Saint Leo University

Bridge Program

Handbook

Fall/Spring 2018-2019
This handbook is designed to be used together with the Saint Leo University Student Handbook and the International Student Handbook (http://www.saintleo.edu/international-services). The goal of this handbook is to provide useful and current information about the Bridge Program at Saint Leo University. Please contact Dr. Iona Sarieva (iona.sarieva@saintleo.edu) if this handbook does not address a question you have about the Program.
Program Mission

Following the core values and the mission of Saint Leo University, the Bridge Program at Saint Leo strives to support international students by providing them with high-quality English for academic purposes instruction. The main goal of the program is to maximize students’ opportunities for academic success through assuring their balanced language development, personal and academic growth, and smooth transition and adaptation to their new academic culture. An integral part of the University community, the Bridge Program fosters the spirit of collaboration, respect, responsible stewardship, intercultural understanding, and academic integrity.
Program Description

The Saint Leo University Bridge Program is an academic program designed to provide qualified students with the opportunity to adjust smoothly to the US academic environment. The Program serves the needs and the interests of international students who meet the minimum English language proficiency requirements for University admission. The primary goal of the Bridge Program is to increase students’ potential for success in the new academic culture. The credits earned through the successful completion of the courses offered in the Program are counted towards students’ total graduation credits as general electives or University Exploration credits. Starting Fall 2014, two Bridge Program tracks are offered: (1) the students of low-intermediate and intermediate levels of proficiency, will enroll in a two-semester regular track; (2) the students of high-intermediate level of proficiency will enroll in a one-semester fast track. The placement criteria are stated in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog and in the Bridge Program brochure; more details about the course schedule are provided in the Course Description section of the handbook.
Program Policies and Procedures

- The Program admission criteria are outlined in the University active catalog available at: http://saintleo.catalog.acalog.com.
- The Bridge students follow the course sequence provided in the Course Sequence section of this handbook and in the University catalog.
- The Bridge students are advised by the Program Director or a Bridge faculty member. A new academic advisor will be appointed upon the successful completion of the program (typically after the students has started his/her ENG 12 or ENG 119 composition course).
- The passing grade for all Bridge Program courses is C-.
- The maximum number of credit hours for which Bridge students are registered each semester is 15 credits, the minimum number is 12.
- For all students who have successfully completed ENG 118, the placement decisions for the next level ENG Composition courses are made based on their final grade for ENG 118 and the results of the English placement test taken by all freshman students. This test is taken as part of the final exam for ENG 118. The students who receive a passing ENG 118 grade and receive a passing score on the placement writing test qualify for ENG 121. All other students qualify for ENG 119.
- All Bridge students are expected to take the next composition course for which they qualify (ENG 119 or ENG 121) at Saint Leo University during the first semester after their successful completion of the Bridge program.
- If a Bridge student challenges level placement, it is his/her responsibility to contact the Program director and arrange additional placement testing before the end of the Add/Drop period. The test will be evaluated by two Bridge faculty members and final placement decision will be made. After the end of the Add/Drop period class schedules will not be modified and placement will not be changed.
- If a Bridge student challenges a course grade, he/she should follow the procedures described in the University Undergraduate Catalog.
Description of Proficiency Levels

a. The proficiency level scale used in the Program is the TESOL Pre-K–12 English Language Proficiency Standards Framework. Because the students are freshmen, the grade cluster level considered is 9-12 grades (available at: https://www.tesol.org/docs/books/bk_prek-12elpstandards_framework_318.pdf?sfvrsn=2).

“Level 1-Starting
At L1, students initially have limited or no understanding of English. They rarely use English for communication. They respond nonverbally to simple commands, statements, and questions. As their oral comprehension increases, they begin to imitate the verbalizations of others by using single words or simple phrases, and they begin to use English spontaneously.
At the earliest stage, these learners construct meaning from text primarily through illustrations, graphs, maps, and tables.

Level 2-Emerging
At L2, students can understand phrases and short sentences. They can communicate limited information in simple everyday and routine situations by using memorized phrases, groups of words, and formulae. They can use selected simple structures correctly but still systematically produce basic errors. Students begin to use general academic vocabulary and familiar everyday expressions. Errors in writing are present that often hinder communication.

Level 3-Developing - Bridge Regular Track – Semester 1 (also referred as intermediate)
At L3, students understand more complex speech but still may require some repetition. They use English spontaneously but may have difficulty expressing all their thoughts due to a restricted vocabulary and a limited command of language structure. Students at this level speak in simple sentences, which are comprehensible and appropriate, but which are frequently marked by grammatical errors. Proficiency in reading may vary considerably. Students are most successful constructing meaning from texts for which they have background knowledge upon which to build.

Level 4-Expanding - Bridge Regular Track – Semester 2 and Bridge Fast track (also referred as high intermediate)
At L4, students’ language skills are adequate for most day-to-day communication needs. They communicate in English in new or unfamiliar settings but have occasional difficulty with complex structures and abstract academic concepts.
Students at this level may read with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts within the text. However, they may not understand texts in which the concepts are presented in a decontextualized manner, the sentence structure is complex, or the vocabulary is abstract or has multiple meanings. They can read independently but may have occasional comprehension problems, especially when processing grade-level information.

Level 5-Bridging – Exit level for both tracks
At L5, students can express themselves fluently and spontaneously on a wide range of personal, general, academic, or social topics in a variety of contexts. They are poised to function in an environment with native speaking peers with minimal language support or guidance.
Students have a good command of technical and academic vocabulary as well of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. They can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured texts of differing lengths and degrees of linguistic complexity. Errors are minimal, difficult to spot, and generally corrected when they occur.”
**Course Description**

**Bridge Courses**

**ENG 114 – Composition and Grammar for Speakers of Other Languages.**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program.

This course is designed to remedy the special problems of non-native speakers related to developing their academic writing skills. Emphasis is on various grammatical structures used in oral and written academic communication. (3 credits)

**ENG 118 – Composition for Speakers of Other Languages.**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program; successful completion of ENG114

A course designed to help non-native speakers improve their critical thinking, reasoning, and academic writing skills. Increased emphasis is placed upon English idiomatic usage, academic text structure, and appropriate citation and referencing practices in academic writing. (3 credits)

**ENG 120 – Listening, Lecture Note-Taking, and Speaking**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program.

This course is designed to improve the academic listening and speaking skills of non-native speakers of English. Emphasis is on lecture note-taking, academic communication in various settings, and presentation skills. (3 credits)

**ENG 115 – College Reading I**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program.

This course is designed to improve the critical reading and academic vocabulary skills of non-native speakers of English. Emphasis is on using effective reading strategies to aid in the comprehension of general academic texts. (3 credits)
**ENG 117 – College Reading II**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program; successful completion of ENG 115.

This course aims to support the mastery of key academic reading skills and the application of effective critical reading strategies of non-native speakers of English. During the course, the students will be involved in active reading of college-level texts, critical examination of text organization patterns, identification of main and supporting ideas, and analysis of the connections of ideas presented in the texts. (3 credits)

**SLU 105 – Introduction to American Culture and University Life**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program.

This course is intended for international students who are entering a US college. It focuses on improving international students’ cross-cultural competence and granting opportunities for analyzing complex social, moral, and academic issues that students will have to face while studying in the US. (3 credits)

**SLU 110 – Academic Learning Laboratory I**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program.

This course is designed to improve the academic skills of non-native speakers of English. Emphasis is on access and evaluation of informational resources, on gaining familiarity with university expectations, regulations, and resources, as well as on developing oral and written academic presentation skills. (2 credits)

**SLU 112 – Academic Learning Laboratory II**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program; successful completion of SLU 110.

This course is designed to improve the academic skills of non-native speakers of English. Emphasis is on mastery of active and critical use of informational resources in students’ academic work, critical reading, logical thinking, and academic writing. (2 credits)
University Courses for Bridge Students and All Degree-Pursuing Students

**SLU 101 – Introduction to the University Experience**

This course provides a unique, collective, intellectual experience that helps to establish familiar and cooperative bonds among the student, the instructor, and the academic advisor. It provides a framework of effective academic and personal strategies to help the student succeed both in and out of the classroom. Students are engaged in reflective writing assignments, group and class discussions, individual and group presentations, and various Internet activities. The course is supplemented with convocations and guest speakers from many disciplines, including career development, majors, campus support services, personal finance, Saint Leo history, and our Benedictine-inspired values. The student also becomes an active member of a support group by examining problems and issues common to the freshman experience. (1 credit)

**SLU 200 – Learning Laboratory**

This course is offered to emphasize positive change and enhance student academic skills, confidence, and potential for academic success. (1 credit)

**Transitional English Language Course**  
*(for more detail see Program Policies and Procedures section of this handbook)*

**ENG 119 – Advanced Composition for Speakers of Other Languages**

Prerequisite: Admission into the Bridge Program; successful completion of ENG118 and passing grade on the freshman English language placement test.

This course is designed to address the specific problems of non-native speakers of English; it specifically targets the refining of their academic written skills in English including grammar, vocabulary, and genre. For Bridge students, the course replaces the ENG 002 (3 credits).
All second-semester Bridge students are required to take two mainstream university courses: University Exploration and Campus Requirement. The fast-track students are required to take one course. It is highly recommended this course to be the campus requirement course SLU 125: Choosing Wellness. They may choose these courses from the following list (course descriptions are provided in the University Catalog):

**Campus Requirements:**

- **SLU 125** – Choosing Wellness (highly recommended as the only mainstream course to be taken by Fast track students and as one of the two mainstream courses for the Regular track students) – 3 credits
- **SLU 101** – Introduction to University Experience (required for all freshman) – 1 credit

**University Exploration Courses**

*Note: usually taken as a second mainstream course by regular track students. The decision is made individually after a consultation with the academic advisor.*

- **MAT 003** – Basic Algebra (remedial mathematics course)
- **MAT 128** – Intermediate Algebra (after placement test) – 3 credits
- **MAT 131** – College Mathematics – 3 credits
- **MAT 141** – Business Mathematics (after placement test) – 3 credits
- **COM 140** – Basic Computer Skills – 3 credits
- **HUM 110CL** – Giants of the Arts
- **HUM 110HM** – Revolution Now! Democracy in Troubled Times
- **HTY/SSC110HM** – Native American History and Life: More than Teepees and Tomahawks
- **PSY 110HA** – Psychological Well Being: How to be Sane in an Insane World
- **SOC 110HA** – The McDonaldization of Society
- **SOC110HM** – Building a Multiracial Society
Course Sequence

Regular Track (two semesters)

Semester 1 (15 credit hours)

**ENG 114** - Composition and Grammar for Speakers of Other Languages (3 credits)
**ENG 115** - College Reading I (3 credits)
**ENG 120** - Listening, Lecture Note-Taking, and Speaking (3 credits)
**SLU 105** - Introduction to American Culture and University Life (3 credits)
**SLU 110** - Academic Learning Laboratory I (2 credits)
**SLU 101** - Introduction to University Experience (1 credit)

Semester 2 (15 credit hours)

**ENG 118** - Composition for Speakers of Other Languages (3 credits)
**ENG117** - College Reading II (3 credits)
**SLU 112** - Academic Learning Laboratory II (2 credits)
**SLU 200** - Learning Laboratory (1 credit)
*Approved Campus Requirement/University Explorations course (3 credits)
*Approved University Explorations course (3 credits)

**Fast-track (one semester, 15 credit hours)**

**ENG 118** - Composition for Speakers of Other Languages (3 credits)
**ENG117** - College Reading II (3 credits)
**SLU 112** - Academic Learning Laboratory II (2 credits)
**SLU 105** - Introduction to American Culture and University Life (3 credits)
**SLU 101** - Introduction to University Experience (1 credit)
*SLU 125 - a Campus Requirement course (recommended) or a University Explorations course (3 credits)
Bridge Students Share Their Learning Experiences

Read students’ blog publications:

http://bridge-saintleo.blogspot.com/
http://lifeatsaintleo.wordpress.com/
http://bridgeprogramcarmona.blogspot.com/

Our FaceBook Page: Bridge at Saint Leo University
Dr. Iona Sarieva earned her PhD from the University of South Florida in the field of Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology. She holds a Master degree in Russian Studies and Teaching English as a Foreign Language graduate certificate from Sofia University, Bulgaria. She has taught English for Academic Purposes, ESOL teacher training courses, and Russian as a Foreign Language in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. Her professional experience includes instruction of face-to-face, blended, and distance learning courses as well as development of distance learning courses in the field of TESOL. Dr. Sarieva’s research agenda is focused on student-centered approaches to language teaching, teacher-training, and computer-assisted learning. She has published multiple articles and book chapters on these topics in the United States, Asia, and Europe. Dr. Sarieva is a Fulbright Alumna and worked as a Fulbright scholar at Sofia University, Bulgaria. She enjoys spending time with her family, going for long walks with her dog, reading, and traveling.

Natalya Glover is a full time English instructor for the Bridge Program at Saint Leo University. She is also an adjunct professor for the Department of Criminal Justice. As an English instructor she is responsible for student advising, and she teaches several classes including English for Academic Purposes, ENG 114 and 118 designed specifically for Bridge students, as well as Basic Composition Skills, ENG 002 designed for traditional students. Her professional interests are in the field of ESL writing and criminal justice. In her free time, Natalya enjoys horseback riding and her aerobic classes in the gym.

Dr. Marcela van Olphen received her M.A. in Spanish Linguistics and her Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education from Purdue University. Recently, she did a Graduate Certificate in Global Public Health with a focus in Latin America at the University of South Florida. Dr. van Olphen teaches Spanish and Portuguese classes, in the bridge Program she teaches SLU 103: Introduction to American Culture and University Life. Her research interests include world languages and English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) teacher education with a focus on the integration of technology, heritage learners, international education, and global public health. Her publications include articles in journals like Learning and Leading with Technology, Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, CALICO, and the Handbook for Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) for teacher educators. She is a frequent presenter at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Florida Foreign Language Teacher Association (FFLA). Dr. van Olphen has received teaching awards from University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Purdue University. In her spare time, she enjoys biking with her family, gardening, and cooking.
Visa Requirements: Things to Remember

A message from Mrs. Paige Ramsey-Hamacher,
Director for Multicultural and International Services

Hello all – here are some really good tips from the Department of Homeland Security, Student and Exchange Visitor program regarding international students and holiday travel. Remember to travel with “SANTA”:

“During the holiday season, many international students will be traveling outside of the United States and returning home. To ensure that nonimmigrant students have an uninterrupted traveling experience, designated school officials (DSOs) should remind them about SANTA:

1. **Sign the Form I-20.**

   A nonimmigrant student should travel with a valid, signed Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.” **I-20 Must be signed once every 12 months except when you are on OPT and then it is signed every 6 months. Come to Paige Ramsey-Hamacher’s office #216 in the Student Activities Building in order to have your I-20 signed.**

2. **Apply for passport or visa renewal in the student’s home country, if necessary.**

   A nonimmigrant student who has either an expired passport or one that will expire within six months should apply for renewals while at home. A student who holds an expired visa must apply for renewal prior to re-entering the U.S. Students should check the website of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in their home country to make an appointment once they know their travel dates. A student traveling on expired or soon-to-expire documents may have trouble when seeking re-entry into the United States. Advise a student traveling to a third country to check the visa requirements for that country before travel.

3. **Note that an employed student should bring an employment letter and Form I-766, “Employment Authorization Document,” (EAD) when traveling.**

   An employed nonimmigrant student should travel with a valid EAD and a letter from the employer verifying employment. This will assist U.S. Customs and Border Protection in verifying the student’s information upon re-entry. **This is for students on OPT.**
Visa Requirements: Things to Remember

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4. **Travel with all required documents.**

A nonimmigrant student should travel with all required documents but should never place those documents in checked luggage. The required documents include at least the following: a valid, signed Form I-20; a valid passport (good for more than six months, unless otherwise exempt); a valid nonimmigrant visa, if required; and financial information showing proof of necessary funds to cover tuition and living expenses. Failure to have all required documents may jeopardize a student’s ability to re-enter the United States.

5. **Assign an emergency phone number.**

School officials may wish to consider setting up a phone number that nonimmigrant students can call to contact a DSO in the event of an emergency while traveling. **At Saint Leo, the emergency number which can be called collect if need be is for Campus Safety (352) 588-8432.**

By traveling with “SANTA”, international students will have an uneventful re-entry and travel experience.”

Check out other good tips from ICE on this website – [http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/)

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Useful Information Sources

- **International Services Office, Saint Leo University:**
  https://www.saintleo.edu/international-services
  The International Services office staff will provide you with various useful information related to the university services for international students: International Student Handbook, driver’s license information, employment information, student visa information etc.

- Check our **International Students** page to find more about our student clubs, various programs on campus, as well as funding & loans information and useful links: https://www.saintleo.edu/international-student-experience

- **Immigration and Custom Enforcement** – Student Process Steps: How to Navigate the U.S. Immigration System: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/
  This webpage highlights the key steps international students should follow from their arrival to the United States to the end of their studies.

- **Driver License Offices in Pasco County** - Information about service centers in Pasco county, driver licenses, and driving tests: https://www.flhsmv.gov/locations/pasco/

- **Health Insurance Information** – Saint Leo University requires all full-time undergraduate students attending University Campus to carry health insurance. To assist students in following this policy, the university automatically enrolls students in the university-endorsed health insurance plan and bills their student accounts. Students with their own insurance through a group or individual plan may waive the coverage and avoid the fee. For more information, visit https://www.saintleo.edu/student-health-insurance.

- **Culture Shock 101**: http://www.travelinsurancereview.net/culture-shock/
  Similar to language, the rules and customs that define a person’s culture are learned early and reinforced steadily through their continued experiences and social learning...

- **GrammarBook.com**: http://www.grammarbook.com/
  GrammarBook.com is your site for helpful rules, real-world examples, and fun quizzes.

- **Grammarly**: http://www.grammarly.com/
  With Grammarly you can instantly find and correct most typical grammatical issues, improve word choice with context-optimized vocabulary suggestions, avoid plagiarism by checking your texts against over 8 billion web pages.

- **Bridge at Saint Leo University on Facebook**