Overall description of the organization of IEI Level 500

TRACKS and ELECTIVES

Level 600 and Level 500 students make two kinds of course choices, about "TRACKS" and about "ELECTIVES."

TRACKS: Students choose either the ACADEMIC TRACK or the EVERYDAY TRACK. Both tracks have two core courses: a Listening and Speaking course and a Reading and Writing course. Students may not mix courses from the two tracks.

The ACADEMIC TRACK prepares students for the English language skills that are required for university study in the English medium: listening to lectures, writing essays and papers, and orally presenting ideas to a group. The Academic Track is a two-course sequence. At level 500, students work on the main skills of writing in multiple paragraphs and understanding key points in short lectures. At level 600, there are new advanced goals: students are challenged to understand and integrate information from multiple sources, to construct written arguments based on information sources, and to analyze complex readings and lectures.

The EVERYDAY TRACK is for students who are ready to begin using English at an advanced level and who do not plan to use English for academic purposes. In the Everyday Track, students practice reading materials from Internet sources, magazines and non-fiction and fiction books and students listen to materials from popular sources such as television talk shows, radio and movies. At level 600, students typically read and listen to longer, more complex materials. In some semesters, there is only one combined Level 600 and 500 course. If there is insufficient enrollment for the Everyday Track, the courses may be cancelled and all students placed in the Academic Track.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR CONTINUING STUDENTS:
1. If you are planning to enroll in a US university and you have completed Academic Track Level 500, the IEI recommends that you continue in the level 600 Academic Track and in order to continue university preparation.
2. If you are a continuing student and you "switch tracks" from the Everyday Track to the Academic Track, you may need to start at Level 500 Academic regardless of your previous placement.

ELECTIVES: The IEI offers several elective courses each semester. Level 600 and Level 500 students enroll in two elective courses. (However, IEI asks students to indicate four choices because sometimes a course is cancelled or there is a scheduling problem.) Level 600 and Level 500 students are together in the elective courses. Level 500 students are expected to complete the course tasks successfully with clear and coherent expression in English. Level 600 students are expected to complete course tasks successfully and to strive for a high level of control over the nuances and implications of their word choices, grammar and logical organization in the work of the course.
**Level 500 Academic Core Courses**

1. **Level 500 Academic Reading and Writing (ARW) (6 hours/week)**
   This course is designed to introduce many of the aspects of academic reading and writing needed in university courses. Students explore topics through reading and discussion before writing paragraphs and essays on those topics. Among the organizational writing patterns students will learn are summary, compare/contrast, cause/effect, and argument. Students practice paraphrasing and other documentation skills needed to use sources in their writing. By the end of the course, students who have worked hard should be able to write a short, well-organized paper with documentation from articles they have read.

2. **Level 500 Academic Listening and Speaking (ALS) (6 hours/week)**
   This course is an introduction to the academic listening and speaking skills needed to succeed in an American university environment. Students develop basic presentation skills by giving both group and individual presentations. Students also learn how to appropriately express a well-developed argument in a controlled discussion. The course uses a textbook to help students develop listening and note-taking strategies they will need when attending university lectures. By the end of the course, students who have worked hard should be able to do a simple presentation based on 2-3 sources. They should also be able to show their understanding of the main ideas and important details in a short lecture.

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**Level 600 and 500 Everyday English Core Courses**

   (In some semesters, there is only one combined Level 600 and 500 course).

1. **Everyday Reading and Writing (ERW) (6 hours/week)**
   This course covers two main areas: the practical and the personal. The practical focus is on reading and writing letters and e-mail dealing with requests and responses, complaints, and apologies. The personal focus is on reading a book (a novel or an autobiography) and magazine articles on human interest topics, with vocabulary, discussion and short personal writing assignments on the same topics as the readings. Students will also write a résumé to explain personal strengths in a balanced and effective way.

2. **Everyday Listening and Speaking (ELS) (6 hours/week)**
   This course provides students with the opportunity to improve their listening to real world sources, such as TV, movies and radio as well as their ability to express ideas in the course of a conversation by working on specific skills such as expressing an opinion appropriately in a variety of contexts and telling a story effectively. By the end of the course, a student who has worked hard should be able to understand main ideas and important details in 10-15 minute listening segments as well as be able to perform the conversational skills studied in class.

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**Level 600 and 500 Combined Elective courses**

   (Students must take TWO elective courses. Each course is 4 hours/week.)

**Business Communication**
In this course, students work in teams to examine various business situations, based on readings from the news and Internet. Students make oral presentations (proposals, press briefings, and negotiation) or create written documents (memoranda, and short reports). Emphasis is on communicating in an appropriate style for business. Please note: IEI Business Communication classes are English classes with a business focus; we do not teach business theory. Returning students: You should not repeat this course.

**Communication in American Culture 1 (Fall)**
This course focuses on developing students’ communication skills for dealing with different aspects of daily life in American culture. In Communication in American Culture 1, students learn language skills and vocabulary for healthcare, restaurants (including tipping/complaining), emergency situations and service phone calls. Special attention is given to language use variations according to level of formality, situation, and participants. In class, students do a variety of pair, small group and whole class activities to improve spoken fluency and accuracy. They participate in planned and unplanned conversations in class, watch topic-related videos, discuss readings and perform real-world tasks outside of class. Graded assessments include written exams, role-plays of daily life situations and group projects.
Communication in American Culture 2 (Spring)
This course focuses on developing students’ communication skills for dealing with different aspects of daily life in American culture. In Communication in American Culture 2, students learn language skills and vocabulary for travel, shopping, and housing situations. Students also learn about how to function in the American academic culture through discussion of topics such as requesting an appointment with a professor or getting information on campus. Special attention is given to language use variations according to level of formality, situation, and participants. In class, students do a variety of pair, small group and whole class activities to improve spoken fluency and accuracy. They also watch topic-related videos, discuss readings and perform real-world tasks outside of class. Graded assessments include written exams, role-plays of daily life situations and group projects.

Current Events
The current events class gives students an opportunity to improve their listening ability, increase their vocabulary, and intelligently discuss the events that are in the news. Since most news sources focus on US news or present the news with an American perspective, students will get a better understanding of certain aspects of American history and culture. At the same time they will be encouraged to look at the same issues from different perspectives from around the world. Because of the nature of the news, many of the issues under discussion are generally political in nature. In-class activities will include the use of current news videos, radio news, newspaper and magazine articles, group discussions, and group presentations.

Advanced English Grammar
This class is important for students who want to improve their ability to analyze English grammar and use it meaningfully and accurately. There is much more to English grammar than completing grammar exercises! In this course, students analyze real-life written and spoken English in order to understand the meaning of English grammar more deeply. Short writing assignments are an important part of the class, so that students can demonstrate that they can understand and also apply meaning distinctions through grammar.

Advanced Vocabulary Development
This course is designed to assist advanced students to increase word knowledge, improve word context analysis skills, and learn strategies for effective vocabulary development. Students will use spoken and written language corpora (databases of natural language) and other online resources to practice and develop independent skills in analyzing word structure and meanings in context, to understand and use rich, varied language. Assignments in this course will include written exercises based on texts of various lengths and sources, and mini-projects. At the end of the course students should be able to apply the skills and strategies learned to build general and field-specific vocabulary continually beyond the classroom.

Advanced Pronunciation
Students learn how to improve their ability to both perceive and produce individual sounds and how they are combined in words and longer phrases. The course covers English melody, rhythm, word stress and phrase stress. In addition, students learn about common patterns of reduction and assimilation in American speech – patterns that can make it difficult for them to understand native speakers. There is plenty of opportunity to practice and improve under the guidance of the instructor.

Integrating Language Skills and the TOEFL iBT
In this course, students put together language skills in order to practice the Internet-based TOEFL test, which combines listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Students learn about the test format, test-taking strategies, and vocabulary development skills. Every different type of question on the test in each section is analyzed and practiced, so students learn how to answer questions more efficiently and accurately. In addition to preparing students for the TOEFL, this course is good additional practice for students who want to improve their English for academic purposes.