



Conversation Courses – Course Description

English Now!

The goal of English Now!’s Conversation Course Program is to provide students with instruction in and practice speaking and understanding conversational English in a small-group setting with classmates who are at approximately the same level of English proficiency. Our maximum class size for this program is four students, so our teachers are able to personalize instruction to meet the needs of each individual student. In our Conversation Courses, students have the opportunity to share information about their countries of origin with classmates from around the world and discuss topics related to personal interests and current events.

Levels of English Proficiency. Conversation Courses at English Now! are open to students from High Beginner to Advanced levels. New students are placed in an appropriate class based on a written placement test and an oral sample.

Curriculum. A wide variety of texts and materials are available to instructors working with students in our Conversation Courses. Instructors choose a textbook series or text like American Headway at the appropriate level, A Day in the Life of an ESL Student, one of the books in the What I Believe series, Azar’s Fundamentals of Grammar, or Kathleen Olson’s Something to Talk About as the basis for their curriculum. Instructors also draw individual lessons from any number of ESL textbooks in English Now!’s teacher library. Alternately, some Conversation teachers use a theme-based approach to conversation practice, focusing on stories in the news, current events and issues, or personal travel plans.

Each teacher will assess the goals and language level of a particular Conversation group before selecting materials. Classes will focus on improving conversational ability while emphasizing listening comprehension skills, the proper use of English grammar, vocabulary development, common idiom usage, and practice in pronunciation and intonation. Conversation teachers will tap the vast resources of the Internet to engage and instruct students in reading and listening to English, summarizing and retelling stories, and presenting information and ideas orally.

Homework. Conversation Course students at English Now! are encouraged to complete all homework assigned by their teachers in order to enhance progress in learning English. Homework may include short assignments in reading, writing, listening comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary development, as well as preparation for oral communications activities in class.

Innovative Team-Teaching Program Model. Conversation Course instructors may utilize a new team-teaching model that has proved to be academically significant and a lot of fun for teachers and students. In this approach, two Conversation teachers bring their classes together once or twice a

month on a regular basis for approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Teachers work together in advance to create a plan for each joint lesson. The goal of these team-taught sessions is to encourage the two groups of students to get to know each other in an enjoyable setting while working on grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary together. Group language games and pair work are emphasized. In this model, students also have access to a second native-speaker of English.

Schedules and Duration of Study. Conversation Courses meet twice a week Monday through Friday in the morning or the afternoon for two hours per class session, or once a week on Saturday mornings. Conversation Plus classes add one or more hours of private instruction a week per student to the four hours of weekly group instruction.

English Now! typically runs as many as seven Conversation Courses a week at any given time, with specific schedules varying, dependent on student and teacher availability.

English Now! Conversation students may study with us for whatever duration meets their individual needs, however we recommend at least two to three months of instruction for progress in English to be observable. In fact, a number of our students choose to study with us for a year or more! Because our Conversation Courses are flexible, we can generally accommodate students who take family vacations or have business travel.

Special Activities Available at English Now! All Conversation Course students are invited to participate in the following activities, as their schedules permit:

- Friday Outings to a wide variety of places of interest in and around Washington DC, led by an English Now! teacher or staff member
- Lunchtime Talks presented on Wednesdays by members of our staff on topics related to travel or life in the US, as well as American history or significant holidays
- Potluck Lunches, held on one Thursday a month, which feature international dishes made by faculty, staff, and students in the Intensive English Program
- Pancake breakfasts offered one morning a month to all students studying that morning, and especially made and served by our director
- Low-cost Friday workshops on topics such as pronunciation improvement, parenting issues, and extra writing practice

With Questions or to Enroll. Visit us at the school, email us at info@english-now.com, or call us at +1 301 718 3575. We look forward to meeting you and would be glad to have you take a proficiency test – with no cost and no commitment – to learn more about your language background and to enable us to talk to you about placement.

