

The ELI Weekly

Out and About: Getting Lost in Gainesville

by Valeria Carreras Millet



Photo credit: Valeria Carreras Millet

If you like to have a good time with your friends, I recommend going to downtown Gainesville. Last Saturday I went to the downtown with my friends and it was quite an adventure! None of us had a car, so we had to take the bus to get there. It dropped us off at the Reitz Union, so we had to walk on UF campus to go to the downtown. My friends were so excited to be there because they had never been to UF, and they found the campus impressive. After walking a lot, we arrived to the downtown and as you can imagine, we got lost. We wandered around the streets for about 15 minutes, looking for a place to eat, we went into a lot of restaurants to see which one called our attention, but in the end, we ended up at McDonald's, a classic. When we saw the time, it was already 9 pm, and we still had to take the bus back home. When we checked the arrival time of the bus, it said it was going to arrive in 5 minutes, and we were not exactly at the bus stop, so we decided to walk there. As we were crossing the corner to get to the bus stop, the bus that was supposed to take us home, passed us by so we started running to get to the bus stop on time and while we were running one of my friends fell and twisted her ankle, and to put the cherry on the top, when we got to the bus stop, the bus was gone. Later we managed to catch another bus, and we got home safe and sound, but it was a rush of adrenaline I must say. So again, if you want to have fun with your friends, I recommend going to downtown Gainesville, however, you should bring a map, or at least you have to be willing to get lost.

Notes from the Office

COVID-19 Testing Schedule: Face to face students, remember to do the weekly COVID-19 screening by 3pm on Monday, February 8 with this link: <https://uf.tfaforms.net/440>. **You are not required to do a saliva test this week.** Your next test must be between February 15 and 18. The schedule below will remind you what to do each week.

For the week of 2-8: Screening only	Week of 2-15: Test	Week of 2-22: Screening only	Week of 3-1: Test	Week of 3-8: Screening only	Week of 3-15: Test	Week of 3-22: Screening only	Week of 3-29: Test	Week of 4-5: Screening only	Week of 4-12: Test	Week of 4-19: Screening only
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New I-20s for New Students: New students on the F-1 visa can pick up their Active I-20s from the ELI Main Office. Having an active, continued attendance I-20 means that your I-20 is registered in SEVIS. You should keep the I-20 you used to get the F-1 visa and enter the United States for the first time, but you must use the Active I-20 for all future activities, like travel, getting a driver's license, or applying to a new school.

Notes from the Office continued:

ELI Attendance Policy and Screen, Test, Protect (STP):

Some people have had questions about the ELI attendance policy and UF's Screen, Test, Protect (STP) policy. Here is what you should know:

If you are *sick* or do not feel well

- Do not come to campus. Do not attend class (in-person or online). Contact your teacher and Victoria. You will be counted absent, but you will be able to make up the classwork when you are feeling better. If are seriously ill or think you will be sick for more than 3 days, you must contact Victoria for help.

If you are *Withheld from Campus* by UF STP

- Do not come to campus. Contact Victoria. Victoria will arrange for you to take classes until you are *Cleared* (for example, going to class online).

If Victoria says you are *Barred from Campus* because you did not follow STP rules

- Do not come to campus. You will not be allowed to attend class (in-person or online) until you follow the rules. You will be counted absent and will not be able to make up the classwork.

Please stay home if you feel ill and follow all of the STP rules so we can keep everyone safe!

CIP Weekday Activities

Monday, February 8th – Game Night (Zoom) – 6-8pm

Play fun virtual games with LAs and classmates! This week we will play Taboo.

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96129662095?pwd=TmdldmgvWkFlckhBc0FwdFdOeW9NZz09>

Meeting ID: 961 2966 2095
Passcode: gamenight

Tuesday February 9th – Plaza Hangout (In-person) – 5:15–7:15pm

Come hang out face to face at the Plaza! Socialize and play some contactless games. You MUST sign up for this activity, be cleared for campus, and wear a mask at the event.

Sign Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4BA9A823A02-plaza12>

Wednesday, February 10th – Coffee and Culture Talk (Zoom) – 6-7:30pm

Join us this week for a discussion on Valentine's Day!

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99582032927?pwd=UIFOQ1pjaiswa3huUk41cnBuMEFiQT09>

Meeting ID: 995 8203 2927
Passcode: 926123

Thursday, February 11th – Movie Night (Zoom) – 6-8:30pm

Come vote on a movie and watch it with LAs and ELI friends as we chat in the chatbox! Stick around for a fun discussion afterward! Movie choices this week are *Finding Ohana*, *Avengers*, and *The Princess and the Frog*.

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92962712031?pwd=dnZhVnh5WTJxWE5FNGZaRndyOFN0UT09>

Meeting ID: 929 6271 2031
Passcode: movienight

Weekend Activity

Saturday, February 13th – Baking Night (Zoom) – 3:30-5:30pm

Make some easy delicious desserts from home with your ELI friends on Zoom! It is a Valentine's Day tradition to make sweet treats! We will be making peanut butter cookies (Ingredients: sugar, peanut butter, egg) and Oreo Truffles (Ingredients: Oreos and cream cheese. Optional additions: Chocolate, vanilla extract). Have the ingredients ready for both or just one recipe! If you don't want to bake, you can still come watch and socialize.

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/98772067099?pwd=ZUxoR1VzZXp0YThkbGJoMjl6QUNzZz09>

Meeting ID: 987 7206 7099
Passcode: baking



Manners and Culture

Question: *What does XOXO mean for Valentine's Day?*

Answer:

Before we had emoji kissy faces and the text symbol <3, we had the letter X to represent a kiss and the letter O to represent a hug. If you see a Valentine's card with XOXO, the meaning is kisses and hugs.

Valentine's Day is February 14th. In the US, people will greet you on this day by saying, "Happy Valentine's Day." You can reply by repeating, "Happy Valentine's Day" or by saying "You too." There are several other traditions for this day of love. Romantic couples might eat a special dinner, or they might give each other flowers, balloons, and candy. Americans also celebrate friendship on this day. Children at school will exchange cards and candy. You can find boxes of Valentine's cards for school children in the grocery store right now. Some children make and decorate their own cards to celebrate friendship at school. Adult friends are very likely to share candy with each other. If Valentine's Day falls on a weekday, even college students are likely to get a piece of candy from a friend at the university.



Conversation Partners



Want to meet with an English speaker every week to practice English and make a friend? Sign up for a conversation partner! You can sign up by emailing Tate at conversationpartners@eli.ufl.edu. We still have some volunteers waiting to be paired with you!

Birthdays!

Students:

- Le Hoang Mi Nguyen – 2/11
- Rodrigo Sadurni – 2/13

Staff:

- None



Notes from the Editor

The idiom *out and about* means "doing an activity, especially after doing nothing." This is the title of our guest column – written by students, faculty, staff, and LAs. Send me your story about your experiences this semester in Gainesville or in your own country. Send your reports to mshastri@ufl.edu.



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