

PIA Schools Association

Student Handbook

2009



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WELCOME TO PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

We are very happy that you have decided to join our family. Pacific International Academy (PIA) has been serving international students since 1997 and is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET). PIA has three goals: 1) to uphold the highest academic standards in helping you acquire English as a second language; 2) to provide you with excellent opportunities to learn about American culture through school and community projects, events, outings, and trips; and 3) to provide a warm, caring environment in which you will truly feel like a part of our family.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the overarching intent of Pacific International Academy to help students achieve their personal goals in English by facilitating the language proficiency required in daily communication, in higher learning, and in the professional world.

PIA provides instruction of English as a Second Language to non-native speakers of English who bring to the program a broad array of interests and backgrounds. Throughout their experience at PIA, students are encouraged to seek intellectual and academic growth at Marylhurst University as well as in the surrounding community.

Every PIA class is a safe learning environment with an average student-to-teacher ratio of approximately 8 to 1. The curriculum is structured to promote basic communication skills in students at lower ability levels, and more complex academic skills in students at higher levels. Key grammatical forms are emphasized and integrated into performance based classes. In the areas of speaking, reading, listening comprehension, and writing, students learn to apply specific linguistic rules that are presented through holistic and communicative instruction.

Students in this immersion program are encouraged to be active learners. While academic English tends to be a focus, significant energy is devoted to coaching students in learning the cultural norms and expectations of their new social environment. Themes of this nature are necessarily folded into each class session. Further support in cultural adaptation and language acquisition is provided through conversation partnering and tutoring.

The PIA Program

1. serves students for whom English is a non-native language
2. places students through TOEFL and Michigan Language Assessment
3. offers a 10-week course each Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer term
4. offers short term programs on demand
5. provides classes for college credit to registered Marylhurst University students
6. prepares students for academic course work

OVERVIEW OF COURSES

Core Classes:

PIA has five core levels of ESL classes. In each level, students will attend classes in reading, writing, grammar and speaking/listening. Classes are held Monday through Friday with a total of 20 hours of class per week. Within these classes, students will not only improve their English but also have a chance to study cultural topics, computer skills, and other points of special interest. Students in levels 3, 4 and 5 are eligible for 1.5 Marylhurst credit per class.

Undergraduate Foundations:

These 3-credit courses are integrated with Marylhurst Literature and Human Studies courses, totaling 6 credits per term. They are primarily intended for international students with conditional admission to Marylhurst University. Students will focus on composition and revision of various essay forms. Writing projects will be directly linked to material covered in the Marylhurst University courses.

Graduate Foundations (Pathways to Success):

These two 3-credit classes are integrated with Marylhurst University Business courses. They are primarily intended for international students with conditional admission to the MBA program at Marylhurst University. Students will focus on methods of inquiry, forms of communication in the work place, and a term paper.

GED Preparation:

For students who have not completed high school, PIA offers GED preparation classes to help students study for and pass the high school equivalency examinations. The GED class meets for up to four hours per week.

PLACEMENT

Placement and Orientation:

At the beginning of each term there is a placement test and orientation for all new students. Students are placed in the appropriate level on the basis of a battery of tests, which include the Michigan English Placement Test (EPT), the Test of Written English (TWE), and an oral interview. During the first week in class, placement may be adjusted on the basis of a student's ability to meet at least 90 percent of the performance objectives for the class.

If you leave PIA for more than one term, you must be re-tested prior to registration.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Grading:

In each class, your grade will be based on a combination of attendance and participation, and class work, which will consist of in-class assignments, homework, quizzes, and tests. Based on completion of class requirements, the following grades are given.

A - 90 - 100%	Excellent
B - 80 - 89%	Above Average
C - 75 - 79%	Average
D - 60 - 74%	Below Average – Repeat the class
F - below 60%	Fail – Repeat the class

If you receive a grade of C- or lower (below 75%), you will need to repeat the course.

Advancement:

There are three ways for you to advance to a higher level:

1. receive a grade of C (75%) or better in current classes
2. repeat a class and be assessed by your teacher
3. take a challenge test only on the placement testing day.

Challenge Testing:

If you are returning student you may choose to take a challenge test to achieve a higher level in a particular class. Each challenge test is a different form of the placement test you took when you arrived at PIA. You may take a challenge test only on the day of placement testing. Ask the Academic Coordinator to give you a challenge test for a specific skill area. Then, you must be present at PIA on the day and time that is scheduled for PIA Orientation and Placement. It will not be possible to take a challenge test after this time.

1. Only returning students may take a challenge test.
2. A challenge test for a particular skill area may be taken only once while at PIA.
3. A challenge test may be taken only on the day of PIA Orientation and Placement. A recent TOEFL score will also be considered at this time.
4. Beginning the first day of class, only individual instructors may recommend advancement in level. Please see the level confirmation information below.
5. No recommendations for level changes are possible after the first class session.

Level Confirmation:

During the first class session of the term, your teachers will assess your skill level through a brief Level Confirmation Exam. If you score 90% or better in this quiz, you may be considered for advancement to the next level in that class.

Note: under rare circumstances the Academic Coordinator may consider exceptions to any part of this policy.

Exit Testing:

Any student enrolled in Levels 1-4 are required take an exit exam upon leaving the program. This is the English Placement Exam (EPT), Form C. The score from this exam does no affect the grades achieved at PIA

Students graduating from Level 5 are required to take the Michigan English Language Institute College English Test (MELICET) near or at the close of their final term with PIA. The score from this exam has no effect on grades achieved at PIA and are used a) as an indicator of a MELAB score, and b) as anonymous data for ongoing program assessment.

Attendance:

99% attendance is required. Exams and quizzes missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up. If you are going to miss school, please inform the PIA office (503-699-6310) when you can be expected back in class and the reason for your absence. Excused absences are such things as illness, snow closure, or unforeseen emergencies. Shopping trips, visits with friends, trips to the DMV or Social Security office, and sleeping late, are examples of absences, which are not excused. If students do not contact the PIA office to explain an absence, it will be marked as unexcused. Habitual tardiness and absences will be handled in the following manner:

- 10 minutes late = 1 tardy
- 3 tardies = 1 absence
- 3 unexcused absences = 1 grade down on the final grade (a C will change to C-)

Electronics in the classroom

Cell phones and MP3 players shall be turned off, while limits on lap-top usage shall remain the discretion of the instructor.

Inclement Weather Class Cancellation:

In the winter there may be snowy or icy weather. If road conditions are considered unsafe, classes will be cancelled for all or part of the day. PIA will follow the same snow cancellation policy as Marylhurst University. If it snows heavily at night there are several ways to find out if classes are cancelled. Morning news stations on TV and radio report school closures. The radio station KGW, 620 AM, is a good choice. Also, Marylhurst University has a Weather Line

– (503) 636-8140. Call this number to find information about class cancellation, or call the PIA office, (503) 699-6310.

Academic Standing:

If you have less than a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), or have repeatedly violated school policy, you will be given an Academic Warning, and placed on probation. You will then have one term to show measurable improvement. At the end of the term, you will be evaluated. If no improvement has been made, you may not be re-admitted. This will also negatively affect your status as an F-1 student.

University Credit:

If you are registered at Marylhurst University, you can earn up to 18 university credits as you complete PIA levels 3, 4, and 5. Each PIA course starting in level 3 carries 1.5 undergraduate credits.

Proficiency Examinations:

In-house achievement examinations are in the form of midterm and final tests. These are held in class within a two-hour duration and are given significant weight in the grading criteria stated in each syllabus.

Certificate of Completion:

When you complete Level 5 in good academic standing, you will receive a Certificate of Completion from PIA.

PIA Referral:

If you are interested in moving into a Marylhurst academic program, you must discuss your plans with two parties:

1. PIA Administration
2. The MU International Student Admissions Specialist

Textbooks:

You are responsible for purchasing the required textbooks every term. Failure to do so may result in probationary action. Textbooks are available at the Marylhurst University Bookstore. Students are required to have the textbooks on the first day of class. Students coming to class without the proper materials may be asked to leave by the instructor. Used books are available at the Marylhurst bookstore. Please keep in mind that used books often contain work from the previous owner. The instructor may ask the class to erase all of the writing from any used books which are in use. The instructor can determine that a used book with excessive writing in it is unusable and ask the student to get a clean copy of the text.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific and proper acknowledgment. Examples: misrepresenting another's work (paper, lab report, article, or computer work) as one's own original creation and submitting it for an assignment; using someone else's ideas without attribution; failing to cite a reference or to use quotation marks where appropriate, etc.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating and plagiarism are very serious offenses in American academics and may result in failing classes or being expelled from school. PIA follows Marylhurst University policies in regards to plagiarism. Please refer to the Marylhurst Student Handbook for more information on academic honesty.

Student Records:

A file is maintained for each student attending PIA. All necessary admissions, immigration and academic documents such as I-20s, proof of financial resources and records of academic performance are kept in these files. All information contained in these files is confidential and available only to authorized personnel such as the director, DSOs and the academic coordinator. With adequate notice, a student may review the information in her/her file in the presence of the director. Requests for copies of any document in the file must be made in writing and submitted to the director.

STUDENT HEALTH**Health Insurance:**

Health insurance is required for all students who have been issued an I-20. You must show adequate proof of health insurance prior to registration. If you do not have health insurance, you may purchase it from Marylhurst University. One year's coverage is \$768.

If you are sick:

You must call the PIA office at the beginning of the day or the night before and leave a message for your teachers- (503) 699-6310. If you do not call the office to explain your absence, it will be considered an unexcused absence, which can affect your grade. **In case of emergency call 911.**

Even if you are absent you will be responsible for knowing what happened in class and completing homework and assignments. If you are sick, you need to call a classmate or the PIA office to find out what work you have missed.

If you feel that you need to see a doctor, the following clinics are close to the school:

Readycare Clinic
Telephone: (503) 652-2844
17070 SE McLoughlin Blvd
Milwaukie, Oregon 97267

Willamette Falls Immediate Care
Telephone: (503) 654-8417
9775 SE Sunnyside
Clackamas, Oregon

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition:

Application Fee	\$50 one time
Tuition – ESL	\$2200 per term
Tuition – GED	\$1200 per term
Housing Placement	\$250 one time
Homestay Fee	\$600 per month
Airport Transfer	\$50 per trip
Health Insurance	\$768 12 months

Tuition should be paid before or on the first day of classes. No fees other than the application fee will be collected before admission to the program.

Refunds:

For students who withdraw from their classes prior to the start of school PIA will provide a full refund of any tuition paid.

First Term

For students who withdraw at any point in the first four weeks of the term, PIA will retain the charges applicable to the first four weeks of the term. For students who withdraw after the first four weeks but before or at the fifth week of the term, PIA will retain a prorated amount of tuition. No refund is available to students who withdraw from school after the fifth week of the term.

Subsequent Terms/Sessions

For students who withdraw after completing the first term but before or during the fifth week of any subsequent term, PIA will retain a prorated amount of tuition up to the fifth week. For students who withdraw after the fifth week of any subsequent session, PIA will retain all of the tuition for that term.

Prorated refunds will be calculated on a weekly basis. When determining the number of weeks, PIA will consider a partial week the same as if a

whole week were completed, provided the student was present at least one day during the scheduled week.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Harassment:

PIA will not tolerate any form of harassment, including harassment on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. If you feel that another student or faculty member is harassing you, please contact the Director or another staff member immediately.

Student Conduct Code:

As a PIA student, you are expected to act in a responsible manner, respecting all other students, as well as following U.S., State, and local laws. PIA will follow the same Student Conduct Code as Marylhurst University. For more information on the Marylhurst University student conduct code, please refer to the Marylhurst University Student Handbook.

Drinking:

The possession or use of alcohol by students on campus is prohibited except when approved for a University- sponsored event. In such instances the use of alcohol is limited to those of legal age. The legal age for drinking alcohol in the U.S. is 21. Students under the age of 21 found with alcohol may be subject to a reprimand or legal action such as a ticket or fine. For more information on drugs or alcohol, please refer to the Marylhurst University Student Handbook.

Smoking:

Smoking is not allowed in any building on the campus of Marylhurst University. There are designated areas on the campus where smoking is allowed. If you are a smoker, you should smoke only in these designated areas. Students are expected to follow the laws regarding smoking; be aware that it is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy or use tobacco.

Student Grievances:

Students who have a grievance or issue which they would like to raise may contact the Director or Academic Coordinator at any time via appointment. This meeting can be kept confidential at the student's request. Furthermore, all students will have the opportunity to comment on and rate the courses and services, as well as instructors at the end of the term through evaluation forms.

SUPPORT SERVICES:

Conversation Partners:

Students wishing to get more opportunities to practice English conversation should contact the Academic Coordinator and ask to be put on the list for a conversation partner. Conversation partners are local community members who

volunteer their time to have informal discussion with international students. The program is first come / first serve, and is free.

Tutoring:

Students who wish to have extra professional help in a specific area may request a tutor. Tutors are drawn from the PIA teaching staff as well as a qualified tutor list. Tutoring costs \$35 per hour. All appointments must be cancelled no later than 24 hours before the tutoring session or the student will still be charged the fee for arranging the tutor.

Apartments:

If you wish to rent an apartment, you must take responsibility for making your own rental arrangements. PIA office staff may be consulted for referrals.

Host Families:

Many of our students wish to experience another aspect of the American lifestyle by choosing to live with a host family. Students living in a host family have the opportunity to participate in activities, learn, and make American friends outside of the classroom. Host families are usually located close to the university or on a major bus route for easy access to the school. If you wish to live with a host family, you should contact the PIA office to make the necessary arrangements.

MARYLHURST UNIVERSITY SERVICES

Bookstore:

The bookstore is located in the Clark Commons. In addition to supplying textbooks and school supplies, the bookstore offers a variety of refreshments, free Internet access, and a comfortable atmosphere for conversation.

Cafeteria:

The cafeteria in the Clark Commons is open daily. A salad bar, soup, sandwiches, desserts, and a variety of hot foods are available.

Library and Computer Labs:

The Shoen Library located on the Marylhurst campus is available for student use. Inside the library are several computer labs that are available for various student activities such as research, word processing, and email.

Post Office:

There is a full service U.S. Post Office on the first floor of the Administration building. A mailbox is located just outside the post office. The Post Office is open 8-5 Monday through Friday, closed for lunch from 11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Lost and Found:

To inquire about missing items, please ask the receptionist in the lobby of the Administration building.

TRANSPORTATION SHOPPING AND BANKING

Marylhurst, Oregon is a beautiful town 15 minutes from downtown Portland. The University is located adjacent to a main avenue, which has many accessible bus stops. There are several shops, restaurants, and banks within a short distance of Marylhurst University, and are easily accessible by foot or by bus.

You are responsible for arranging your own transportation for shopping, banking, medical appointments, etc. However at the beginning of each term PIA staff are available to assist you in setting up bank accounts, obtaining Oregon State identification cards and arrange for basic shopping needs. Please check in the office for more details.

Tri-Met (www.trimet.org) is the local bus system, which has regular routes between Marylhurst University, downtown Portland and other points of interest around the city. Student discounts are available. Monthly bus passes may be purchased at the University bookstore.

Riding Tri-Met towards Oregon City:

Bale's Supermarket: This is a large supermarket about five blocks from the University. Bale's is the center of a small shopping mall, which also contains various other shops, restaurants, and a bank. A quick, 15-minute walk from campus, Bale's is very close and convenient.

Bank of America: Bank of America is one of the largest national bank chains, with branches all over the country. Our local Bank of America branch has been very helpful in dealing with the financial needs of our students for several years. The closest Bank of America branch is located in the shopping area near Bale's supermarket, very close to the Marylhurst University campus.

Oregon City Transit Center: The Oregon City Transit Center is a major connection point for all of the local bus routes. Here you can find a bus that will take you to destinations all over the Greater Portland Area, including Clackamas Town Center – a large shopping mall, or to one of the medical clinics listed in this handbook.

Riding Tri-Met towards Portland:

Marylhurst University is located on Highway 43, a main avenue that leads North to Portland. There is a bus stop next to the Marylhurst campus where students can catch bus #35, which will take them to downtown Portland. Along the way is Albertson's. This is a large supermarket surrounded by many smaller shops and restaurants in the center of Lake Oswego, about 15 minutes from the University. If you continue on the bus you will pass many other shopping areas and reach downtown Portland.