ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

San Antonio College

A Handbook for English as a Second Language Students

Department of Human Development and Public Service

Center for English Language Learning

(Revised August 2026)

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Who are we?

The **Center for English Language Learning (CELL)** is one academic discipline in the Department of Human Development and Public Service. We are part of San Antonio College, one of the Alamo Colleges. All information in this handbook is supplementary to the San Antonio College Student Handbook.

Where are we?

We are in the Oppenheimer Academic Center (OC) building on the San Antonio College campus. Our main office is in **OC 119**.

Vision

The vision of San Antonio College is to be recognized nationally for student success and best practices. As part of that vision, CELL's vision is to provide a vibrant learning environment for English language learners (ELLs) to prepare for success in their academic and/or career choices.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Center for English Language Learning is to provide an opportunity for English Language Learners (ELLs) to study in a dynamic learning community in order to acquire essential English language and cultural adaptation skills necessary to meet academic, professional, and personal goals.

Goals

- To provide high-quality, comprehensive instruction for ELLs
- To prepare ELLs to transition to and be successful in college-level classes
- To develop the communication skills of ELLs to work in a diverse global society

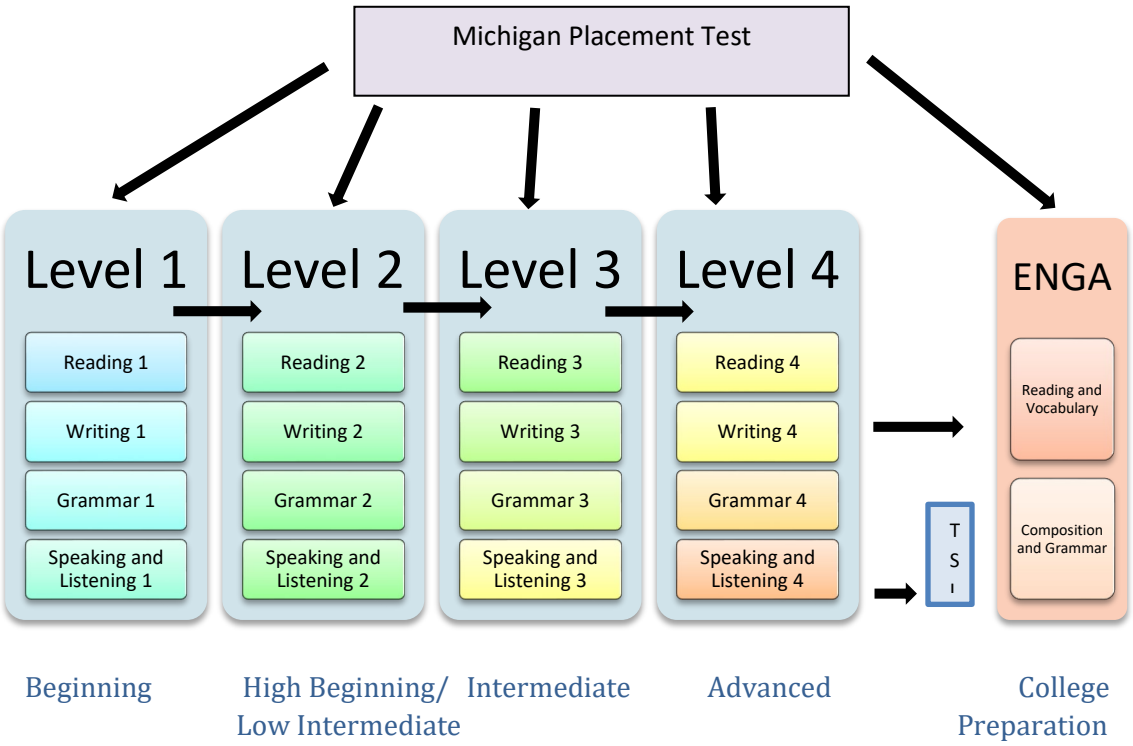
Accreditation

San Antonio College has been accredited since 1972 and has regional accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

The Center for English Language Learning at SAC has national accreditation from the *Commission on English Language Program Accreditation.*

Progression through the Program

All students first must take the Michigan Placement Test to see what level they will start in.* Once a student enters a level, they must complete all classes for that level following the chart below.



ESLA and ESL Levels 1 – 4

Both academic students (ESLA) and continuing education students (ESL) are enrolled in Levels 1-4.

Students take classes in each of the core areas (Reading, Writing, Grammar, and Speaking and Listening) before going to the next level. These courses are to prepare students for advanced courses (ENGA) or to improve communication skills in English for professional careers

TSI Test

After students complete all classes in Level 4, they need to take the TSI Test to see if they are college ready.

ENGA

The ENGA courses are college preparatory courses. In the ENGA courses, students learn skills critical for success in college classes. In ENGA Composition and Grammar, students learn to write academic essays and how to cite sources to avoid plagiarism. In ENGA Reading and Vocabulary, students learn skills and strategies to read and understand advanced college-level texts.

- **Requirements:** (1) completion of ESLA or ESL level 4 or ENGA course placement testing; (2) *college readiness (TSI) exam

Recommended Progression through Program

It is strongly recommended that students take a maximum of two classes each flex. Students who follow the recommended plan will complete each level in one semester. Students will complete the entire program in 2 years and 1 flex if they begin in Level 1 and take ENGA. Students may be able to complete the program faster if they take summer courses (optional).

*Students must retake the Michigan Placement Test if they stop taking classes for one year or more.

Registration and Enrollment

The best way for students to register for ESL classes is to come to the Oppenheimer Academic Center 119 or call (210) 486-0965. The office staff can speak Spanish, Arabic, and Farsi and will help students through the whole process.

Who can apply for the Academic Program (ESLA and ENGA)?

Take ESLA and ENGA (credit) classes if you:

- want to improve reading, writing, grammar, and listening/speaking skills for college-level courses;
- have an F-1 visa;
- have financial aid; or
- are U.S. citizens or permanent residents who wish to continue their education at SAC, transfer to university programs or pursue professional careers.

How do I apply?

1. APPLY TEXAS: Complete admissions form online: www.applytexas.org (admissions process takes approximately 4 business days).
Note: Café College can assist students who need help filling out their applications.

2. BANNER ID: Receive Banner ID in email from college.

3. TRANSCRIPTS: Evaluate your transcripts www.naces.org.

- High school diploma – Basic / General Evaluation
- University transcripts – Course by Course Evaluation
- GED in Spanish or English

Submit Official Transcripts & Evaluation OR GED scores to Admission and Records. The documents must be sent directly from the institution to SAC:

- Electronically: **sac-transcripts@alamo.edu**
- Mail San Antonio College **Attn: Welcome Center Box 704 1819 N. Main Ave. San Antonio, Texas 78212 (MLC 207).**

4. MENINGITIS VACCINATION: If you are UNDER 22 years old, you must get the Bacterial Meningitis Vaccination and wait 10 days before registering.

5. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLACEMENT TEST:
The free test is offered in the Oppenheimer Academic Center #119 Monday through Thursday at 9:30 am by appointment. Please contact at 210-486-0965 or email sac-cell@alamo.edu to schedule your placement test.

6. REGISTRATION: After you take the Michigan placement test and complete all the enrollment steps, you will be registered in the ESL Main Office.

Who can apply for the Continuing Education Program (ESL)?

Take ESL (non-credit) classes if you:

- have to pay out-of-state tuition;
- have any kind of visa except F-1 Visa;
- want to improve English skills for training or employment opportunities; and/or
- plan to take ESLA after they have in their possession, documents and/or evidence of a high school diploma, residency, etc.

How do I apply?

1. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLACEMENT. The free test is offered Oppenheimer Academic Center #119 Monday through Thursday at 9:30 am by appointment. ESL Main Office at 210-486-0965 or email sac-cell@alamo.edu to schedule the English Proficiency Placement test.

2. SCAN THE QR CODE. It will open a form. Fill it out and submit.

ESL- Placement Test Request

3. **REGISTRATION:** After you take the English proficiency placement test, you will be registered in ESL courses.

Helpful Links

- Registration Calendar
- Tuition and Fees
- Payment Deadlines

Registration for Continuing Students Each Flex

Students must complete all courses in a Level before they can move to the next level. If a student does not pass a class, they must retake the class.

If students register for a class in the next level before receiving their final grades, but they do not pass their current class, they must go to the office to register to retake their current class again. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Refund Policy

Academic Students (ESLA and ENGA)

Students who do not attend the class and withdraw by the first day will receive a full refund.

Students who drop a course within the first two weeks will receive a 70% refund.

Students who drop a course within the first two and a half weeks will receive a 25% refund.

Each flex has a specific refund payment calendar.

Continuing Education Students (ESL)

Students who have paid for a class but do not attend will receive a full refund.

Students who have paid for a class and attend one day or more of a class will NOT receive a refund.

First Week Attendance Policy

All students should attend classes on the first day of class. If students are absent on the first day, their instructors will contact them to see if they are planning to attend the following classes.

If the instructors receive no contact by the Census Date, the students will be dropped from the class by their instructors.

The census date for Academic Students (ESLA and ENGA) is the second Monday of a flex.

The census date for Continuing Education Students (ESL) is the second Monday of a flex if the class is a Monday/ Wednesday class OR the second Tuesday of a flex if the class is a Tuesday/ Thursday class.

Academic Advisement Process

- After taking the Michigan Placement Test, students will be advised by the ESL office about their correct level. If there are any problems with enrollment (such as problems with their FAFSA), they will be sent to an advisor in the Empowerment Center.
- All Level 4 students receive advisement from the ENGA Coordinator about the TSI exam requirement for ENGA classes.
- When students are ready for college classes, they will be advised by the Empowerment Center advisors about which classes to take.

Repeat Course Policy

Repeat Course Policy or "3-Peat Policy": If an Academic student (ESLA or ENGA) needs to take the same course three times, there is a financial impact on the student of an additional $125 per credit hour. (See SAC Student Handbook)

At-Risk Student Policy

At-risk Student Policy:

Definition: An At-risk student is one who has either failed the same course 2 times or failed multiple courses in a particular level.

Procedure for Mentoring At-Risk Students:

1. The first time a student fails a class, their new instructor will be notified. The new instructor will meet with the student during the first week to discuss strategies to help them pass the class for the second time.

2. If a student fails two different classes in the same semester, a meeting with their advisor will be arranged to go over financial aid and strategies.
3. If a student fails three or more classes in a semester, that student will meet with a program representative to discuss strategies and how to best move forward in the program.

Orientation Videos

Orientation videos are available for students who need help with:

- ACES
- Canvas
- Getting textbooks
- Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint
- Student Email
- Checking Financial Aid

Classroom Policies and Procedures

Attendance and Homework Policy

Attendance Policy: Students can be dropped from a class after **two absences**.

An instructor can give an absence when a student misses an entire class, comes late to class, or leaves class early.

Students who are absent 2 times must meet with their instructor to make a plan to make up missed work and discuss how to move forward in the class. Failure to meet with their instructor can result in being dropped from the class.

It is important that students communicate regularly with their instructors when they cannot attend class. This can be by Canvas email or meeting with an instructor before the missed class.

Homework Policy: Students are expected to have a minimum of 2 hours of homework for each class meeting. Homework is an essential part of each class.

If students know that they do not have the time to spend on the class, they should speak with their instructor about dropping the class.

Grading

Academic Students - ESLA and ENGA students are graded using the following criteria.

Passing
- A = 100 – 90
- B = 89 - 80
- C = 79 – 70

Not Passing
- IP = 69 or lower
- F = 69 or lower (for students who stop attending classes or have plagiarized on assignments.)

*I = Incomplete – A student may receive a grade of incomplete (I) if they are not able to complete a course, but they have told their instructor and have planned to make up missing assignments within 90 days of the final day of the class. To get an I, students must sign a contract with the instructor with the approved plan. If the missing assignments are not completed by the 90-day deadline, the student will receive an F.

CE Students - ESL students are graded using the following criteria.

Passing
- A = 100 – 90
- B = 89 - 80
- C = 79 – 70

Not Passing
- NR = 69 or lower

Extra Credit Policy

Extra credit will not be given to individual students. The only extra credit that will be given will be offered to the class as a whole.

Extra credit will not be given on the final exam.

Academic Honesty

All written work must be in your own words.

Do NOT copy work from your classmates, copy and paste information from the internet, write answers in your own language and then translate it into English, or use artificial intelligence (Chat GPT etc.) to complete your work.

Scholastic dishonesty has very serious consequences, including failing the assignment, failing the course, or being suspended or expelled from the college.

Any suspicion of submitted work that does not represent the student's language and appears to be the work of artificial intelligence or produced through the excessive use of a translator or otherwise appears to be taken from another source will result in the student demonstrating written proof of knowledge during student hours.

Final Exam Policy

Final exams are 40% of the student's total grade. Final exams are usually scheduled for the final day of a flex. Students must be present for the final exam. If students cannot attend the final exam, they must plan with their instructor prior to the last week of the flex.

Administrative Procedures

Student Complaints and Complaint Form

Please follow the following process for complaints about the course:

1. Speak directly with your instructor first.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved with your instructor, you may speak to the ESL Faculty Lead, Ms. Linda Silva (OC 130).
3. Finally, if the issue is still not resolved, you may make a formal complaint (located in OC 119) and speak with the Associate Dean.

Student Appeal for Final Grade

Students who think they have received the wrong grade in a class can appeal their final grade.

First, they must speak with their instructors.

Then they can go to the Oppenheimer Academic Center 119 to fill out a form if the issue is not resolved with their instructor.

Request to Change Level

Students may not skip a level. However, if students feel that they are not in the correct level, here are the steps to follow:

1. Go to the office (Oppenheimer Center 119) and fill out a *Request to Change Level Form*.
2. Students will then discuss their level with a full-time faculty member.
3. If the full-time faculty member feels they should skip a level, only then will permission be granted.

Center for English Language Learning Faculty

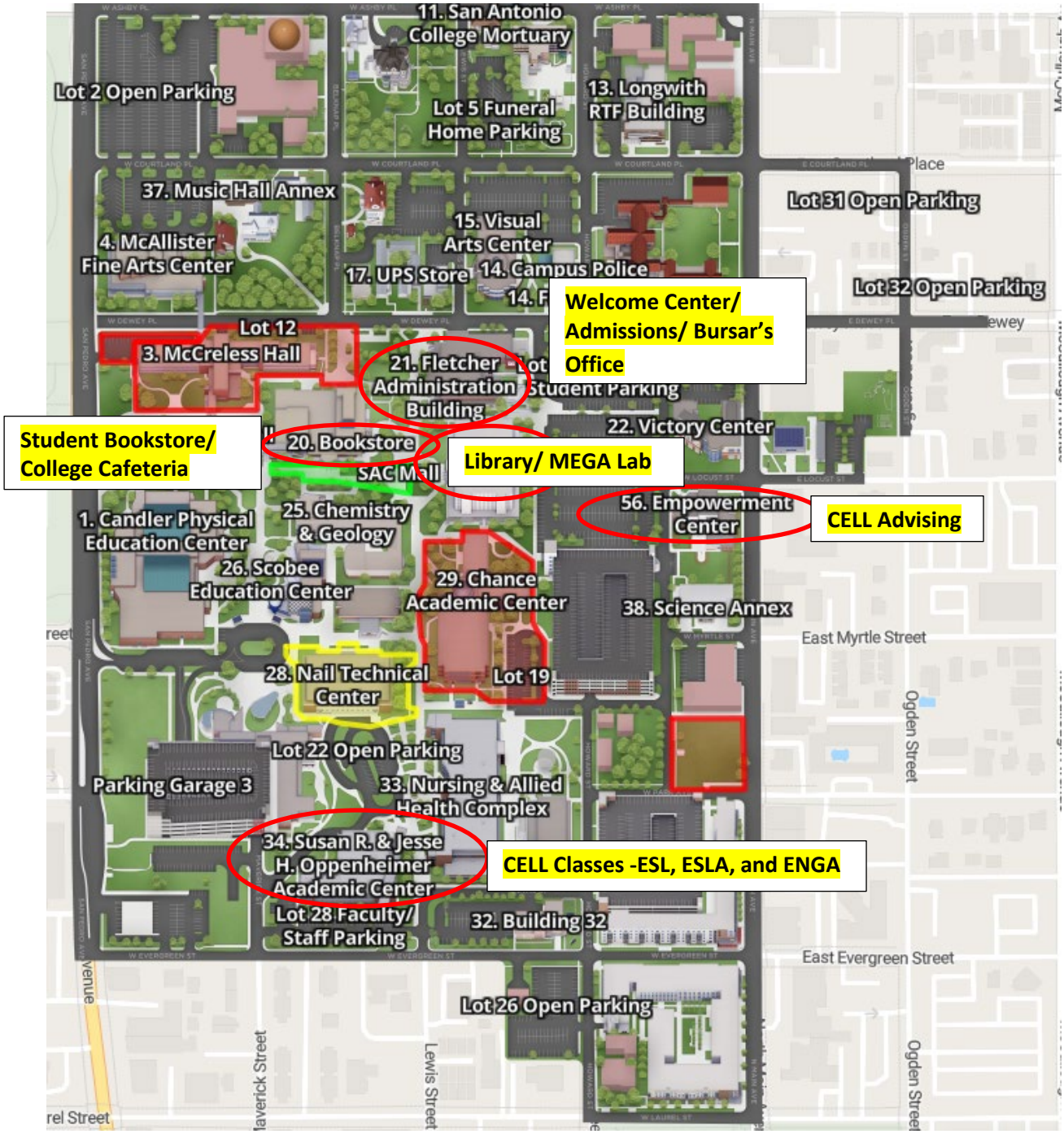
Full-Time Faculty

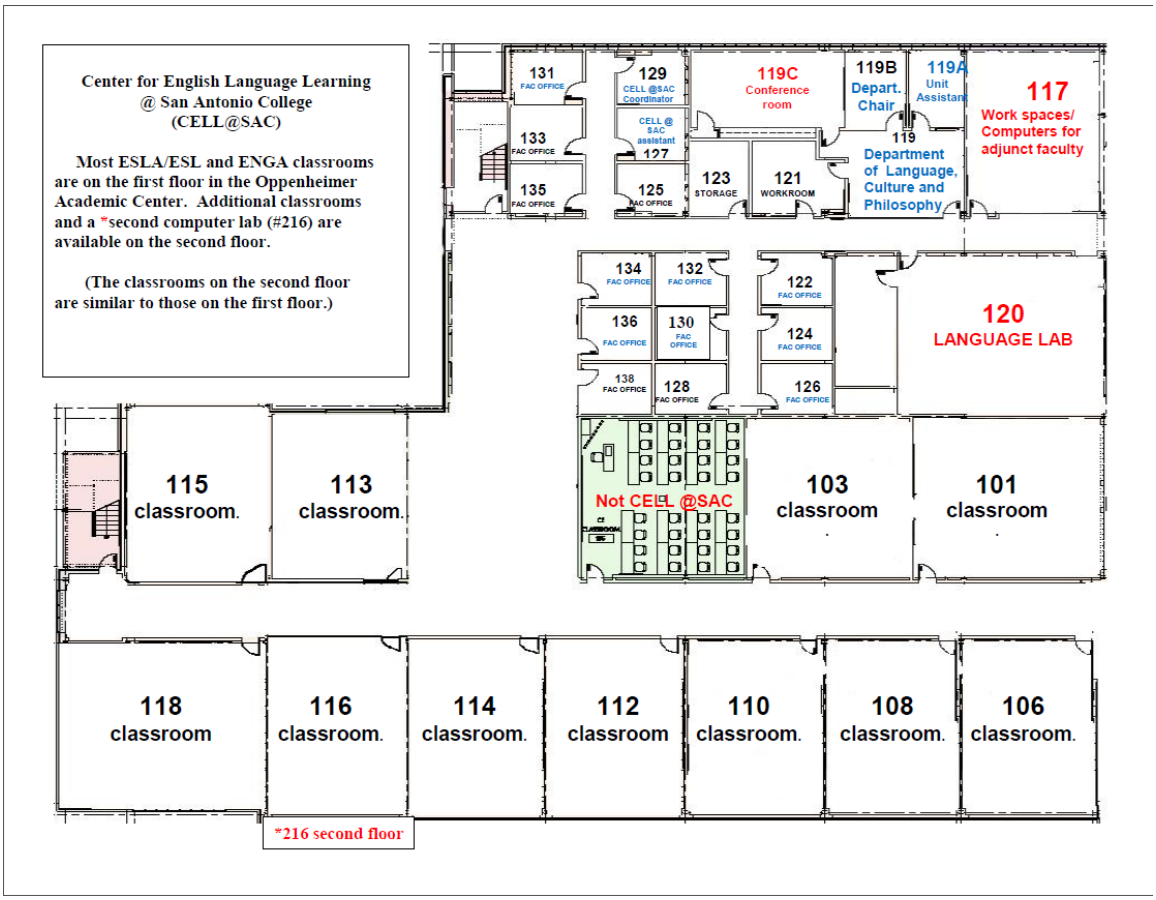
Kelsey	Evans	kevans69@alamo.edu	OC 124 210-486-1730
Jeremy	Polk	jpolk11@alamo.edu	OC 131 210-486-1717
Linda	Silva	lsilva@alamo.edu	OC 130 210-486-1715
Kerrie	Smith	ksmith477@alamo.edu	OC 122 210-486-0979

Part-Time Faculty

Dr. Sharla	Jones	sjones@alamo.edu	OC 126 210-486-0983
James	Bohling	jbohling@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965
Nancy	Ford	nford11@alamo.edu	OC 138 210-486-0965
Melissa	Pumayugra	mpumayugra@alamo.edu	OC 132 210-486-0965
Jinah	Carlile	jcarlile9@alamo.edu	OC 127 210-486-0965
Uzzielita (Lindy)	Bell	uvega-hernandez@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965
Barbara	Sage	bsage1@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965
Gaytan-Baker	Sally	agaytan-baker@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965
Einas	Albadawai	ealbadawi@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965
Lubna	Stevens	lstevens43@alamo.edu	OC 117 210-486-0965

San Antonio College Campus Map



Classroom Locations

First floor