From the ESL Director . . .

Hello, and welcome to ESL!

I am writing to you just before the fall semester begins. It is Friday and very quiet at the moment, but that will not last very long. Starting Monday, we will have a bustling program as our hallways and classrooms fill with energy and activities connected to teaching and learning.

Having an excellent program like ours takes planning, as you know. Here in ESL, we always schedule the Friday before each semester as a day for teachers to get together and share ideas. Perhaps the most important thing about workshops for our teachers is the friendships that are formed. These friendships help teachers collaborate and become better in their jobs while having fun. It is much like your classroom experience. You do group work and projects in class so you get to know classmates. You share ideas and help each other to learn throughout the semester with joy and laughter along the way.

So even for teachers who have been here for years and years, there is always something new to learn. For example, electronic communication is part of everyday life but there is so much that is new. Today, several ESL teachers are sharing how they use iPads and Smartphones for language learning. Most of us have these tools yet we don’t always think about them as learning tools, but of course they are!

A couple of teachers are also presenting some very interesting research about reading. Sometimes we think that we have to study and don’t have time to read stories or novels that interest us. Apparently, that’s not true. Last spring, 9 ESL classes (students and teachers) participated in the STAR project by reading books, filling out surveys, taking tests, and doing interviews. Results showed that students who read books at home that they checkout out from the ESL library or from public libraries got higher scores on their tests than students who only studied their grammar books. In their report, the teachers said they learned new things about language learning from their students and called this experiment “the power of reading!”

As you can see, teaching is not just something instructors do and learning is not just something that students do. We are all teaching each other and we are all learning from each other. This makes our program very dynamic! And you are an important part of this dynamic energy!

Have a wonderful semester!

Dr. Liza Becker (Director)
Appliance Repairers

Appliance Repairers service and repair large and small gas and home appliances. These range from relatively uncomplicated appliances, such as food mixers and toasters to stoves, refrigerators, washing machines, dryers, and dishwashers which have complex control systems. They consult manuals and wiring diagrams and use testing equipment to determine the cause of failure. They may disassemble the appliance, test components, replace or repair defective parts and then reassemble it or they may refer the customer to the part or equipment company service department for repair. They keep records of calls and parts.

Personal Characteristics:

- compile information
- use words and numbers
- use fingers and hands to reach for things
- read and understand parts and repair manuals
- learn repair procedures
- use physical coordination
- do precise work with tools, instruments, or equipment
- see detail
- work quickly and accurately
- visualize spatial relationships
- work according to set standards and procedures
- draw conclusions based on facts about equipment
- meet many different kinds of people and to work well with them

Current Monthly Wage Data (2011)
Entry/Low Pay $2,832
Average Pay $3,639
Top Pay $4,511 & up

Would you like to learn more about these careers and their requirements? Make an appointment to see a member of the ESL Counseling Team. Ask for Michael Ngo, John Pellitteri or Bertha Rodriguez.
Photographers

Photographers record visual images on film or video tape to graphically illustrate or explain an idea. They may also prepare the pictures for presentation. They generally specialize in a particular type of subject matter, such as portraits, landscape, nature or news pictures and in types of equipment such as 35 millimeter cameras, video or movie cameras.

Personal Characteristics:
- learn and understand photographic procedures, and techniques
- compile data and synthesize what they have learned
- visualize pictures from objects and negatives
- see slight differences in shapes and shades
- use color discrimination
- use numbers and words
- use eye-hand coordination
- use hands and fingers to reach for things
- work well with people by speaking and signaling to them
- do precise work accurately
- work with things by operating and controlling them

Current Monthly Wage Data (2011)
Entry/Low Pay: $1,970
Average Pay: $3,549
Top Pay: $4,329 & up

Musicians

Musicians play, arrange, conduct, and compose musical compositions. Most Musicians specialize in either popular or classical music, or some other musical genre. They may perform solo or as members of a musical group. Composers create and write compositions expressing ideas or feelings in musical form. Performers are often also Composers, or Lyricists who write the words to songs and work closely with the Composer. In addition to performing, many Musicians teach instrumental music.

Personal Characteristics:
- learn and understand techniques
- work accurately with detail
- use physical coordination
- use manual and finger dexterity
- interpret and nurture a feeling for music
- do precise work with tools, instruments, or equipment
- handle objects and equipment
- see slight differences in objects
- use eye-hand-foot coordination
- make judgments using knowledge or experience
- accept criticism
- talent and creativity
- a sense of rhythm
- self-discipline to practice and rehearse

Current Monthly Wage Data (2011)
Entry/Low Pay: $3,658
Average Pay: $5,890
Top Pay: $6,911 & up
**Horses**

I chose to write about horses because I like to ride them. I also like to pet them. Horses are so beautiful and fun to ride. I like thoroughbreds because they are such a pretty brown color. I also like Arabians because their different coats are very beautiful and they're one of the oldest horses.

A horse can walk, trot, canter, and gallop. A trot is kind of like a skip. A canter is like a fast skip. And a gallop is like running.

Horses can be great friends. Some horses can be dangerous but most horses are very lovable. Most horses live about 12 to 14 years. You usually find horses on a ranch. They usually live in a barn. Some horses are wild.

Horses eat hay, grass, barley and oats. The best food for a tired horse is oatmeal. Don't give a young horse too much oatmeal, it makes them hyper. Horses love carrots, apples, molasses and sugar cubes. A block of salt gives the horse important minerals and makes them thirsty so the will drink enough water.

Did you know that the first horses were no bigger than a fox and looked like a donkey? They had short tails and small ears. These horses lived millions of years ago, but now they are extinct. The only way we knew there were horses like that was because the first humans (our ancestors) painted these horses on ancient cave walls. These horses lived in North America and over the years they changed into the horses we know now.

Arcelia Lopez

Writing B

**Highway One**

Highway one is the most beautiful place I've ever been to. My husband and I were driving on Highway One when we came back from San Francisco last year. There are quiet and endless mountains on one side, and there are millions of green towering trees and delicate grasses growing on them. The mountains look as though they wear a colorful jacket.

There're some campsites hiding in the plush green forests. Sheer cliffs, the blue Pacific Ocean, and white sandy beaches are on the other side. A lot of brown shrubs grown on the beach.

The white waves lap on the rocks. The pure white clouds are as cotton floating in the blue sky. Everything looks clean and clear. It made me feel peaceful and relaxed. It also made me very excited because I've never seen such beautiful natural scenery before. It just like a gorgeous nymph. In an instant, I felt like I was in heaven. Time stood still. Everything was so beautiful. I couldn't help crying all the way home. Thanks to God for giving us such a beautiful place. It's my favorite and never to be forgotten.

Xuejiao Chen

Writing B
**Dress Codes in the Schools**

Many schools are adopting the dress code for their students and many parents do not like the idea. Some of these parents feel that this would give students less opportunity to express themselves. Others feel doing this would take the right to chose away from them. Another reason some of these parents don’t want uniforms at their school is that they don’t want to spend more money on getting uniforms. Some of these parents say that most students already have good clothes for school and don’t need to spend more money that they may not have.

I am in favor of making students wear uniforms because I feel it would be beneficial for many reasons. First, I think that with everyone wearing the same clothes it would help all the students to focus better without having to worry about what other students are wearing. With many students wearing short skirts, skimpy tops, inappropriate wording on their clothes and low pants, this is too distracting and not for school. With less things distracting them, students can concentrate on getting a good education and focus more on what their learning.

Another reason I agree with school uniforms is that with all the peer pressure in school, I feel that many students already have a hard time fitting in. Wearing a uniform will help to make everyone feel like they don’t stand out because they aren’t wearing the cool clothes. I also think that uniforms help students prepare for the real working world where professional clothes are required.

Fei Feng
Level 6

**My Pet Gustavo**

I have a pet cat named Gustavo, but I call him Gus for short. He was about 8 weeks old when I got him and now he is about 4 1/2 months old. When I got him he fit in both of my hands. Now he is about as big as a size eight sneaker. He is a little gray and white kitten. I wanted a pet so I went to the animal shelter and I fell in love with Gus so I brought him home.

Gus is playful most of the time. He likes to bite and hit peoples hands when they try to pet him but he is not trying to hurt anyone he just wants to have fun. When Gus was a baby, I would put him on the bed by my feet. I would move my feet under the covers and be on top chasing them around. When he got tired he would put his head down and fall asleep. I would pick him up, put him near my pillow and we slept together.

I love Gus and I think he loves me because he always looks for me. He always misses me when I’m not there. When I come home from school and I open the door, Gus comes flying around the corner, and starts to climb my pants! When he gets high enough, I grab him and we start cuddling each other and Gus starts purring. Gus is with me as much as possible. Sometimes he’s busy playing with his pet mouse, sleeping or eating. Otherwise, he’s playing or sleeping with me. We do so many things together and I’m glad I have him.

Victoria Ruiz
Writing C
English Learning Tips

Ask yourself weekly: *What do I want to learn this week?*

Asking yourself this question every week will help you stop and think for a moment about what is most important to you. It is easy to focus only on the current unit, grammar exercise, etc. If you take a moment to stop and set a goal for yourself every week, you will notice the progress you are making and, in turn, become more inspired by how quickly you are learning English! You will be surprised at how this feeling of success will motivate you to learn even more English.

Quickly review important new information shortly before going to bed.

Research has shown that our brains process information that is fresh in our brains while we sleep. By shortly (this means very quickly - just a glance at what you are working on at the moment) going over some exercise, reading, etc. before you go to sleep, your brain will work away on this information while you are sleeping.

While doing exercises and alone at home or in your room, speak English aloud.

Connect the muscles of your face to the information in your head. Just as understanding the basics of tennis does not make you a great tennis player, understanding grammar rules does not mean you can automatically speak English well. You need to practice the act of speaking often. Speaking by yourself at home and reading the exercises you are doing will help connect your brain to your facial muscles and improve pronunciation and make your knowledge active.

Do five to ten minutes of listening at least four times a week.

In the past, I decided I needed to get fit and went jogging - usually three or four miles. Well, after not having done anything for many months, those three or four miles really hurt! Needless to say, I did not go jogging for another few months! Learning to understand spoken English well is very similar. If you decide that you are going to work hard and listen for two hours, chances are that you will not do extra listening exercises any time soon. If, on the other hand, you start off slowly and listen often, it will be easier to develop the habit of listening to English on a regular basis.

Look for situations in which you must speak / read / listen to English.

This is probably the most important tip. You need to use English in a "real world" situation. Learning English in a classroom is important, but putting your English knowledge into practice in real situations will improve your fluency in speaking English. If you do not know of any "real life" situation, create new ones for yourself by using the Internet to listen to news, write English responses in forums, exchange emails in English with email pals, etc.

http://www.how-to-study.com
Writing Tips
Writing is an important form of communication. Good writers use different writing techniques to fit their purpose for writing. To be a good writer, you must master each of the following writing techniques.

1. Description

Through description, a writer helps the reader use the senses of feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting to experience what the writer experiences. Description helps the reader more clearly understand the people, places, and things about which the writer is writing. It is the most common form of writing. You will find descriptive writing in newspapers, magazines, books, and most other forms of written communication.

2. Exposition

Through exposition, a writer informs, explains, and clarifies his/her ideas and thoughts. Exposition goes beyond description to help the reader understand with greater clarity and depth the ideas and thoughts of the writer. Expository writing, like descriptive writing, is commonly found in newspapers, magazines, books, and most other forms of written communication.

3. Narration

Through narration, a writer tells a story. A story has characters, a setting, a time, a problem, attempts at solving the problem, and a solution to the problem. Bedtime stories are examples of short stories while novels are examples of long stories. The scripts written for movies and plays are further examples of narrative writing.

4. Persuasion

Through persuasion, a writer tries to change a reader’s point of view on a topic, subject, or position. The writer presents facts and opinions to get the reader to understand why something is right, wrong, or in between. Editorials, letters to the editor in newspapers and magazines, and the text for a political speech are examples of persuasive writing.

5. Comparison and Contrast

Through comparison and contrast, a writer points out the similarities and differences about a topic. Comparison is used to show what is alike or in common. Contrast is used to show what is not alike or not in common. Describing living conditions in 1900 and living conditions today would allow for much comparison and contrast.

By using the writing technique that fits your purpose, you will be able to communicate your ideas effectively.

www.englishclub.com
Do you want to practice learning English outside your classroom? Then why not stop by the Language Learning Center, also known as the LLC, located in the Learning Technology Building (Bldg. 6).

The Language Learning Center has a large variety of language learning software, videos, DVD’s and recordings to improve listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills.

To find out more you can also visit the LLC website and see the number of audio, video, internet and software resources available for the different levels by clicking in the Resource Link and selecting the LLC Materials/ESL. [http://llc.mtsac.edu](http://llc.mtsac.edu)

To use the Language Learning Center, you must have your Mt. SAC Student ID Card.

Hope to see you there!