



Graduate School

Enhancing Language Skills for Graduate Success

OLIVIA: So hi, everyone. I imagine folks might trickle in over the next couple of minutes, but I'm told that we have a very full presentation today, so let's go ahead and get started. So, yeah, hi. I am Olivia. If you've been to other of the Primer Series sessions you probably recognize me. You probably also recognize Zenobia and Sarah, who have been working hard to set up the entire Primer Series. So a big thank you to them. The goal of this series is basically to help you have information and tools and build a skill set to help you transition into your role as a Cornell graduate student. So we've had some really great sessions so far, and I'm really excited about today's on enhancing English language skills for graduate school success. Again, I'm told it's a very full session, so I'm going to keep my introduction really short, and I think at this time, just mention a couple of logistics. So I'm going to be dropping into the chat a link to the Primer Series page so that you can see upcoming sessions and get signed up for those if you haven't already. And then I also want to note that this session is being recorded, just so you're aware of that. But yeah, I think with that kind of a fast and dirty introduction there, I'm going to turn things over to Michelle and Derina. Thank you so much.

MICHELLE CROW: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, Olivia. And we really appreciate the graduate school hosting this series for graduate students. Boy, what a joy to meet graduate students before you even arrive on campus. So thank you, thank you for doing this. And thank you all for making time for this and being here. And so if you would go to the next slide, Derina. What we're going to do is just start with some introductions. We would love to learn a little bit about you. And so if you would rename yourself in Zoom, what you would do is just hover over your face the little tile of you. And there's three dots in the upper right-hand corner. If you hover over that and click on it, then you can select Rename. There's going to be a menu that pops up. Select Rename, and then add your graduate field. So for instance, Natural Resources. And if you desire, you can put your preferred pronouns-- how you want people to refer to you. So he/his, she/her, they/them, something like this. OK. And once you do this, if you would in the chat, tell us where you are joining us from. So where you are currently located. And so right now I'm actually in Brooktondale, which is a little tiny town that borders Ithaca. I'm about 15 minutes from Cornell. So I'm in Brooktondale, New York.

DERINA SAMUEL: And I am from-- and I'm going to put it in the chat. I'm from Tully, New York, which is about an hour north of Ithaca. Wonderful to see everybody pop in. Thank you for joining us.

MICHELLE CROW: Yeah, wonderful. And so we timed this early in the morning for Ithaca, thinking that there would be people around the world joining us. Wonderful. Look at all these people. Yes. And we were also thinking that some people were already here in Ithaca, and we are seeing that. Yeah, wonderful. Yes. So keep the introductions coming in. And while you do this, we're going to introduce ourselves. So if you go to the next screen. And so my name is Michelle Crow. You are welcome to call me Michelle. I'm perfectly comfortable with that. I'm the Director of the English Language Support Office, which we call ELSO. So if you hear the word ELSO from your advisor on campus, this is what it is. And our mission is to provide writing, speaking, and language support to multilingual residents and international graduate and professional students across Cornell. We work with students from your first semester to the end of your first year, second year, third year, fourth year, fifth year, sixth or seventh year. However long you are here at Cornell, we are here for you. Derina?

DERINA SAMUEL: Well, welcome to all of you. My name is Derina Samuel, and I'm an Associate Director at the Center for Teaching Innovation, specifically focused on graduate student development. One of the areas that I also oversee is the International Teaching Assistant Program. And this program provides language support to multilingual residents and international graduate students specifically who will have teaching responsibilities. So if you're going to be teaching while you are at Cornell and you've been told that you need to meet with somebody at ITAP this is how you get in touch with us. The email is below. Well, the website is below. So we're with the Center for Teaching Innovation, and ITAP comes under that. Moving on, so feel free to keep adding your names and where you're from in the chat. We're still monitoring that. And it also builds community for everybody to know where everyone's from, so feel free to continue to do so while we're talking. So the learning outcomes. When we thought about this workshop, what we wanted to focus on is to ensure that all of you by the end of the workshop would be able to identify strategies to develop as a successful language user and also be able to explore resources that are available. And there are a lot of resources on the campus to support your language development while you're here at Cornell. And I'll turn it over to Michelle.

MICHELLE CROW: And so our agenda is, first we're going to do a little icebreaker. Then we're going to discuss communication skills needed for graduate school and explore that a little bit with you. Then we'll explore what you can do to enhance language learning once you arrive on campus, but also now. And, time allowing, we will practice small talk. We will see. Because we also want you to feel comfortable asking questions. We've saved time at the end for your questions, your comments, your insights. But please, throughout this presentation, ask questions. You know, you can put questions right in the chat. And we'll be monitoring that. Go right ahead. And I also want to let you know before we get started is that you have access to all of the workshop materials, including these slides. And so you don't have to scramble to take notes during the presentation. I'm sorry. I've got a little bit of a head cold starting, so my voice is a little ragged. But what you can do is go into the English Language Support Office Canvas site, and you can self-enroll in this Canvas site. You don't need to do this now. You don't need to access any of the materials during the

workshop. We'll be sharing everything that you need. And we'll be sharing this slide again at the end of the workshop so that you can have some time then to access it. But we just wanted to let you know ahead of time. So when you hear us during the workshop refer to handouts, this is where you'll find them. If you hear us during the workshop refer to websites, URLs, everything is in this Canvas site all ready for you. All right. So as we wanted to warm people up, we wanted to have this icebreaker. And looking at these different sheep in different poses, which sheep best represents how you feel when you think about using English at Cornell? So if you could put in the chat the number that you would select on the sheep scale. Oh, number 4. A bucket over your head. I know that feeling. Number nine, jumping for joy. Fantastic. That is great. Yay. Yeah, number 4. Number 2 looks kind of peaceful. Just hanging out, waiting to see what happens. There's a number 7, yeah. It's a little timid and shy. And that's very normal as you come to a new campus. Number 6. That's interesting. So you look ready. Just taking charge. Kind of putting your best foot forward maybe with this nice garland of flowers. Number 8 is how I'm feeling right now. I'm excited for the semester to start, but I'm a little overwhelmed, too. I'm just like, holy moly, do I have a lot of work to do before the semester starts. How in the world is this going to happen? It always does, but I do feel like number 8 right now. What do you feel like right now, Derina?

DERINA SAMUEL: I had just put down 3.

MICHELLE CROW: Oh, no.

DERINA SAMUEL: I feel like I've got a lot going on right now.

MICHELLE CROW: Do you just want to cover your eyes?

DERINA SAMUEL: I just want to cover my eyes and go to bed or something, but—

MICHELLE CROW: Go to bed. That's great. Yeah.

DERINA SAMUEL: All right. Well, so as we're thinking about graduate school-- and I know a lot of you are thinking very much about it because you are getting close to being here-- we wanted to remind you that listening and speaking English is going to be pretty intensive on our campus. So when you think of listening skills, they're going to have seminar lectures, class discussions, meetings. And if you are a TA, you might have student questions, you might have questions from your advisor, you could have from your peers, your colleagues. In terms of speaking, there would be class discussions, group work, collaborative research, presentations, networking, maybe even job interviews. Some of you are going to be here for just a year and you may be thinking about job interviews or internship interviews as well, because people start fairly early for the next summer. And again, if you are teaching-- you're a TA, you would have to present or you'd have to teach your class. So you definitely have to use your speaking skills in that case. So it is a fairly intensive process that you have to think about. And I'm passing it on to Michelle.

MICHELLE CROW: Yeah, graduate school is also reading and writing intensive, as you probably anticipate. So reading. There's so much reading assigned in graduate school. I remember just being shocked, honestly, when I would look at my syllabi at the beginning of the semester. So you'll be reading for courses, but you'll also be reading for your own research. For journal clubs. So some departments run journal clubs where the whole department gets together and reads either a new article that just came out or a landmark article that everybody should know about. And they'll get together and a student will give a presentation on that article, and then everybody will discuss it. If you're a TA, you might be reading student work. And then writing. Lots and lots and lots of writing. When I entered graduate school, I did more writing in graduate school than I had ever done in my life before then. Longer papers. More papers. More audiences that was reading my work than I'd ever experienced before. So there are seminar papers, research papers, theses and dissertations, grant applications. And if you're a TA, you'll be developing teaching materials. And then job application materials. Many people during graduate school will apply for jobs. Either a professional jobs and industry or academic jobs. And so, because graduate school is so communication intensive, a lot of students experience what's called language shock. And this is one of the motivations for us developing this workshop-- is to tell you about this and warn you about it and tell you that it's OK. It will end. It's not a continuous experience. And so what language shock means is-- and I put this photo here and a picture of my little dog, Gus, watching the waves at Cayuga Lake, which is the lake that Ithaca is at the base of. And we're at Taughannock State Park right here, which is about 20 minutes on the west side of the lake. 20 minutes from Ithaca. And I put this picture here because what students have told me is they feel these waves of English just washing over them, just battering them, and that they have a hard time grabbing onto particular words and phrases. And it can be a very overwhelming experience and can be an experience that's frustrating. Students will say to me, boy, the English teachers in my home country must have been terrible, because I'm having such a hard time with English right now. Or they beat themselves up and they say, boy, I should have studied English harder when I was in my home country. Or, I don't know as much English as I thought I did. It can really shake up a person's confidence as an English language user. And so I'm here to tell you that while many people experience this, especially if it's your first time in an English medium environment, this experience passes. And very quickly, you'll start being able to access all of your knowledge as an English language user. It'll all start getting activated. And trust me, you know a lot about English, or you would not have been accepted into Cornell. We have confidence in your English language skills. That's why you were accepted. And so hold on to that. You were accepted for a reason. Many, many, many reasons. Not just English, but many reasons. But English is part of it. And so what will happen is you'll start gaining confidence and start accessing your language skills. And if you could go to the next slide. And so you have a rock solid foundation of English language skills, and then you'll be building on that during your time here at Cornell. And so you'll be enhancing your language skills. And so what we're going to be talking about are how you can take advantage of factors of language learning, resources you can use here at Cornell to enhance your language learning, and approaches you can start using now to

engage with English. Next slide. And so there's three factors of language learning that we're going to talk about-- time on task, risk taking, and noticing. Next slide. And so time on task simply means that the more time you spend engaging with the language, the more quickly that you will enhance your language skills. So some of you are going to arrive at Cornell and find very few people who use your first language. That can be a lonely experience. It can be kind of scary. But the good news is that this will force you to use English in lots of different ways and lots of different situations with lots of different people, and your language skills will develop more quickly. Some of you will arrive at Cornell and find many, many people who use your first language. It may be that most people in your graduate cohort use your first language. It could be that your professors use your first language. It could be that most people in your lab use your first language. It could be that you've chosen a roommate that uses your first language. What a comforting, good experience that can be, right? It's a lot of work to communicate in English. It can be frustrating. You can't always express your full ideas at first. So you, if you're in this situation, will be able to relax into your first language and just communicate freely without these kinds of barriers. But you will have to work a little bit harder to create opportunities for yourself to engage with English. And so we will be sharing some of these opportunities during this workshop. And the third factor we want to talk about is risk taking. And so language learners who are willing to make mistakes learn more quickly. And so I don't know about you, but when I got to graduate school, I was like, holy smokes, I don't want to make a single mistake in front of anybody. I want everybody to think I'm smart and capable and everything. You are all smart and capable. You don't have to worry about that. But part of the learning process is making mistakes. It's just a natural part of the learning process. Everybody understands that, and everybody understands that part of the language learning process is making mistakes. And so I know it can be scary and uncomfortable to speak when you haven't fully formed the English phrase in your mind that you want to say, or to speak when you're not confident that your pronunciation is accurate and that people understand what you say. And I understand that it's scary to share drafts of our writing that we know are incomplete. There might be more that are ideas that we want to add, or we know that it's kind full of errors. And it can be especially scary to do this in front of our advisor or other colleagues. We encourage you to do that. Next slide. But the strategy that we're advising is also to seek out some low stakes settings to engage with English. And so what low stakes means is that it doesn't matter if you make mistakes. It's OK. Nothing is riding on it. And so some low stakes settings might be in a course that either the ITA program offers or ELSO offers. Those are really low stakes. Everybody is an international student or resident student that uses English as an additional language. This is a practice space. It's a safe space. But there's other safe spaces as well. There's student clubs on campus. That's a wonderful space to just interact with other students and to be able to make mistakes and speak freely. There's even opportunities off campus. So let's say you're waiting in line at Dunkin' Donuts for coffee. What a great time to make some small talk and just make some mistakes. That's a good opportunity. And so to seek out these low stakes settings where you can build up your confidence and practice skills for the high stakes settings. OK, next slide. And then the last factor we're talking about is this idea of noticing. And so I think we're used to the idea that

we can pick up a lot of language from reading and from listening. We can kind of absorb language. But there's actually a mechanism that's happening where first, we need to-- if we go to the next slide-- speak and write in the language that we're trying to learn in order to figure out where our language gaps are. And so while we're speaking of writing, we might struggle to figure out a certain word or phrase or a word form like, should that noun be singular? Should it be plural? Which verb ending should I use? And so that struggle is pointing out a language gap. A gap in your knowledge of language. And then we need to notice that gap so that when we're listening or reading in the language, we can fill those gaps. And then we can use that new word or word form while we're speaking or writing. And so this whole cycle puts us in this mindset of constantly noticing our own language use and noticing language in the environment and learning from that language. And the strategy that we're recommending on the next slide is to keep a language journal so that you can track your language gaps and also track new language. And so there's two handouts that go into detail about both this concept and what a language and communication journal is in the Canvas site. And if you missed the first couple of minutes of the workshop, we will tell you how to access that Canvas site again toward the end of the workshop. All right. So we walked you through some of the ideas and strategies you can use. And here are some resources that you can use to enhance language learning. We have resources on speaking and writing. We're going to talk about generative AI. And that's something that a lot of people are talking about these days. And we'll give you a little bit of an introduction to that. And then also talking about opportunities that you might want to pursue to engage with English at Cornell.

DERINA SAMUEL: So thinking about speaking, if you have or you will have a teaching appointment, the International Teaching Assistant Program, ITAP, which is part of the Center for Teaching Innovation-- all these acronyms-- CTI offers the following. So we provide language assessments to determine what language proficiency level people are at. And at Cornell, we have a level that is required in order to teach, which is different from the admission requirements. And so we expect that people will have a higher language proficiency when they are in the classroom and interacting with students. So departments will require you to go through a language assessment. And if your language proficiency is not at the level that it needs to be in order to teach, we offer three different courses, starting off with ALS 5780. And these courses will be suggested to you by your department. The ITAP also offers undergraduate language consultants for those students who are part of our program. This semester, we are going to be offering workshops that will be open to all graduate international TAs, not just those who are in our sessions. And we also offer consultations to anyone who's interested in thinking about language proficiency and improving their language proficiency in the classroom, just like ELSO does. But we do offer that in the international TA program.

MICHELLE CROW: And you can also find speaking resources in the English Language Support Office, or ELSO. And all graduate and professional students can self-select our courses and self-select our programs. And so we don't assess language. We let students decide what they need, and then they can take advantage of our programs. And another

thing that you should know-- it's a question we get often-- is that we do not charge you a fee for taking any of our courses or engaging in our programs. You've already paid for ELSO through your tuition. So, please, we hope you take advantage of it. And you can enroll in our courses the very same way that you enroll in any course at Cornell through Student Center. So for speaking, we offer three courses that are really focused on speaking and two courses that involve a lot of speaking. So the three courses that are completely focused on speaking are Improving Pronunciation, Taking Part in Discussions, and Designing and Delivering Effective Presentations. And then the two courses that involve a lot of speaking are Preparing for the Professional Job Search and Communicating in the Workplace. These are all half semester courses. They run for about seven, eight weeks. They're one credit courses. And they're pass/fail, and so they won't impact your GPA. We also offer tutoring on pronunciation. And the way this works is that during the first meeting, you would bring a short recording of your speech. We have prompts on our website. You and the tutor would listen to this recording together and together figure out where miscommunication could happen or what could be clearer. And then together you would make a plan, set some goals, and the tutor would provide you with some resources for practice that you can do on your own. And then you can use the pronunciation tutoring service as many times as you want. And so let's say you're working toward a goal. You want to come in and check in to see how you're doing. You can make another appointment. Or let's say you're working on a specific thing, like you have a presentation in class coming up or for a job or for a conference, and you want to make sure that you're clearly communicating during that presentation. You can practice in front of the pronunciation tutor, and they will help you with that. And outside of the English Language Support Office, there's also a center called the Language Resource Center. This center runs a series of conversation hours in many, many languages, including English. And so this is something that you can take advantage of and speak English casually in a low stakes setting for an hour each week to be able to practice. And we also offer support in writing. And so we have tutoring on writing. So the workshop recording-- we will post it in the Canvas site. Will the graduate school also send out a link to the workshop recordings?

DERINA SAMUEL: I believe they do.

MICHELLE CROW: OK, fantastic. And so for tutoring on writing, there's actually three writing tutoring programs on campus. So it can be a little bit confusing. You can take full advantage of two of them. So the two that you can use are the Graduate Writing Service, which is offered by the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines. And so the Graduate Writing Service is available to all graduate and professional students across the University. They can help you with writing at any point in the process. And they offer three different kinds of appointments-- face to face appointments where you meet on campus with a tutor, online video sessions where you're interacting with the tutor in a session kind of like this one, and also asynchronous online appointments, which means that you send in your paper-- you email it to the tutor, you tell them what you would like feedback on. They use their session time to give you feedback and they send back written comments via email after that appointment time. So that's a wonderful service. You can also take

advantage of the ELSO Writing and Presentations tutoring service. So in addition to writing, you also get feedback on the structure and organization and design of a presentation. We offer all the same stuff that the Graduate Writing Service does. The same three kinds of appointments. And we can meet with you to focus on writing at any point in the process. The ELSO tutors are also trained in giving careful feedback to students using English as an additional language. So they can go sentence by sentence with you and really focus on communication-- if that sentence is communicating your ideas the way you intend it to, and syntax, style, and grammar. Things like this. There's also a third writing center on campus that's called the Cornell Writing Centers. And this is also offered by the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines. During the academic year, this is only for undergraduates, and so most of their peer tutors are undergraduates. It's not that they would say no to you. You can use their center. But they're undergraduates. And so they've never read the kind of complex documents that many graduate students write, and they can feel a little intimidated by that. But during the summer, sometimes the Cornell Writing Centers will open their door to graduate students. If that happens, it will be renamed, I think, the Summer Writing Center. And that will be posted on websites and shared through announcements. If you go back a minute, we also offer courses on writing. And so we offer four different courses, and these courses are designed to help you at different points in the writing process. So if you're just at the beginning of a writing project or you know you're going to have to write, you can take a course called Preparing to Write Workshop. We offer-- I'm trying to remember-- I think three sections of this course in the Fall and maybe one or two sections in the Spring. And during this course, you'll learn tons and tons of strategies for getting started with a writing project that you could apply to a current writing project immediately. Or you can just do some practice writing during that course. We have two courses that are designed, if you're already in the drafting process of a paper, Research Paper Writing Workshop and Thesis and Dissertation Writing Workshop. In these courses, we invite you to use these courses to make progress on the project that you're already working on. And so we give you time during class. And in fact, all of our writing courses-- we have time during class for you to actually to work on your writing. But in these courses you learn lots of strategies for pushing forward your research paper or your thesis or dissertation. And then the final class is called Revising and Editing. You'll see parentheses on the screen with "with generative AI." That's because we're in the process of renaming that course. And in that course, we will fully explore generative AI with you to figure out how effective it can be for revising and editing. What does it do well? What does it not do well? Where would it make sense to use other kinds of strategies? And so that's an exploratory course. This is a course for students who already have a draft developed or have a past paper that they could use for this. So will grammar, syntax language will be graded and term papers? So each faculty member is-- it's up to them they grade. Some are very accustomed to working with lots of international students and focus a lot more-- this is what research shows, too. If you're a more experienced reader of varieties of English, you're more flexible and you don't take grammar, syntax, language into account quite as much. Some faculty members really focus on these things with their goal of helping students produce very strong writing when they send papers to journals. When they send in conference abstracts. When they prepare for the workshop. So this really varies by

instructor, and it's a really good question to ask instructors at the beginning of a course. And many will also have a rubric where you can see what they're grading for. Whether or not it's graded, it does make an impression. People do see it and notice it, and some will give feedback on it and some will kind of ignore it. So that'll really vary across situations. And so next slide is generative AI. I've been using this term assuming that everybody knows what it means, but you might not. And so a generative AI refers to these large language models that can assist you when you write. They're already being integrated into Microsoft Outlook, our email at Cornell. They're integrated into my smartphone where I'm typing something into a text message and more words are popping up that I could select or just let it write it for me. That's all large language model. What a large language model does is it consumes all of this language from across the internet and across different spaces. And then it uses all of these algorithms to predict the next words that will come up. That's what a large language model does. They have gotten incredibly sophisticated. And so some that are popular is-- ChatGPT is probably the most popular one. And I would say it's very well developed. I think it's on version 4+ or something like that right now. There's also Bard. That's developed by Google. And Cornell bought a subscription to Microsoft Copilot for all Cornell community members to use-- faculty and staff and students. And so Microsoft Copilot through Cornell. Go to Cornell's IT page to access it. I tried accessing it just through the internet, and gave it my Cornell net ID and password and then found out it was a pretend site. It was a phishing site, so don't do that. Then I had to change my password very, very quickly. Access it through Cornell's website to be safe. And the Cornell version has some guardrails up so that it doesn't save your content so that it can't share your content with other people. That's a guardrail. So we could spend a whole day talking about generative AI. The big point that I want to make here is that these are powerful tools. They can be used to enhance the learning of writing and to support language learning. They can also be used in ways that cross into plagiarism or academic dishonesty. And so if you're using it to assist you with writing the very same way you would use, let's say, Grammarly or a writing tutor, that's generally seen as OK. But if you're using it to do the writing for you, and you're using it to write for you in a high stakes situation like a research paper, that can cross into academic dishonesty. And right now we're in this period where everyone's just trying to figure out what the heck generative AI is and what it can do. So a lot of faculty-- and we encourage faculty to put a statement in their syllabus about how students can use generative AI. Every faculty member at Cornell can figure out their own policies for allowing students to use generative AI, so it's going to change from class to class. That's something for you to be aware of. We do not have a Cornell-wide policy. If your faculty member doesn't have a statement on their syllabus, it might mean that they're still trying to figure things out and they're waiting to see what happens and they're still learning about generative AI. We strongly encourage you to have a conversation with faculty to find out what their stance is before you use it in one of your courses for that faculty member. Because what we don't want to see happen is write an entire paper and use generative AI and all these different ways, and then you find out right before you hand it in the faculty member sees that as unethical and that they want you to redo the whole paper. Disaster, right? You don't want to go through that. So talk to them early in the process. And there's three resources that I've listed here that are all available in

the Canvas site and just on the Cornell website, too, which is two that ELSO created called "How Generative AI is Being Used for Writing." Lots of different ways. And a second one, which is really important, "How to Use Generative AI with Less Risk." I encourage you to read both of those before you even start here at Cornell. And then there was a task force at Cornell focused on how to use generative AI in research writing. It's a big, long, detailed document. Before you publish or maybe present a paper at a conference or do maybe even a grant proposal, I would advise you to look at that document and maybe even talk it through with your advisor. So next slide. ELSO will be holding a workshop on generative AI and writing early in the semester.

DERINA SAMUEL: So I just put a question up to see how many of you have actually had a chance to use ChatGPT. And I can't see participants here, so hopefully you can see that. But share a thumbs up as a reaction on your screen if you have used-- I think the ChatGPT is one that's most common. Just to get a sense of who of you have actually used it. Michelle, are you able to see any?

MICHELLE CROW: Yeah. I'd say there's a handful. Yeah.

DERINA SAMUEL: Oh, good. All right, so you put it on the chat. That's even better. There we go. All right, so a good number of you. And those of you who haven't, as Michelle says, ELSO does offer these workshops to introduce you to them. And the Center for Teaching Innovation has a website introducing anybody who's interested in generative AI in terms of teaching to this resource as well. "Used it to rephrase my grad application. Did cite it on the document." Good job. Citation is critical. That is something that we are all going to get used to. And so thank you for bringing that up Arsh. OK, so moving on. And I just want to bring up-- we did say there are going to be questions-- an opportunity for asking questions at the end. But as some of you have already done, don't hesitate to type into the chat if you have a specific question at any time. We would be glad to stop and answer it. So when you thinking about opportunities to engage with English at Cornell, there are a lot of opportunities. And as Michelle pointed out, the idea is to really get out of your comfort zone. And this is something that has been shown by research that the more you get out of your comfort zone, the more the learning happens. So you don't get yourself to the point where you're really uncomfortable, but to the point of slight discomfort is OK. So maybe you're not that much of an extrovert and you don't like going out into places. But there are social events that the graduate school offers at the Big Red Barn, so that might be an easy way. Maybe go with a few friends, because then you won't feel like you're totally on your own. So that might be one way to do it. Attend orientation activities. Those could be within your department. Within your college. The graduate school is going to have an orientation for all grad students on August 22. We'll have information at the end again. Attend departmental and professional events. So departments often have welcome events for their graduate students, and don't hesitate to go to those. You really want to get to know people, and it's critical to learn how to network. And the more you do it, the more comfortable you'll feel being in these larger situations. We encourage you-- so as I mentioned, the Big Red Barn-- Tell Grads It's Friday. That's TGIF. It's what it's shortened

to. Every Friday they have a session. They open up the Big Red Barn, and people can join them. And I believe it's still \$1 for sodas and \$1 for beer. And sometimes they have pizza. They have free popcorn as well all through the day. So that's a wonderful place to come at the end of the week to be able to just relax and meet some new friends. They don't have to be from within the department. You are coming to a wonderful opportunity of being able to meet with people all across the campus. Take advantage of it. You will meet people from different countries, from different parts of the US, and different interests. And this is your time to explore what your interests might be. The other thing to consider is joining student organizations. That's a wonderful way to also meet people, network, but also get some skills. And it's a wonderful resume builder as well. So thinking about that as soon as you can is definitely something to consider. And as we say, there's 1,423 student organizations at Cornell. Only 355 at the graduate level, but that's still a considerable number that you could choose from. And if you feel like you need to start one, there's an opportunity for you to start one, too. If there's something that you're interested in but you don't see it in the list of student organizations that you could be part of, feel free to start one. And again, as Michelle pointed out earlier, I'm going to reiterate, just do not lose the opportunity to engage in small talk. This could be at the bus stop. It could be at the grocery store. It could be at the local restaurant. In a dining hall. In an elevator in your department. Get to know people within your department. And even if you're not comfortable, start off with just saying hello, and say see where that goes. And you can move on to-- the weather is always a good topic in Ithaca to use in small talk conversation. We often say, stay away from anything that might be controversial. So keep it fairly low key unless you feel comfortable with the person. And then you could get into other topics. But weather changes so frequently in Ithaca, so that's always a good opportunity. But you could also just start off by saying, how are you doing? And, hope you have a wonderful day. small. That's just small talk. So just short sentences, and see how comfortable you get with that and then see if we want to proceed with anything further.

MICHELLE CROW: And so ways that you can engage with English now. We have a lot of ideas here, but we also in the chat welcome you to add your own ideas. What have you found helpful for practicing English? And if you could put that in the chat. And I'll just mention a couple of ideas from this slide. And so you can engage with reading in English. You might choose to read academic articles by professors in your department. That's a nice thing to do. You can also practice some focused reading strategies. There's a handout in Canvas on focused reading strategies. For writing, you could just keep a written diary in English. And what this does is it enhances your fluency with writing so that your writing just about everyday things, just to get used to expressing your ideas in English. You can read and then take notes in English to practice focused note taking strategies. And there's a handout about that in the Canvas site. We also talk about both of these things in our courses. For listening, you can listen to podcasts in English on topics related to your field. This is a great thing to do to practice because you'll practice hearing a lot of the words that are going to be used in your courses. So that's a nice way to do it. It can help you start identifying some of those vocabulary. You could also listen to a Cornell lecture or watch a Cornell video on demand. And so in the Canvas

site, I put links to both of these. But there's quite a nice bank of Cornell lectures that the library has collected. And when we create videos, we add them to Cornell Video on Demand, and then those are accessible by the whole Cornell community. So that's a great thing to do. You could also keep an oral diary in English to practice speaking. That's a really nice thing to do, to be able to just practice that fluency in speaking. And see if you can find opportunities to engage in small talk in English wherever you are. Does anybody have things that they want to add in the chat? Or have you already been doing some of these things? What have you found helpful for practicing English? Very nice. So DeepL I'm pretty sure that's generative AI. Is that right? It is, yes. Yep. And so this is something that you can use to practice writing and to get feedback on writing. And it can definitely be used to expand vocabulary, because what you can do is ask it questions. First you can say, which words are synonyms for this particular word I'm going to try to use? And then of those words, which are most often used in this particular context, like writing a research paper on natural resources. And it will tell you. Fantastic. And so watching TV to practice English. Absolutely. Absolutely. So media-- songs, podcasts, TV, films-- really, really helpful for practicing listening. And then you could even go online and look for fan conversations about these shows and about songs and engage in some of that. Listening to own audio. I know. Yeah, I think this happens to all of us, right? Sometimes I'll watch a workshop like this that I've recorded and I just go, oh my, is that really how I sound? Is that really what I look like? Yeah, it's hard to do, but it's good for just noticing things that you might not notice in the moment. Talk with ChatGPT with some mock daily conversations. Are you doing that through writing, or are you doing that by speaking? Because ChatGPT has been working on audio versions of ChatGPT. OK.

DERINA SAMUEL: Speaking.

MICHELLE CROW: Speaking. Yes. Great. And I haven't tried that. And so that's something I'm going to try and explore a little bit. QuillBot. Yes. And so QuillBot, I think, is another generative AI platform. And that's also very good for getting some feedback. And then just by speaking, great. Yes, thank you. And so keep these ideas coming in, and we are going to move forward just because we're starting to run out of time here. DERINA SAMUEL: So I just want to follow up on the comment about watching TV series. And that's really good for listening skills, but the other thing to consider is talking about it with other people mentioning a TV series that you enjoyed. A movie that you watched that you really enjoyed. Summarizing it for them. That is really helpful for you to develop impromptu speech and be able to talk about it with other people and practicing your conversational skills. We always say watching TV can be a very passive activity. And so you can make it more active by talking about it to others. And I know everybody wants to chill out at the end of the day and just watch something. So do that, but also consider some active conversational skills that you can utilize as well. OK, so we look forward to meeting you on campus. I know some of you already here, but those of you who are on your way, the graduate school has a new graduate student welcome in Bailey Hall on August 22 at 9 o'clock. And the CTI will offer a new to welcome right after that in the same space in Bailey Hall. And that's from 10:00 to 10:45. And this is an opportunity for you to understand what

resources are available to support you if you are going to be teaching either this semester or in the coming years. It also allows you to interact with experienced TAs, both international and domestic TAs, to ask them in person what concerns they had when they arrived and any advice they would give you as you are starting off the semester. And we will stick around until 11:00 because after that, there's a resource fair in Barton Hall. And so people will be going over there to understand about all the different resources. And I understand that also will be in the resource center, as will be the Center for Teaching Innovation. And there's going to be food in Barton hall, so encourage you to start off at Bailey Hall and then walk over to Barton to get some snacks after that. ELSO has some information sessions which are virtual. And those, I believe, will be on your website. Right, Michelle?

MICHELLE CROW: Yes. And we'll be sending out the Zoom links through our listserv. Yep.

DERINA SAMUEL: OK. And those are August 16th, August 20th, August 23rd, and those are all Eastern Standard Time. So Ithaca time. So once again, just as we had mentioned, we talked about this at the beginning. We want to make sure that you have access to all of the Canvas site that ELSO has put together. That has all of the materials that we've been talking about, any resources that we mentioned, as well as the PowerPoint. So we will be putting the PowerPoint up. And so you will have that. And at this point, this is the first time we've actually had this workshop. So we would really appreciate if you could complete the workshop survey. There is a QR code on the screen. Please complete the workshop survey as you are answering questions. We'd love to know. And give us some feedback. Tell us what you think. If there's any other information you would have hoped we could have offered. But we are now going to open it up to questions.