



Learning Support vs. ESL

There are several important differences between the Learning Support (LS) program and the ESL program at GPC. U.S. high school graduates should consider these carefully when deciding which program to follow.

Decision is Final - If you choose LS courses, you will not be allowed to switch to the ESL program later. The decision that you make at the onset of your college career is important and final.

Grammar Issues - LS courses are designed for native speakers of English and may not address the grammatical issues facing ESL students. The ESL classes are specifically designed to help with language issues that are unique to non-native speakers of English.

Exit Exam - To finish LS English courses, you must pass the COMPASS test in addition to an exit essay. Many ESL students have an extremely difficult time passing the exit essay because the essay is evaluated as a test for native speakers. ESL also has an exit essay, but it is evaluated by ESL instructors who are sensitive to the needs of non-native speakers.

Attempt Policy

- LS classes have a very strict attempt policy. You are given a total of two attempts to complete the required English course and two attempts to complete the required reading course. If you cannot complete your required course or courses in two attempts, you are suspended from all University System colleges, including GPC, for one year.
- The ESL program has a more lenient attempt policy. You are given three attempts for each course, not each area. Also, if you cannot pass a course in three attempts, you are only suspended for one semester before you can come back and try the course one more time.

General ESL Comments

- ESL courses are designed to help you learn the formal English that you will need to be successful in college. While your conversational English may be strong, it will not meet the requirements of college-level courses.
- Upon completion of the ESL program, you are eligible for college-level English.
- ESL courses on your transcript do not negatively affect you when you transfer to another college. Many of our students transfer to the best University System schools, such as Georgia Tech and UGA.
- ESL students are a diverse group. Even if you have been in the States for many years, you will feel comfortable in our classes.

For more information about the ESL program and your choices, please contact Michael Wallace at michael.wallace@gpc.edu or 770-274-5180.