



STUDENT HANDBOOK

AMERICAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

American Language Program, Columbia University
School of Professional Studies
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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 semester.

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

The ALP offers a unique educational and cultural experience. You are studying 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 that we hope you will be part of. Those of you here in New York City also have a beautiful and historic campus to explore. And hopefully, as the city opens up more, you will also be able to take advantage of your surroundings and learn what an amazing city you are living in.

We hope this 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, how to make the most of the virtual 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



Contents

What to Expect	3
Week One: Important Things to Do	4
Campus Safety for In-Person Classes	8
Medical Insurance	9
Columbia Health Fee	10
ALP Visa and Immigration	12
Paying for the ALP	15
Withdrawal Procedures	17
Academic Matters	18
Academic Integrity Pledge	26
Academic Resources	27
Connecting to Columbia and NYC	29
Dining	31
Transport, Shopping and Services	32
Advising	34
Housing	34
Community Standards of Behavior	35
Safety	37
Complaints	38

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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 three teachers. They work closely together to plan a course based on what you need to learn most. 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. For Spring 2021 you will have some classes in person (as long as New York State and Columbia University says it is safe to do so) and some remote classes via Zoom. Your schedule will make it clear when you need to come to class.

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. Your instructors will tell you which ones to buy during week one. You should have your textbooks with you for all classes. You might use several books within a two or three-hour class.

Columbia University

You are studying at an Ivy League university. This offers you many opportunities, from world-class libraries to interesting lectures by Columbia professors and thought leaders. Most events in spring will take place remotely, but make sure you check email to find out what is happening and what is open. There are details about activities and much more in this handbook.

New York

Obviously life here right now is different, but there are still things to see and do. We hope you are able to expand your learning beyond campus. Your teachers and the Assistant Director for Student Life can help give you ideas and suggestions. You can also receive discounts with your Columbia ID.

Week One: Important things to do

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

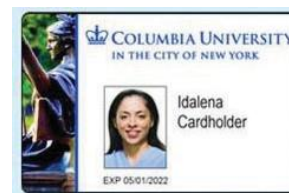
1. Get/revalidate your Columbia ID card
2. Start checking your Columbia email regularly
3. Become familiar with Zoom
4. Download the ReopenCU App
5. Check your E-bill
6. Add Your Emergency Contacts in SSOL
7. Update your local mailing address
8. Complete SEVIS registration (if you are an F-1 student)
9. Tell the university of your decision about the meningitis vaccination
10. Confirm your enrollment in the Columbia University Medical Insurance plan (Intensive only)
11. Show proof of your Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) vaccination (if you have not already done so)
12. Get or show proof of your Flu vaccination (if you have not already done so)

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 from their instructors during their first in-person class. If you do not receive your card at check-in, email the ALP's Admissions Advisor, Joel, at jc3303@columbia.edu and we will help you get it.

ID Center
204 Kent Hall
(212) 854-5883
Monday-Friday: 9:00-5:00



You can use the card to:

- 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

When you arrive for your first in-person instructor will give you 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

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 CUIT Help Desk at (212) 854-1919 or [submit a ticket to the Service Desk](#).

3. Become familiar with Zoom

For Zoom classes 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](#). Take a tour of Canvas [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.

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

4. Download the ReopenCU App

You will need to complete the daily symptom check each day you come to campus. See page 8 for more information.

5. 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 when your E-bill is ready.

You can find your E-bill at [Student Services Online \(SSOL\)](#). For information on how to make payments online for tuition and fees, see the 'Paying for the ALP' section.

6. Add Your Emergency Contacts

It is very important to list emergency contacts in SSOL (Student Services Online). 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 (<https://ssol.columbia.edu/>) 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.

7. Update Your Local Mailing Address

As an international student, you **must** update Student Services Online (SSOL) and SEVIS with your **local New York home address and telephone number**. The University will send university mail only to your local address.

To update your local address in SSOL:

1. Log into SSOL (<https://ssol.columbia.edu/>) 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. To update SEVIS with your new address, please email Tomasz Tuleja at alpvisa@columbia.edu with your UNI and a complete US address.

Note: The US Government requires that non-immigrant students (students on an F-1 visa) must update SEVIS within 10 days of the address change.

8. 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

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

Contact

The Office of Immigration Advising is remote in Spring 2021. Email Tomasz Tuleja with any questions:
t.tuleja@columbia.edu

9. Give Your Meningitis Vaccination Decision

New York State public health law requires that the University gives all students information about meningococcal meningitis and the vaccine that protects against this disease. Columbia students must decide if they want this vaccination and must certify this decision online.

To certify your vaccination decision, log on with your UNI and password to [SSOL](#)

What is meningitis? Meningitis is an infection of the fluid of a person's spinal cord and the fluid around the brain. It is usually caused by a viral or bacterial infection. For more information see the [Columbia Health website](#).

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

All ALP students in the Spring Intensive living in the U.S. are required to have Columbia Medical Insurance. Visit [Columbia Health](#) for details. Log onto [Student Services Online](#) and follow the instructions. You must do this by the deadline.

*SACM students with government sponsored insurance can submit an exception request to remove the Columbia medical insurance plan. Do this before the enrollment deadline.

See page 9 for more information on medical insurance.

Note: Students studying in semi-intensive or part-time classes are not required to have Columbia Medical Insurance.

11. Return Your MMR Form (If You Have Not Already Done So)

All ALP students must follow the Columbia Health office's rules for immunization against Measles, Mumps and Rubella (immunization = vaccinations against sickness and disease). You should complete this requirement before arrival to ALP.

If you have already had these vaccinations at home or in the US, you should submit your documents to the Columbia Health office. You will not need to be immunized again if you can show you had the vaccinations. If you have not, you can make an appointment at Columbia Health for vaccinations but please note you may be billed for this. Columbia Health Insurance does not cover the expense, so you will have to pay for it yourself.

[Immunization Requirements](#)

[MMR Information](#)

The [Columbia Health MMR \(Measles, Mumps, Rubella\) Form](#) (under "Immunization Compliance")

You can submit the MMR form to the Columbia Health office by:

Email: immunizationcompliance@columbia.edu

Upload: [send securely online](#)

If you are not compliant, there will be a HOLD on your Columbia account. A 'hold' means you will not be able to register for classes or begin your studies. It is very important that you complete your MMR form immediately.

12. Get or show proof of your Flu Vaccination (If You Have Not Already Done So)

This academic year, Columbia is requiring all students to get a flu shot.

If you have already had a flu shot at home or in the US, you can upload proof to the Columbia Health office. You will not need to be immunized again if you can show you had the vaccination. If you have not, you can make an appointment at Columbia Health. The vaccine is free if you get it on campus.

For information on the flu shot and to make an appointment see the [Columbia Health Flu Information](#).

Campus Safety for In-Person Classes

Columbia is working hard to make sure that Columbia's campus is the safest place possible for our students, faculty and staff. This will require everyone in the Columbia community to do their part.

Before your first class on campus:

Read the [Return to Campus Student Guide](#) so you know what to expect and how to prepare.

While on campus, follow Columbia's guidelines:

- Complete the daily symptom tracker on the Columbia app [ReopenCU](#) each day *before* arriving on campus. If you answer "no" to all three questions, you will receive a green pass on the app. You will not be allowed inside any of the buildings on campus if you do not receive a green pass or if you do not complete the questions. On the days you have class at home and do not come to campus, you do not need to complete the daily symptom tracker.
- Bring your CUID. You will need this to enter Columbia buildings.
- Masks over mouth and nose are required.
- Physical distancing of 6 feet (2 meters) is required.
- Stay home if you're not feeling well.
- Follow the [Enhanced Health and Safety Policy](#).
- Keep shared spaces clean. Wipe your desk, shared computer or study space when you arrive **and** when you leave. The University will provide disinfectant sprays or wipes for you to use. [Columbia staff will also clean high-touch surfaces throughout campus regularly](#).

Stay updated:

We know this is a lot of information to keep up with. Visit <https://covid19.columbia.edu/> for the latest updates on Columbia's response to Covid-19 and what you need to know about coming onto campus.

Have questions?

Call 212-854-9355 between 9:00am-5:00pm Monday through Friday for general questions on COVID-19. They can provide information on testing, contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine.

If you're not feeling well, call Medical Services at 212-854-7426, available 24 hours a day.

Quarantine and Isolation Support:

Columbia Health has designed a series of programs and services to support your well-being needs while in quarantine or isolation in New York. <https://health.columbia.edu/content/quarantine-and-isolation-support>

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.

1. Medical Insurance Requirements

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

Note: If you are a part-time or semi-intensive student, you are not 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, employer-sponsored 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** before the deadline. Students who do not submit an exception request before the enrollment deadline will be charged for Columbia Medical Insurance. Students who do not need Columbia insurance must still pay the Columbia Health Fee. If you submitted an exception request in the Fall, you will need to do so *again* before the spring semester starts.

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.

2. Columbia Student Medical Insurance Cards

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

You will receive your Columbia medical insurance card from Aetna Student Health 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.

Columbia Health Fee & Health Resources

All students will be charged the \$610 **Columbia Health Fee** (whether you are on campus or remote). This includes:

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.

For health fee rates and dates visit <https://health.columbia.edu/content/cost-service>

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. You do not need to pay; the Columbia Health Fee covers to cost.

Make an appointment by phone: (212) 854-7426

Columbia Medical Services is in John Jay Hall, 4th Floor. Currently, you cannot simply walk into their office. You need to call first.

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 9:00am – 4:30pm

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.

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

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.

ALP Visa & Immigration

NOTE: This section is only for students with an I-20.

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, 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.

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. 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.

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

Note: use extreme caution if you travel outside the USA during the Spring semester. Talk to Tomasz to get advice. We do not recommend unnecessary travel at this time.

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](#).

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](#)
- [Fees for visa services](#)
- [Visa denials:](#)
- [US-VISIT:](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [The United States Citizen and Immigration Services](#)
- [Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#)
- [Study in the States website](#) for prospective and current international students

Paying for the ALP

1. Tuition & Fees

Students are charged tuition and various fees for each session. All students will also be charged a \$610 Columbia Health Fee. See page 10 for more information on the Health Fee. You can find a full list of 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

For more information visit the [online Q&A tool](#)

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](#).

4. Tuition Exemption (For Columbia Employees)

- 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](http://hr.columbia.edu/) for more information: <http://hr.columbia.edu/>.
- If you have tuition exemption, please take your Tuition Exemption Form to 210 Kent Hall to pay for the class. The Cashier's Office in 210 Kent Hall is open Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Save all receipts from registration. 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.

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

Spring Session	
7- and 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

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:

- Fall and Spring Semesters (14 weeks each) - 10% = 25 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	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

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

For students taking letter grade courses, 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.

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 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.

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 for International Students
- ALP Summer A, B, and C
- Winter Institute
- Pronunciation
- International Teaching Fellows Training
- English for Professional Purposes: Business
- English for Professional Purposes: Law

Some ALP courses have a "Letter Grade Only" designation in the University Registrar's system. For these courses, it does not matter in which school the student is registered. The ALP courses for which a letter grade is the only option are:

- English for Professional Purposes: SIPA
- Advanced Academic English for Graduate Students

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
- Z1007 Advanced Academic Writing

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

Grades and Promotions

In Spring students will be assessed on Speaking and Writing skills. Grades will be determined as follows.

Letter Grade	Notes on student achievement in each of the skill areas: Writing + Speaking	Promotion
A+	AA for students at the top end of A (98%+)	2 level promotion
A	AA for students in the mid-range of A (93-97%)	1 or 2 level promotion
A-	AA for students at the lower end of A (90-92%) AB with high A or B	1 level promotion
B+	AB with low A or B BB for students at the top end of B (87-89%)	1 level promotion
B	BB for students in the mid-range of B (83-86%)	1 level promotion
B-	BC (or AC) BB for students at the lower end of B (80-82%) ALL LEVELS: If C is in speaking, then the student <i>may</i> get a promotion, but will receive a warning on their speaking. LEVELS 7-9: If C is in writing, then there is no level promotion	LEVEL 1-6: 1 level promotion possible LEVEL 7-9: 1 level promotion but NOT at level 7+ if C is in W
C+	BC with high B or high C CC for students at the top end of C (77-79%)	No level promotion
C	BC with low B or low C CC for students in the mid-range of C (73-76%)	No level promotion
C-	CC for students at the lower end of C (70-72%)	No level promotion
D	CD DD	No level promotion

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. In Spring 2021 the ALP is only offering classes at level 5 and above.

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) 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. 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 105 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.

6. Level Promotions

Promotion decisions are based solely on each student's proficiency in the various language skills [speaking and writing only in Spring 2021]. 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 (5b to 6b, 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. Students in Listening & Speaking and Pronunciation do not receive level promotions.

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. University Credit Courses

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 language 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 are very challenging. In American universities, regular attendance and completion of all homework 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 'per point tuition rate' and is not included in the ALP tuition. Tuition information can be found at <http://sps.columbia.edu/postbaccalaureate-studies/tuition-and-fees>

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

- University credit courses are only available to ALP students who have reached Level 8 or 9.
- University credit courses are only available to students who achieve an A- grade in the intensive program.
- University credit courses are only available to students who have a recommendation from their instructor.
- Students may not take university credit courses during their first semester at the ALP.
- Students can only choose courses that begin after 6:00pm.
- All requests to take university credit courses must be approved by the ALP. Students should avoid courses in fields such as History or Philosophy that require very advanced writing skills.

ALP students interested in exploring this academic option further should talk to their instructors and ask for a Course Approval Packet. Typically, ALP students interested in taking university credit courses during the Fall semester should talk to their instructors no later than July. ALP students interested in taking university credit courses during the Spring semester should talk to their instructor no later than November. Students can also ask the ALP Advisor for an advising appointment: alp-advising@columbia.edu.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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. [Bookstore](#)

Columbia University Bookstore, 2922 Broadway at West 115th Street, Alfred J. Lerner Hall, Lower Level
Telephone: (212) 854-4131
Store Hours: Monday to Friday: 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM; Saturday and Sunday: 11:00 AM - 6:00 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 level changes during the first week of the semester.

2. 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 from CUIT



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.

The following libraries are open, but require a reservation:

Butler Library, Avery Library, Lehman Library, Starr East Asian Library, Business Library, and Science & Engineering Library.

If you want to study in the library, you can reserve a seat for up to four hours a day. Reservations can be made up to two weeks in advance. Masks are required. Visit the [Library website](#) to find out what is open and what you can access.

Note: Some study spaces may be closed until further notice.

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

Wherever you are this semester, it's still possible to join the community and to get involved with activities at Columbia. Even for those students here in New York, much of the social and recreational life will remain online for safety reasons.

1. ALP Advising and Workshops

The ALP offers virtual advising and workshops so that students can connect, practice English and work on their goals. Check your email and listen for announcements from teachers.

2. Columbia University Events

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. NYC Museums

Some museums have reopened, so check websites for updates. You can get into many [NYC museums for free](#) with your student ID. Right now, some museums may be 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 semester, visit their [website](#). Religious advisors are available for counseling and care. Email chaplain@columbia.edu or eb3334@columbia.edu to make a virtual appointment.

5. Language Exchange Program (LEP) – Fall and Spring Semesters Only

The American Language Program runs the Language Exchange Program, which offers students additional opportunities to practice English outside of class. An ALP student is paired with an English-speaking Columbia student learning his/her language. The two students then meet online and spend time speaking their two languages. To request a language partner, complete the [online application](#). Once you have submitted your application, we will try to connect you with a language partner that matches your needs. Some applicants of less common languages may be placed on a waitlist if a partner in that language cannot immediately be found. The program is not active in the summer. Note: because many undergraduates will be studying remotely in spring, the LEP will most likely be held remotely.

6. 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 [Columbia University Student Organizations](#) page on the Columbia website to find out which will be active this semester.

The ALP has a new club: Cooperating Nations. Check your email for opportunities to connect with other ALP students this semester.

7. New York Activities

The city is slowly beginning to open up, including museums and outdoor events. We will try to keep you updated about what you can do, but we encourage you to do your own research too. Often with your Columbia ID you can get free or discounted admission.

Dining

1. On Campus options

There will be a number of cafes and dining locations open during the spring semester. We recommend you check the [Columbia Dining website](#) for the latest information about what is open, but here are a few cafes that will be open:

Lerner Hall – Blue Java Café; Café 212
Mudd Building – Blue Java Café
Uris Hall – Deli; Blue Java

As with all other locations on campus, a mask is required.

2. Restaurants & Markets in the Neighborhood

There are many cafes and restaurants in the neighborhood. At the time of writing there is no indoor dining in New York, but you can get take out and also eat outdoors at many places. A mask is required for entry to all locations listed here. Once at a table, you may remove the mask.

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
Mill Korean	(Korean Barbeque restaurant) between 112 th and 113 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
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

*You might see people taking photos in front of this restaurant. It became famous from a much-loved 1990s TV show, *Seinfeld*.

3. Restaurant Guidelines

- Tipping 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, 15% is considered normal.

In a bar, you are expected to tip around 20%, as you do in a restaurant (right now bars are only open for outdoor service if they sell food).

- 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

1. Getting Around

Note: Masks are required for all public transport.

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!

The subway is open from 5am to 1am. Between those hours trains and stations are cleaned.

Bus

The M4, M5, M11, M60 and M104 buses all stop at 116th and Broadway. The M60 is a direct link to LaGuardia Airport.

Intercampus Shuttle Bus

With a CUID you can take the free Columbia shuttle bus between 116th & Broadway to Lamont, Studebaker, the Medical Center, Harlem Hospital and the George Washington Bridge Bus Terminal. 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.

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.

2. Shopping, Services and Local Supplies

If you want something in New York, chances are you can find it. Note: if you are going into a store you will need to wear a mask.

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 109th and
 Broadway Sprint on 108th and
 Broadway AT&T on 106th 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: on 112th between Broadway & Amsterdam

Banks: Citibank on 112th and Broadway
 TD Bank on 109th and Broadway
 Popular Community Bank on 109th and Broadway
 Bank of America on 107th and Broadway

ATMs: Santander in Lerner Hall
 Santander in Uris Hall
 Citibank in Barnard Hall
 Chase Bank on Broadway at 113th
 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! The Assistant Director of Student Life, Jana Quigley, is available to answer questions and help you adjust to life in New York. Send an email to jmq2107@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?
- What is the best MetroCard to buy?

Housing

1. Campus Housing

In Spring dormitory accommodation is not available for ALP students because of the coronavirus.

2. Non-Columbia Housing

A list of non-Columbia student residences can be found on the [ALP website](#).

The list is for convenience only and does not imply any endorsement of these private companies by Columbia University. Please contact these organizations directly for more information about availability, housing rates and application procedures.

3. 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

Web: <https://residential.columbia.edu/ocha>

Community Standards of Behavior

1. 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". The nearest one is between Dodge Hall and Lewisohn Hall, near the steps.

Students must not smoke in areas designated as prohibited (especially in front of Lewisohn Hall). Any student caught in violation of this University rule will be brought up on disciplinary charges, which will likely result in dismissal from ALP without a refund of tuition.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

Safety

1. 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. Stay in touch by signing up [here](#):

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, Columbia University Safety Escort Service will send two specially trained students to walk you to your door any time from 7:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., 7 nights a week. The service is available in the Morningside Heights area. See the [Safety Escort website](#) for exact locations. Allow escorts 5 to 15 minutes to arrive and ask them to show a University ID. For a safety escort, call 212-854- SAFE (212-854-7233). From a campus phone, call #4-SAFE. If you need an escort before 7:00 p.m. or after 3:00 a.m., call 212-854-2797.

Stop in a Safe Haven Location

It is rare, but 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.

Evening Shuttle in the Columbia Neighborhood

The Evening shuttle is a free service that helps students, faculty and staff can travel safely after dark. Two shuttle buses travel on different routes from 4:00pm to 4:00am, in thirty minute loops across the Morningside and Manhattanville areas. Check the [map and schedules](#) to find out more.

2. 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? Try 504 Lewisohn first if you left it in a classroom. You can also 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 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.

