpvisa@columbia.edu to check on your status

You will receive an email confirmation of your withdrawal from the SPS Student Life.

How to Drop an Individual Class or Session

To drop a class or session, contact alp-advising@columbia.edu. We will help you complete a [Registration Adjustment Form](#).

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?

- You will get an Unofficial Withdrawal (UW) grade. This does not look good on your record and may result in academic probation or dismissal.
- You are charged full tuition for the course. You will still need to pay for a course you did not attend.

Refund Policy When Withdrawing

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

Please note that fees such as the Columbia Health & Related Services Fee may not be refunded.

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

ALP Withdrawal and Tuition Refund Schedule

Fall and Spring Semesters	
14-Week Courses	
<i>Withdrawals Received:</i>	<i>will be refunded:</i>
during week 1	100%
during week 2	50%
after week 2	0%

Academic Matters

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. Certificates of Attendance are given to those who attend 90% or more of 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 absent for that hour.

Absences

Students may miss up to 10% of classes without penalty. In Fall and Spring Semesters (14 weeks each) 10% = 25 hours total.

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.

End of Week:	90% attendance - Absent no more than:	End of Week:	Total hours of absences:
1	2 hours	8	14 hours
2	4 hours	9	16 hours
3	5 hours	10	18 hours
4	7 hours	11	20 hours
5	9 hours	12	22 hours
6	11 hours	13	23 hours
7	13 hours	14	25 hours

“Good Standing” in the American Language Program

This chart explains the steps taken when students are not completing work, attending regularly or behaving appropriately in an academic context. Note that 99% of students remain in green ‘OK’ status, and are in ‘good standing’ with the program. We take these matters very seriously to make sure that all students have the best learning experience.

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, AAP) 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 they demonstrate disrespect for University behavioral standards and academic discipline.

Grading

For students taking letter grade courses, an explanation of ALP letter grades:

Grade	Percentage	Meaning
A	90-100%	Exceeds the standard
B	80-89%	Meets standard
C	70-79%	Partially meets the standard
D	50-69%	Does not meet the standard
F	<50%	Does not meet the standard. Limited or no basis for judgment
UW	n/a	Unofficial withdrawal; student has not attended any teacher's class for 2 weeks or more without explanation

ALP registrants in Fall and Spring Intensive and summer Advanced Academic Preparation have the choice of **Letter Grade** or **Pass/Fail**.

Letter grade is the default (normal) setting - teachers always submit a letter grade. However, if students want Pass/Fail, they have to 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.

Some ALP courses have a "Pass/Fail Only" designation in the University Registrar's system. For these courses, it does not matter in which school the student is registered. ALP courses for which P/F is the only option are:

- Listening and Speaking
- ALP Summer A, B, and C
- Winter Institute
- Pronunciation
- English for Professional Purposes: Business

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.

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

Grades and Promotions

Letter Grade	Notes on student achievement in each of the four skill areas: Reading (R), Writing (L), Listening (L), Speaking (S)	Promotion
A+	E's in all four skills: EEEE It means you exceed the outcomes in <i>all</i> skills.	2 level promotion
A	LEVELS 1-5: EEEM, with M in any skill LEVELS 6-9: EEEM, but the M cannot be in W or S You can't get a P in any skill.	1 or 2 level promotion For a 2 level promotion, the 2 EE's must be in W + S
A-	Any combination of EEEM, with M in any skill Or EEMM with E's in W and S You can't get a P in any skill.	1 level promotion
B+	EEMM - with M's in W and/or S Or any combination of EMMM Or MMMM for students at the top end of B (85-89%)	1 level promotion
B	M's in all four skills: MMMM It means you meet the outcomes in all skills.	1 level promotion
B-	MMMP (or EMMP, EMEP etc) with a P in W or S ALL LEVELS: If P is in S, then you <i>may</i> get a promotion, but you will really need to work on your speaking. LEVELS 7-9: If P is W, then there is no level promotion MMPP - but <u>only</u> if you get Ms in W AND S (you cannot get a B- if you get P's in W and S)	LEVEL 1-6: 1 level promotion LEVEL 7-9: 1 level promotion but NOT at level 7+ if P is in W
C+	MMPP with P in either W OR S (not both) You will really need to work on your S or W	No level promotion
C	MMPP, with P in W and/or S PPPM To get a C grade overall you need to get M in at least one skill.	No level promotion
C-	P's in all four skills: PPPP	No level promotion
D	A combination of Ps and Ds	No level promotion

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 Policies, then click on [‘Student Achievement Scale’](#))

Placement

Student placement is initially determined by scores on the Oxford Online Test (OOPT) and/or the ALP Day One Writing Exam or ALP Essay Exam.

The ALP Day One Writing Exam is taken by all new intensive students in fall and spring. It is a 60-minute exam.

Students who are enrolled in or applying to a degree program at Columbia University who have been referred to the ALP by that program may have their placement determined by the ALP Essay Exam. This is a 120-minute writing test.

Your teachers will check your placement during the first week of class and recommend adjustments if needed, and if the levels permit. The only exception to this is students placed by the ALP Essay Exam, whose placement is final.

Level Promotions

Promotion decisions are based only 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 fall and spring intensive program is considered to be one full level (4 to 5, for example) after 14 weeks of solid progress. For part-time students in Academic Writing, a full-level promotion is possible, but anything more than that is rare.

There are no level promotions after individual four-week summer sessions, as it is not enough time to make progress to handle a new level. Students who have completed Summer 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.

Program Completion

1. Intensive language program applicants who, upon arrival at the ALP, test into ALP Level 10 may study for one term 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 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. 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. These classes have different learning outcomes and curricula.
4. Students in the ALP part-time program may continue to take classes after they reach level 10 if they still feel they would like continued English language support.

Placement or Promotion Appeal Policy

Initial Placement into ALP Classes:

- Placement into ALP classes is checked by course instructors during the first week of classes.
- Official level changes are made 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 generally not possible beyond the first full 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 completed 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.

University Credit Courses – Spring and Fall only

ALP students who have reached Level 8 or 9 and who have achieved excellent results in their English classes are eligible to take one Columbia University subject-area course in addition to their intensive English course. The advantages include learning more about a specific subject area; becoming familiar with the American university classroom; practicing skills such as lecture comprehension, note-taking, textbook reading, essay writing; and earning university credit (which in some cases may be applied to a degree program).

University credit courses at Columbia are very challenging. Regular attendance and completion of all assignments are expected, so you need to be very serious and willing to work hard. The final grade (A, B, C, D or F) becomes part of your official University transcript, and a poor grade (even a B-) might hurt your chances of being accepted into a university degree program in the future.

Tuition: University subject-area courses are credit-bearing courses. Some university courses are 3 points, some are 4 points. Thus, tuition is charged at the SPS per point tuition rate and is not included in the ALP tuition. Tuition information can be found on the [Postbaccalaureate Studies website](#).

Restrictions: Please note the following restrictions on university credit classes:

- University credit courses are only available to ALP students who:
 - have already completed at least one full semester in the program.
 - have reached Level 8 or 9.
 - achieve an A- grade or better in the intensive program.
- Students must get a recommendation from their ALP instructor to take a credit class.
- Students can only choose courses that begin after 6:00pm.
- All requests to take university credit courses must be approved by the ALP and SPS. Students should avoid courses in fields such as History or Philosophy that require very advanced writing skills.

ALP students interested in exploring this further should email alp-advising@columbia.edu for an advising appointment.

ALP students interested in taking university credit courses during the Fall semester should apply no later than July, and during the Spring semester no later than November.

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 alp-advising@columbia.edu.

Academic Integrity

Every ALP student signs the *Academic Integrity Pledge* in Canvas at the beginning of each session. Below is the text of the pledge, with explanations.

Columbia University & The 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 phones.
 - **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, this could mean 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.

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.

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.

Disciplinary Charges

Students who have concerns about a student's behavior, specifically about his/her academic integrity, can submit a report online to the [Center for Student Success and Intervention](#).

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 Resources

Bookstore

[Columbia University Bookstore](#), 2922 Broadway at West 115th Street, Alfred J. Lerner Hall, Lower Level
Phone: (212) 854-4131

Store Hours: Monday to Friday: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM; Saturday and Sunday: 11:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Here you can buy your textbooks (as well as sell them back at the end of the semester).

The bookstore sells new and used versions of your textbooks, many other books, stationery, and Columbia University t-shirts, sweatshirts etc. Save your receipts, in case your class level changes during the first week of the semester.

Canvas

You will 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 (and DUO)

If you need help with Canvas, find the **Help** or **Call Us** link to talk to someone.

Computers, Printers and Technical Support



You can find public computers and printers in every library. Use your UNI and password to log in and print, then go to the nearest "Pawprint" printing station and log in again.

Technology Help

If you are having trouble with a computer (Columbia's or your own laptop) or are having Lionmail, UNI or password problems, you can contact CUIT:

- Call the [CUIT Service Desk](#) at (212) 854-1919
- [Submit a ticket to the Service Desk](#) or
- [Make an in-person appointment](#) at the CUIT Walk-In Center in 202 Philosophy Hall.

Printing

- ALP students have \$2 a week for printing in their account.
- You can print in black and white for \$.10 per sheet and in color for \$1.00 per sheet.
- You can purchase more printing dollars at the CUIT Service Desk in 202 Philosophy Hall or [online here](#).

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.

Check the [library's website](#) for each location's hours.

Even with limited English, you can:

- Study in the [undergraduate library](#) 24/7
- Listen to Columbia songs in the [music library](#)
- Look at beautiful art books at the [art library](#)
- Check your investments at the [business library](#)
- Read local Asian newspapers in the [East Asian library](#)
- Examine rare books in the [Rare Books & Manuscripts library](#)
- [Ask a librarian](#) for help with your research

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

Being a Columbia student is more than just attending classes! You can join conferences and other special events that interest you. This is a great way to practice your English while becoming a part of the Columbia community.

ALP Activities

The ALP offers activities and workshops so that students can connect, practice English and work on their goals. Check your email and listen for announcements from teachers. Note that in the Fall semester, our ALP Advisor is on maternity leave. We will still have workshops and some events, but look for SPS and Columbia activities to help you build community and get involved on campus.

SPS and Columbia University Events

Whether you're looking for social, cultural, networking, political or educational events, you can find something happening around campus almost every day. As an ALP student, you are part of the School of Professional Studies, which posts events on the [SPS Engage website](#). Log in with your UNI and password to sign up for what interests you.

For a calendar of university-wide events, see the [Columbia events page](#). Be sure to check if RSVP is required.

Columbia University Clubs

ALP students are welcome to join a number of Columbia University student clubs and organizations.

There are over 100 student clubs and 40 sports clubs on campus where you can meet students who share your interest in music, politics, games, culture etc. It's a great way to practice your English and meet other Columbia students.

For a list of clubs visit the [Lion Clubs](#) page on the Columbia website to find out which will be active this semester.

NYC Museums

You can get into many [NYC museums for free](#) with your student ID. Many museums require timed entry, so check websites for information. Make sure the sticker on your ID is for the current term.

The Africa Center
The American Numismatic Society
The Bronx Museum of the Arts
The Met Cloisters
El Museo del Barrio
International Center of Photography
Japan Society
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MoMA P.S. 1
Museum of Jewish Heritage
Nicholas Roerich Museum
The Paley Center for Media
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
Studio Museum in Harlem

American Folk Art Museum
Asia Society Museum
Center for Brooklyn History
Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute
Goethe-Institute
Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum
The Jewish Museum
The Morgan Library & Museum
Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)
New York Transit Museum
The Noguchi Museum
Queens Museum
Socrates Sculpture Park
The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Gallery

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.

Gym and Sports

The Dodge Physical Fitness Center at Columbia University includes an indoor running track, 25-yard swimming pool, sauna, multi-sport gyms, and a three-level fitness center with cardio and weight-training equipment. Members can also take fitness classes.

All Columbia students have to pay for gym access. For ALP students it is not automatically included as an added fee, so to access the gym students need to join and pay a membership fee. For information about costs, visit the membership office in the gym. ALP students can watch all Columbia sports events, including soccer, American football, and basketball for free with their Columbia ID.

Also check out the local NY sports teams. Depending on the time of year you can catch the Yankees, the Mets, the Knicks, the Nets, the Giants or the Rangers.

Student Discounts

There is so much going on in New York! You can see some of the best theater, dance, music and entertainment in the country, and there are ways to enjoy it without paying full-price:

With your CUID you can:

- Buy discount tickets to Broadway shows from [CU Arts Initiative](#)
- Buy discount movie vouchers for AMC, Regal and Angelika/City Cinemas at [TIC in Lerner Hall](#)
- Buy 'rush' (= last minute) tickets to [New York Philharmonic Orchestra](#), [New York City Ballet](#), and [Carnegie Hall](#) (visit their websites to find out how)

You can also find discount tickets for Broadway and off-Broadway plays and musicals from [TKTS](#) or [Today Tix](#).

Dining

On Campus Options

There are a number of cafés on campus that serve coffee/tea, soup, sandwiches, salads, & snacks. Here are some of them:

- Avery Hall – Café Wallabout
- Dodge Hall – Joe Coffee
- Journalism Building – Up Coffee
- Lerner Hall – Blue Java Café; Café East (Bubble Tea & Sushi)
- Mudd Building – Carleton Deli
- Northwest Corner Building – Joe Coffee - also open during weekends
- Uris Hall – Blue Java Café

You may purchase a meal plan, set up a debit account (also known as “Dining Dollars” and the “Flex Account”), or pay by cash. John Jay Dining Hall offers Kosher and Halal meals, as well as vegan and gluten-free dishes.

For more information about on-campus dining options, see the [Columbia Dining website](#).

Restaurants & Markets in the Neighborhood

Many students prefer to eat in the many cafés and restaurants located in the area. There are many options to choose from. You can choose to dine in or, in most cases take out (or even get a delivery). Below are a few of the possibilities (but there are many others!)

On Broadway—walking south (left) from the 116th St. gate

Morton Williams Market	(groceries and deli) at 115 th
Pret a Manger	(sandwiches, breakfast, coffee) between 115 th and 116 th
Starbucks	(coffee, etc.) between 114 th and 115 th
Sweet Green	(salads) between 114 th and 115 th
Symposium	(Greek restaurant) on 113 th between Broadway & Amsterdam
Milano Market	(Italian deli/café) between 112 th and 113 th
Junzi	(Chinese restaurant) between 112 th and 113 th
Dig Inn	(Local, organic American food) between 112 th and 113 th
Tom’s Restaurant	(diner/American food) at 112 th
Community Food & Juice	(healthy and organic food) between 111 th and
112 th Mel’s Burgers	(burger restaurant) between 111 th and 110 th
Starbucks	(coffee, etc.) between 111 th and 110 th
Chipotle	(burritos) at 110 th
Westside Market	(grocery store) at 110 th

On Amsterdam Ave.—walking south (right) from the 116th St. gate

Hamilton Deli	(sandwiches) at 116 th
Hungarian Pastry Shop	(Café) between 110 th and 111 th
V&T Restaurant	(pizza & Italian) between 110 th and 111 th
Happy Hot Hunan	(Chinese restaurant) between 107 th and 108 th
Thai Market	(Thai restaurant) between 107 th and 108 th

On Amsterdam Ave.—walking north (left) from the 116th St. gate

Apple Tree	(food market) at 120 th
Massawa	(Ethiopian restaurant) between 120 th and 121 st
Max Soha	(Italian restaurant) at 122 nd
Dun Huang	(Chinese hand pulled noodles) between 122 nd and 123 rd

Farmers’ Market on Thursdays & Sundays near 114th St. gate

Restaurant Guidelines

Tippling at Restaurants in NYC

Unless you have a party of 6 or more people, the service charge is not automatically added to restaurant bills. In restaurants, you are expected to tip the waiter or waitress about 20% of the total check. In New York City, you can easily leave the appropriate tip amount by doubling the 8.875% sales tax. Tipping less than 15% is considered very rude. Even for bad service, 20% is considered normal.

In a bar, you are expected to tip around 20%, as you do in a restaurant.

Drinking in NYC

The legal age for buying and drinking alcohol in the US is 21. Many stores, bars and restaurants will “card” you (ask to see

your passport, ID or driver’s license) before they will sell you alcohol – this is normal. Note that it is illegal to have an open container of alcohol in public places, including city parks.

Transport, Shopping and Services

Getting Around

Subway

The subway is the main mode of transportation for New Yorkers. It’s safe and usually quicker than other transport. The 1 local train stops at 116th and Broadway. You can connect to the 2/3 express trains at 96th Street which will get you downtown more quickly. Note: uptown 2/3 trains follow a different route and do not stop at Columbia! Also beware: some local subway stations (example 110th) have a downtown entrance and an uptown entrance. You cannot change platforms after you enter, so make sure you’re going in the right direction! You can pay for the subway by tapping a credit card or your phone.

Bus

The M4, M5, M11, M60 and M104 buses all stop at 116th and Broadway.

The M60 is a direct link to LaGuardia Airport. *Buy your “express” ticket at a kiosk *before* you get on the M60 bus.

Intercampus Shuttle Bus

With a CUID you can take the free Columbia shuttle bus north and south of the campus. There are routes that go all the way to 168th Street Columbia Medical Center, and a route that goes to 96th Street. You will need to tap your Columbia ID when you get on the bus. Check the maps and schedules on the [shuttle website](#).

Car

You can park on the streets around campus (but watch for parking meters and alternate side parking restrictions). There are also parking garages close to campus.

Apps to help you navigate

You can download NYC transit apps to your phone to help you with the subway and buses. Google or Apple Maps can also give you directions – walking, bus, train, car or bicycle.

Shopping, Services and Local Supplies

If you want something in New York, chances are you can find it.

You can find restaurants and food in every neighborhood 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There are pharmacies and delis open all day and night. Google or Apple Maps will give you locations and tell you what is open and where to find it.

Most major retail and department stores open at 9 or 10am, close at 7pm or later, and are open 7 days a week.

SALES TAX: You have to pay sales tax on everything you buy. Note that the tax is NOT included in the price listed on any items, but is added when you pay. In New York City the sales tax is 8.875%.

Here are some local listings for places you might need:

Phone Services: T-Mobile on 111th and Broadway
 Verizon on 101th and Broadway
 AT&T on 95th and Broadway

School and class supplies: University Stationery on Broadway between 115th & 116th
Barnes and Noble on Broadway and 115th
Book Culture on 112th between Broadway & Amsterdam

Post Office: 112th between Broadway & Amsterdam

Banks: Citibank on 111th and Broadway
TD Bank on 109th and Broadway
Popular Community Bank on 96th and Broadway
Bank of America on 107th and Broadway

ATMs: Santander in Lerner Hall
Santander in Uris Hall
Citibank in Barnard Hall
Citibank on Broadway at 111th
Bank of America on Broadway at 107th

You can also find ATMS in many delis and stores. Note: if you get money from an ATM that is not your bank, then often you have to pay fees. Sometimes you pay fees twice: your bank AND the ATM can charge you.

General Advising

Moving to a different country, or to a big city like New York, is a completely new experience for a lot of people. Many things may be strange or confusing. Don't worry - we're here to help!

If you have questions about anything (being in New York, public transport, getting involved at Columbia, where to buy food, how to get your phone to work, how to see a doctor) talk to us! We are available to answer questions and help you adjust to life in New York. Send an email to alp-advising@columbia.edu to make an appointment.

Here are some questions ALP students often ask:

- How do I meet people?
- Where can I volunteer?
- How do I print my health insurance card?
- How do I get an eye-check up?
- How do I use the subway?

Housing

Campus Housing

Columbia housing is not available for ALP students in the Fall and Spring semesters. Some dormitory housing is available in summer.

Apartment Rentals

Good, inexpensive apartments are extremely difficult to find, especially around the Morningside Heights area. You may have to live far away from campus and commute. You may also need to find a roommate or sublet an apartment. For important information about the process of renting an apartment in NYC (including financial obligations), click [here](#).

Apartments may be found through online searches, an agent, or Columbia [Off-Campus Housing Assistance](#). The OCHA website lists available rooms and apartments in non-Columbia-owned buildings and sublets of units in Columbia-managed housing. Only Columbia students, faculty, staff and alumni can view the listings, so you must first log in with your Columbia UNI and password.

Columbia's Off-Campus Housing Assistance (OCHA) Office

Phone: (212) 854-2773

Email: ocha@columbia.edu

[Educational Housing Services](#) offers semester-long dormitory accommodation for students in New York City. They have several locations, including in Midtown. You might also be able to find accommodation with a family through [Sara's Homestay](#).

Community Standards of Behavior

Smoking Policy



According to New York State Law, there is no smoking inside any building on Columbia's campus (i.e. Lewisohn Hall, Lerner Hall, Schapiro, Kent Hall, etc.)

Smoking is only permitted at certain places on campus. Look for "[Designated Smoking Areas](#)".

Cell Phone and Social Media Policy

The ALP requires that all students switch their cell phones to 'silent' or 'off' during class time. Sometimes a teacher may ask you to use your phone for a particular reason (example: to check a word, do some research) but otherwise they should not be used.

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 phones.
- Failing to follow (= not following) a legitimate order of a University authority. Behavioral misconduct carries severe punishment.

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

Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

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

For more information, read about [EOAA's policies and procedures](#).

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

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.

Safety

Safety on Campus & in the Columbia Neighborhood

More information about the below services can be found on the Columbia University [Public Safety Website](#).

Sign up for Text Message Notifications

The University can text you emergency updates about weather and public safety emergencies, transit interruptions and campus closures. You can sign up for text message notifications through Student Services Online.

Campus Emergencies

Call 212-854-5555 (#4-5555 from a campus phone) to report a fire, medical or security emergency on campus. Columbia Public Safety answer calls 24/7.

You can also use an Emergency Call Box (blue light phones). The Call boxes are located all over campus. Pressing the red button will connect you directly to Public Safety.

Get Home Safe

If ever you do not feel safe walking alone at night, use the free [Columbia University On-Demand Evening Car Service](#). The service is available from 6:00pm to 3:00am every day in the Morningside Heights area only (see the [map](#) for exact locations). To use, you will need to 1) download the Via app and 2) get a unique promo code from the [Columbia website](#) with your UNI and password. Then you can request a free ride on the Via app. You will need to show your Columbia ID to the driver.

Stop in a Safe Haven Location

If ever you don't feel safe walking home, waiting for a bus or walking to a car, you can go into any local business with a Red Lion in its window. The Red Lion means the store is part of Columbia's Safe Haven Program. The store can call Public Safety or the police for you, and help will come. More than 130 businesses participate in this program.

Safety Tips for Living in NYC

To Report an EMERGENCY in NYC, call 911

New York is generally safe, but as in any big city, it is still important to be careful and 'street smart'. Always be alert and know what's around you.

- Walk with confidence and be aware of people around you.
- Be careful with your money in public places.
- Don't keep your wallet or valuables in your back pocket or an easily accessible outside pocket of your bag.
- Don't leave bags and valuables unattended.
- Always lock your dorm or apartment door.
- Be careful in city parks after dark, especially Morningside Park. Try to walk on well-lit streets where there are other people.
- When riding the subway late at night, try to ride in cars with lots of other people.
- Only hail (raise hand to get the attention of) yellow or green taxi cabs. You can also use Uber or Lyft anywhere in New York City.

Lost Property

Lost something? You can go to Public Safety in Low Library, Room #111 or call 212-854-2797. You can also complete a [Lost and Found form](#) on the Public Safety website:

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 alp-advising@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.

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 University – Morningside Campus Map

