

The ELI Weekly

Out and About: Community Gardens



Have you ever heard of a community garden? A community garden is a piece of land that is gardened by a group of people in a neighborhood. In some community gardens, people who sign up to tend the garden are given their own piece of land to grow fruit, vegetables, or plants, while in others, the entire garden is cultivated collectively, meaning everyone works together to care for the garden and share its produce.

Gainesville has 12 community gardens in different parks and neighborhoods around the city and one located on UF campus: UF Organic Gardens Cooperative, where UF students, employees, or anyone in the community can rent a plot to grow flowers or vegetables organically. Organic gardens do not allow gardeners to use any chemical fertilizers or pesticides.

The American Community Gardening Association estimates that there are 18,000 community gardens throughout the United States. Do you have community gardens in your country? Want to learn more? Here is a 12-minute video about the history of community gardens in a major U.S. city: Boston, Massachusetts

<https://youtu.be/FWJM1TNcvIE?si=Nt0agk3BXNG62HSM>

Weekend Event



Saturday, September 20th – Clearwater Beach Trip– 9:45am – 10:45pm

Spend a day at one of the most famous beaches in Florida! With super soft sand, warm and clear water, amazing shops and restaurants, AND a spectacular sunset, you won't want to miss this full-day trip!

Spaces for transportation are limited, so make sure to buy your ticket early! Tickets are now for sale until they are sold out for 30 dollars exact cash from Tate in the CIP office. You can buy tickets Monday through Thursday between 9am and 1:30pm.

What to bring: bathing suit, towel, sunscreen, change of clothes, spending money for shops and meals (or pack your own meals and snacks).

You must follow the transportation schedule below:

Here is an estimated schedule of the day for September 20th (times may change):

9:45 a.m.- Meet at Norman Garage

12:30 p.m.- Arrive at Clearwater Beach (160 S. Gulfview Blvd., Clearwater, FL 33767)

Enjoy the beach, do shopping, eat food during this time.

7 p.m.- Meet at our saved beach location to watch the sunset

7:45 p.m.- Leave beach and head to bus at roundabout

8:00p.m.- Bus leaves, **you must be at the bus before this time**

10:45 p.m.- Arrive at Norman Garage, plan to be picked up or ride the bus around this time

Saturday, September 27 -- Green Bridges Volunteer Opportunity

We are excited to announce that ELI alumn Jeftey Saint Fleur joins 29 other environmental educators selected by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) as part of the 2025 CEE-Change Fellowship cohort. CEE stands for Civics and Environmental Education. He is part of a United States-based community of passionate educators working to build a healthier and more sustainable future within the environmental education field through a joint civics and environmental education Community Action Project.

He has a special project through this organization for ELI students to volunteer and learn! Do a sustainability and farming workshop, gardening practice, and farming! Jeftey will lead the way and you will get to explore and contribute to an amazing sustainability garden right near campus!

You must sign up to attend this event on 9/27:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4BA9A823A02-58629421-green>



CIP Weekday Activities

	<p>Monday, September 15th – Coffee Talk – 6:30-9:00pm</p> <p>Socialize with LAs and ELI friends at TeaStori! Play games, speak English, and drink a coffee or get dinner at the food truck in the area! Take bus 6.</p> <p>This semester, the location will change each week.</p> <p><i>Address: 3550 SW 34th St, Gainesville, FL 32608</i></p>
	<p>Tuesday, September 16^h – Volleyball – 6:30-9:00pm</p> <p>Play volleyball and hang out at Lexington Crossing Apartments Phase 2 Volleyball Courts with us! No experience necessary! You can also watch, socialize or play other games if you don't want to play volleyball. Take bus 35.</p> <p><i>Address: 3700 SW 27th St, Gainesville, FL 32608</i></p>
	<p>Wednesday, September 17th – Soccer – 6:30 – 9:30pm</p> <p>Come play Soccer on campus at Flavet Field on campus! No experience necessary! You can also watch, socialize or play other games if you don't want to play soccer.</p> <p><i>Address: Woodlawn Dr, Gainesville, FL 32603</i></p>
	<p>Thursday, September 18th – 4th Avenue Food Park – 6:30 – 9:00pm</p> <p>Visit this super popular restaurant area of Gainesville with amazing outdoor seating and yummy food options to try! The fun outdoor space is great for hanging out with friends and photo opportunities! Bring some spending money if you would like to buy dinner. Take bus 1.</p> <p><u>Address:</u> <i>409 SW 4th Ave Gainesville, FL 32601</i></p>
	<p>Friday, September 19th – Reitz Game Room – 6:30 – 9:00pm</p> <p>Hang out with friends in the Reitz Game Room! You can go bowling, play pool, and play board games! Bring your Gator1 ID for cheaper rates. Many Fridays are Gator Nights so bring your ID to check in and see all the fun themed activities the Reitz may have planned for you this week in addition to the game room!</p> <p><i>Address: 655 Reitz Union Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611</i></p>

CIP Photo of the Week: Soccer



Other CIP Reminders

Conversation Partners (CPs)



Want to meet with a fluent English speaker and make a new friend? Sign up for a CP! If you choose to sign up, you must meet with your partner for one hour a week. It can take up to two weeks to get a partner from when you sign up. [Sign up here!](#)

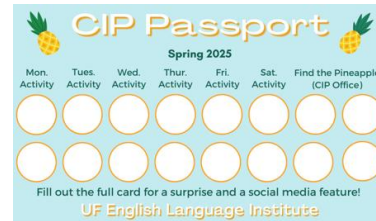
Returning students, you will not automatically be paired again if you had a CP last semester. Please make sure to sign up again here for the Fall semester if you did not request a Fall partner in your end of term evaluation from last semester.

Please email Elijah at conversationpartners@eli.ufl.edu for any issues, questions or concerns or visit her in the CIP Office during office hours.

Other CIP Reminders

CIP Passports

Don't forget to get your CIP Passport hole punched from the activity leaders at the event (not after). **We don't hole punch passports after the event.** Redeem your completed passport for a small gift, a photo for the ELI Instagram, and your name published in the ELI weekly! Need a new CIP Passport? Stop by the CIP Office.



Find the Pineapple

Remember the CIP Pineapple is hidden in a new place every Monday in the CIP office. Stop by and find it for hole punches!



Notes from the Office

Visitors at the ELI: Next week, the ELI will have three visitors from CEA, the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation. They will be reviewing how the ELI works and making sure that we do a good job teaching English. You will probably see them in the hallway, and they will join some of our classes for a few minutes.

As part of their visit, the CEA team will also interview some students about the ELI. The student interviews will be on Tuesday, September 23, from 3-4 pm. If you want to join the interview, talk to Christine and sign up. It's a great chance to practice your English listening and speaking outside of class!

New Visa Appointment Guidance: The U.S. Department of State has [new rules](#) about where you can apply for a visa.

What Changed? You must now apply for your F-1, F-2, or other U.S. visa in your **home country** or **country of residence**, not in a third country. For example, if you are from Colombia, you cannot apply for the visa in Mexico.

Exceptions: If your country does not have a U.S. embassy/consulate that gives visas, you can apply in certain other countries. See the official list here: [*Designated Locations for Nonimmigrant Visa Processing*](#).

Important Notes: Based on current regulations, the F-1 visa (or F-2, J-1, etc.) is only required for entry into the U.S.; it does not determine how long you may stay. Once inside the U.S., your visa may expire while you maintain valid status.

Visas can only be renewed at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad.

You will only need a valid visa if you plan to travel internationally and return to the U.S.

Opportunities to Participate

The **Alachua County Crisis Center** is hosting 10 virtual “Bridging Cultures” sessions on Zoom starting Sept. 17 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. The group meetings will focus on helping people who are experiencing culture shock. This is not an ELI event, but please feel free to check-in with Christine if you’d like more information.

The **University of Florida International Center** would like to welcome you! In order to show their appreciation and celebrate your presence on campus, they cordially invite you to attend a welcome reception with light refreshments on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 from 5:30pm-7:30pm inside the Rion Ballroom of the J. Wayne Reitz Union.

There is no cost to you, but they do ask that you let us know if you plan to attend. Due to space considerations, this invitation is extended only to those students who began their time at **UF this year**. However, you are welcome to bring any immediate family members (such as your spouse or child). **Please use this online form to RSVP by September 16:**
<https://forms.gle/Pbv93QEUUCUjXjCb7>



Birthdays!

Students

None this week!

Staff

Minsang Kim

September 21



Grammar

Q: I find it hard to understand when native speakers say contractions, like *could've* or *I'll*. Do Americans every have trouble understanding each other?

Hearing the contracted form can be tricky! In general, Americans don't have trouble hearing and understanding contracted forms. The only time I hear people ask for clarification might be with the words *can* and *can't*. Sometimes, it's hard to distinguish those two words in spoken English because many of us don't say the final 't' sound very clearly.

Joke of the Week

Q: Why is number 7 so afraid of number 8?

A: Because seven eight nine!





I need students, LAs, instructors, staff, and administrators to help me write the *Weekly*!

- Write a paragraph about your experiences this semester. You could write about an ELI activity, a Gainesville event, a fabulous local restaurant, or tell us about a place or event in your country that we should visit.
- Send me grammar questions for me to put in the *Weekly*.
- Send me manners and culture questions for me to put in the *Weekly*.
- Send me jokes to put in the *Weekly*.

Send your paragraphs and/or questions to Jen Ramos (jenramos@ufl.edu) Use the subject heading: *ELI Weekly*.



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