

Welcome  
To  
Open Hearts Language Academy



*Student Pre-Arrival and Arrival  
Information Package*

(Revised August 2023)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pre-Arrival and Arrival Information	page 3
Dealing With Lost Luggage	page 5
Getting Started (New School / New Culture)	page 7
Cell Phone Policy	page 10
Levels & Sessions Offered / Grading Policy	page 13
Promotion Policy	page 14
Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy	page 16
Typical Class Schedule	page 17
Attendance Policy	page 18
Grievance Policy	page 19
Payment, Cancellation and Refund Policies	page 20
American Sports and Entertainment Information	page 22

## **Welcome to Open Hearts Language Academy!**

We are delighted that you have decided to study English with us at OHLA. **Open Hearts Language Academy** is an international service-oriented organization, with its main office located in Miami, Florida, and campuses in Aventura, Boca Raton, Brickell, Celebration and Tampa

Our mission is to provide high-quality academic programs and cultural opportunities for people who wish to learn English as a second language for academic, professional, or personal purposes.

By now, you should be in the process of being approved for your F1 visa (Student Visa). You must be excited, anxious, and perhaps a little bit overwhelmed due to all the different tasks you must accomplish in such a short period of time. We will take you now, through the **Pre-arrival** and **Arrival information** in hopes that we can assist you through this process.

### **Pre-arrival and Arrival Information**

#### **My Visa Was Approved, What's Next?**

Congratulations! Soon you will be arriving in the USA. Whether you have traveled abroad before or not, it is important to think about what will happen when you arrive before you leave home. On the day of your arrival, you will probably be tired after a long flight. For some of you, it may be your first day in an English-speaking country.

#### **What to Bring?**

- You must carry your I-20 Form together with your passport.
- Contact Addresses: The exact address of your school or host family/residence contact, including the city and state.
- Telephone Numbers: The name and phone number of your contact at the school. The name and phone number of your host family/residence contact.
- Travel Instructions: Remember that your flight destination city may be different from the city where your school is located.

#### **What Will Happen Upon Arrival In The US?**

- Once in the terminal, you will present your passport and visa documents to the Immigration Official. (Passport with an F1 visa and I-20 Form)
- You will go to baggage claim where you will collect your luggage.
- You will be required to show your luggage to the Customs Official.
- You will exit into the Arrivals Hall to meet your host family or OHLA staff member (if you requested an airport transfer on arrival).

## **F-1 STUDENT POLICIES**

All F-1 students must maintain legal status while studying in the United States. Among other things, legal status is maintained by registering for full-time enrollment in the program. Anyone that falls out-of-status will have their FI terminated and will have to apply for reinstatement.

### **HOW TO KEEP YOUR F-1 STATUS**

- Come to school and follow the attendance policies.
- Do not work off-campus. It is illegal.
- Apply for vacation – remember that you must have your vacation approved!
- Know when your I-20 expires.
- Know when your visa expires.
- Know when your passport expires.
- Don't leave the U.S. without making sure that the second page of your I-20 is signed.
- Report any changes to your address or phone number to the school staff.
- Always let us know if you have a problem so we can make sure you don't fall out of status.

### **What to Do Next?**

If you have time, you may want to change money. You may need US dollars and coins for telephone calls, transportation, or food. There should be a bank or money exchange in the airport. If possible, we suggest changing some money at home before you fly to the USA.

If you need to take another flight to reach your final destination, you will clear immigration and customs at your first point of entry in the USA. You will then recheck your luggage to your final destination. Some airports have a luggage transfer counter; others will ask you to take it to the new airline counter to check in. If you need to catch a bus or train to the city of your final destination, locate the Ground Transportation Desk. Show the attendants the address of where you are going, and they will tell you which companies operate to that location and their costs.

### **Who Can You Ask for Help?**

Americans are used to being asked for help. Don't be afraid to ask for help but choose carefully who you ask. Those best able to help you are the Traveler's Aid Desk, Information or Ground Transportation Desk, and Officials in uniform (such as airline personnel and airport police).

### **How You Can Help Yourself?**

Come prepared with important information, like telephone numbers and addresses. Write the information on a sheet of paper which you can show to the people you are asking for help. Take care of your money, passport, and luggage. You will be arriving tired, and you will be an obvious newcomer, so you could be a target for a pickpocket or thief. Do not leave your luggage unattended. Keep your money in an inside pocket or zippered purse. Just remember that everyone feels a bit anxious upon arriving in a new country. It's normal. With preparation you'll be ready for your first day in the USA!

## **Dealing with Lost Luggage**

Although we hear horror stories all the time, the airlines do a pretty good job of handling our bags. The percentage of lost bags is very small. And of all of those, most are found. Less than 1% ends up permanently lost. Despite the relatively low numbers, lost baggage still happens, and when it does, it isn't fun. Here's some advice for those who find that their bags are lost and steps you can take to avoid it in the future.

### **I'm here, but my luggage isn't. What do I do?**

- Immediately go to the airline's baggage claim office and file a claim. If they tell you that your bag will show up soon and not to worry, worry anyway and get the claim filed. If you leave the airport without filing a claim, you risk giving up your right to future reimbursement.
- While filing your claim, ask about the airline's immediate reimbursement policy. Some airlines will give you the money necessary to replace immediate necessities.
- You'll need to brush your teeth, put a comb through your hair and freshen up in general. Inquire about the airline's policy for replacing toiletries. Some will give you a small cash allowance, and others will give out pre-packaged toiletry kits.
- Don't take anyone's word for anything. Often employees are either unfamiliar with the exact policy or fail to inform passengers of all their remedies. When speaking to an airline's representative about your claim, ask to see their actual written policy and for a copy of the file claim.

### **It's Gone for Good. What Now?**

- Luggage that has been missing for 90 days is considered permanently lost. Airlines do not replace lost items, they reimburse by cash, but at a lesser value. So, it is very important that you give the airlines a full and accurate list of everything that was in the bag, and as many actual receipts as possible for the items. When you can prove actual purchase prices, the airlines are forced to reimburse at a higher rate.
- Check with the credit card company that your airline ticket was charged on. Some provide reimbursement coverage over and above what the airline provides.
- Check your homeowner's or renter's insurance policies. They also might provide additional reimbursement coverage.

### **How Can I Avoid Lost Baggage or How Can I Make It Easier If It Happens?**

- Always carry an outfit and some toiletries in your carry-on.
- Put all valuables in your carry-on. Why risk losing your most expensive items?
- Avoid tight connections. You might have enough time to run from one end of the airport to another, but your bags probably won't.
- Arrive on time, at least two hours prior to your flight's departure or as instructed by the airline.
- Watch the airline put the tag on your baggage.
- Consider buying travel insurance.
- Put a US local contact number inside all baggage. If someone has picked up your suitcase by accident, they need to be able to get in touch with you.

- Put an easily recognizable and distinct string, sticker, or cord on your luggage. It makes it easier for you to find and will stand out enough to let others know it's not their bag.
- Have tags on every bag with your name, a US address, and a US phone number.

### **Airport Reception**

If you have chosen the Host Family accommodation and chosen the airport transfer, a representative of the school or of your host family will be greeting you at the airport. They will be greeting you at the airport holding a sign with your name on it.

If you have chosen the Residential accommodation and chosen the airport transfer, a staff member from OHLA will be greeting you at the airport holding a sign with your name on it.

If you did NOT arrange for airport reception and instead you decided to get to your final destination by your own means, keep in mind that taxis are always available. Taxis, like in any big city, can be very expensive. Prior to departure from your home country, contact a staff member of OHLA and ask for assistance. A staff member will be able to give you a better idea on rates depending on your final destination. This way, upon arrival you will have a better idea on taxi rates and less possibilities of being taken advantage of.

Some taxis may not accept payment in the form of credit card, money order or cashier's check. You may need to carry personal money in the form of cash.

## **Getting Started - Our first day at Hearts Language Academy!**

Today is your first official day at **Open Hearts Language Academy**; you will meet staff and Student Services members who will guide you through your first day of enrollment.

Your first official day can be in a way overwhelming, you must take a placement test that can take up to an hour to an hour and half. Based on the results of your placement test, you will be assigned to the appropriate level. The Admission Officer and DSO will confirm that you have all the documents to comply with your visa regulations. That same day, you may need to make arrangements for tuition payments and to confirm all contact information.

## **Prepare for Money Matters**

Remember that it is your sole responsibility to pay all expenses related to tuition, materials, removed paying for insurance accommodation, and other related expenses unaccounted for. It is important that prior to arrival you have organized your own budget and addressed all the expenses associated with your trip.

## **Getting Started at your New School and a New Culture**

### **Professional Culture and Communication**

Certain topics are considered inappropriate to American business communication. People can be extremely sensitive to issues such as romantic relationships, sexual preference, alcohol and drug use and religion.

Standards of hygiene vary from country to country. Americans usually find it extremely embarrassing to have body odor or to notice it on someone else particularly in the workplace or at school. Many Americans use deodorant and/or antiperspirant and bathe everyday.

Time is of critical importance to Americans. Time sets the limits of what you can accomplish. People value their time and generally try to make the most of it. One of the major goals of American lifestyle is to get many things accomplished in a short amount of time. In the same way, being “on time” usually means getting to the class five minutes ahead of time.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, derogatory humor based on gender or sex, and other oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Victims and perpetrators of sexual harassment can be men or women. The harasser can be a teacher, classmate, host or guest. The victim does not have to be the person harassed but anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

As an international student, you are subject to the US laws at all times. Laws concerning sexual harassment protect individuals from being sexually harassed. Sexual harassment is a serious issue that can result in disciplinary action, dismissal and/or legal actions.

### **Examples of Sexual Harassment:**

- Creating an offensive environment by repeated written, verbal, physical and/or visual contact with sexual overtones including suggestive or obscene letters, derogatory comments or jokes, unwelcome touching, impeding movement, assault, staring, gestures or displaying offensive objects.
- A pattern of conduct that causes discomfort and/or humiliation. Examples include unnecessary touching, comments about a person's body, sexuality, or appearance, rumors of sexual activity, expressions of interest after being informed that interest is not welcome.
- Reprisals or threats of reprisal following the rejection of harassing behavior.
- Retaliating against a person for reporting or threatening to report sexual harassment.
- Engaging in coercive sexual behavior within the work environment for purposes of control or influence.

### **What should you do if you are harassed?**

If you feel that you are the victim of sexual harassment, first confront the harasser and ask him or her to stop. If the behavior continues, contact the School Director. If you are concerned about whether your actions could be misconstrued as sexual harassment, please ask for advice.

### **Stereotypes**

During your stay, you may encounter stereotypes of your culture. If Americans seem ignorant of your country and culture, please remember this is one of the reasons why you are here. This is your opportunity to acquaint Americans with your culture.

Be aware of cultural stereotypes. It is important to remember that one culture cannot be defined by a particular behavior. Just because one person acts in a particular way does not mean they are representing his or her race or ethnicity.

### **Problem Solving - Dealing with Challenges Constructively**

At some point during your studies, you may face problems involving people around you. There will also be many challenges to address in your personal life. Here are some steps you can take:

- Deal with the problem immediately. Do not ignore the problem and assume it will go away.
- Communicate clearly and appropriately with all involved parties.
- Always offer to talk about it. Be a good listener.
- Acknowledge your part in the problem.
- Be open to suggestions.
- Sincerely offer to do your best to make it better.



## **Culture Shock**

Culture shock is another difficult challenge you may encounter. Culture shock is a sense of anxiety and confusion that affects people as they adapt to new cultures and communities. The absence of family and friends and differences in lifestyles, values, beliefs and relationships may be disconcerting at first. When you begin to identify and deal with the deeper differences between your home and US culture, the feeling of “shock” can be particularly strong. Cultural shock is often experienced in four stages:

**Stage I** is often called the “honeymoon stage.” During this time, the novelty of living in a new country is the source of great excitement.

**Stage II** appears several weeks later. As the excitement wears off, differences between your home culture and the host culture become more apparent. You become more aware of your values and how they differ from the host culture. You may feel homesick or irritable and begin to miss your friends, family and home country.

**Stage III** is characterized by challenging and rejecting the values of the host culture and an increased bonding with your own culture. You may feel a need to be in contact with people of your own culture. Also, as this is not your first language, you may find it difficult or tiring to speak English every day.

**Stage IV** is reached when a balance between your culture and the host culture is achieved. This stage is characterized by becoming very close to your new friends and classmates and by a deeper understanding of the host culture.

As you go through the stages of cultural adaptation, you may experience common symptoms including homesickness, social withdrawal, fatigue, irregular sleep patterns, and excessive criticism of the host culture, mild depression and irritability.

If you experience these symptoms, do your best to remain aware of your feelings and reactions. Try to be open about how you feel, while remaining respectful to people around you. Keep busy, meet people, make friends, and get involved in school and community activities. Try to establish similar routines to those you had in your home country, i.e. jogging in the morning, religious services on Saturday or Sunday, meeting with friends on a certain evening.

Please contact the School Director if there is any issue you would like to speak about. The School Director is there to assist you through your cultural adjustments. As an ambassador of your country, you will find that patience, tolerance, and adaptability are essential to your success. If you express criticism, do so in a sensitive way that shows consideration for the other person’s point of view. Keep in mind that while we all feel comfortable expressing criticism of our own country, it is a completely different matter to criticize a country where you are a guest.

At the end of the culture shock cycle, you can expect to enjoy and thrive in your new environment. A great sense of accomplishment will probably strike you as you reflect on the experience and knowledge you have gained. At this point, you may experience inspiration, exhilaration, comfort and excitement.

## **Speaking English**

It is impossible to completely master a language - even your own. There are always new discoveries to be made about idioms, pronunciation, slang, intonation, and other speaking nuances. Your level of English depends on many things, such as education and previous exposure. Some people may find that while they can read and write very well, their ability to speak and understand conversational English is not as good as they would like it to be.

Language skills improve with time and practice. In the meantime:

- Ask people to speak more slowly
- Ask the meaning of words you do not know
- Ask to be corrected when you use a word incorrectly or confuse grammatical structures
- Use body language, indicating and gesturing to show what you want to say
- Keep a notebook of new words and phrases
- Don't use slang terms

If you make a mistake which causes your new-found friends to break into laughter, don't panic. Laugh with them, be a good sport, and ask them what you said that was incorrectly. Remember, every conversation is a learning experience.

## **Transportation**

Transportation can be a great challenge in the United States. Most American cities and towns, except for major urban centers, do not have extensive transportation systems. Americans are often very dependent on their cars. Try as soon as possible to find the best ways to get around by public transportation. Driving in the US requires that you have an American driver's license. If you plan on driving during your stay, inquire with your local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) on how to apply for a license in your area.

## **Cellular Phones**

Cellular phones are commonly used in the US. If you plan on purchasing a cellular phone, make sure you fully understand your calling plan. It is important to know how long you can talk on the phone every month and where you can call. Often, if you spend more time on your phone than allotted or you make international calls, your charges will be extremely expensive.

It is considered rude to talk on your phone in many situations. You should always turn off your phone while in class. Oftentimes, cell phone use in public places, like department stores, restaurants, banks, museums, post offices, etc., is considered unacceptable. Cell phone calls do not necessarily have to be completely private but try to be considerate to those around you.

**Cellular phone policy:** Open Hearts Language Academy has a very simple but strict cell phone policy that applies to both teachers and students.

*No cell phones are to be used in class, unless specifically authorized by the instructor as part of an approved educational activity. In case of an emergency, students can be reached by calling the school's main number.*

## **Being an Ambassador**

Dealing with culture shock and a new environment can be extremely challenging, but it is important to keep in mind your role as an ambassador. Patience, tolerance, and adaptability will be essential to your success.

Diplomacy is not always easy. Try to avoid involvement in local controversy. As a concerned individual, you may feel a moral opposition to a specific issue, policy, or cultural practice, but as an international student it is not your role to voice criticism publicly. If you must express criticism, do so in a way that is sensitive and shows concern for the other person's point of view. Remember, that while we all feel comfortable expressing criticism of our own country and customs, it is a completely different matter to criticize a country where you are a guest.

### **Be Proud of Your Culture**

As an international student, you should feel proud of your heritage and culture. It is important to promote goodwill and understanding whenever the opportunity arises. Therefore, Open Hearts Language Academy encourages you to bring items from your home country that capture the interest of your classmates and add excitement to any cultural presentation you might make.

The first day of class can be intimidating. However, by bringing in some cultural items, other students will have the opportunity to see where you come from. Bring in a map so they can see where your country is located. Provide some background about your experiences as a student and a general description of your country including size, population, climate, and major industries.

### **What to bring to the US**

Remember that everyday items people use can be fascinating because they reveal the values and character of a culture. You can bring these items with you or have someone ship them to you once you arrive. Below is a list with some general ideas about items to bring to the US:

#### *Magazines, newspapers and printed material*

Bring a few newspapers with various articles on social issues, culture, arts, sports, and other general issues. Try to bring magazines that would appeal to your classmates.

#### *Photographs*

Family photos are essential. Photos taken at special occasions or celebrations including birthdays, weddings, graduation and holidays are also interesting. You may want to make copies or reprints of your special or irreplaceable photos.

#### *Posters, brochures, tourist information*

Your country's ministry of tourism, travel agencies and airlines may be able to provide you with colorful posters, videos or brochures. Make sure to bring a large pictorial map of your country.

#### *Cultural Artifacts*

Bring items that represent your heritage. Bring flags, traditional clothing or jewelry, colorful postage stamps, coins and currency, a theater program, a report card, anything your classmates would enjoy seeing.

### *Recipes*

Choose uncomplicated recipes with simple ingredients. A copy of a menu from your favorite restaurant would be a great example to share with your students.



### **Community Involvement**

During your stay in the United States, participate in community activities. As an international student, you are also considered an informal ambassador of your country, as such, you can have a tremendous impact on the way those in your community understand your culture.

There are many ways to become active in your community life. Many students organize cultural fairs. These events can include food, native dances, singing and other activities. If you belong to a certain religious group, look into attending local services. Religious organizations often have a calendar of activities and events. Volunteer service to the community is an important part of American life. Take advantage of opportunities to become involved with local nonprofit or charitable organizations. You do not need advance approval from Open Hearts for participating in volunteer activities, but we would like to hear about them and enjoy seeing pictures even more.

## LEVELS OFFERED

The objective of our program is to improve the student's overall English proficiency. Our integrated ESL program offers 8 different levels, each divided in five two-week units for a total of 10 weeks. This will allow our students to not only move at their own pace, but to be continuously challenged by new material.

<p><b><u>Basic 1 and Basic 2</u></b>          Basis of Listening &amp; Speaking          Basis of Grammar          Basis of Reading &amp; Writing          Basis of Pronunciation          Idioms</p>		<p><b><u>Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Intermediate Plus</u></b>          Focusing on Listening &amp; Speaking          Focusing on Grammar          Focusing on Reading &amp; Writing          Focusing on Pronunciation          Idioms</p>
<p><b><u>Advanced 1 and Advanced 2</u></b>          Mastering Listening &amp; Speaking          Mastering Grammar          Mastering Reading &amp; Writing          Mastering Pronunciation          Idioms</p>		<p><b><u>Elite and Elite Plus</u></b>          Accent Reduction          University English Preparation          Internet Research</p>

## SESSIONS OFFERED



## GRADING PROCEDURES

For the Semi-Intensive classes, students are assessed with a bi-weekly block score, which consists of a block exam, and an oral or written task. The block exams are based on the classroom activities and objectives studied for that block. The block exam is worth 50 points. The remaining 50 points are derived from the results of the written and oral tasks (40 points) and the Homework & Quizzes (10 points). At the end of the session, the block scores are averaged to arrive at an overall score for that level.

<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>Course Grading Policy</b>
A = 90 – 100%	Block Exams 50%
B = 80 – 89%	Tasks 40%
C = 70 – 79%	Homework & Quizzes 10%
D = 60 – 69%	
F = Less than 60%	

For the Intensive and Super-Intensive classes, assessment is determined through a final score. The final score is based on classwork, homework and the final exam.

<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>Course Grading Policy</b>
A = 90 – 100%	Final Exam 70%
B = 80 – 89%	Homework & Quizzes 30%
C = 70 – 79%	
D = 60 – 69%	
F = Less than 60%	

### PROMOTION POLICY

To be promoted to the next level, students need to achieve a score of at least 75% on exams, tasks, and homework.

Students who enter the program in Block 1, 2 or 3 will automatically be considered for promotion. Students will need to;

- Make up the Written or Oral task for the missed block
- Take the “comprehensive exam” at the end of the session

Students who enter in Block 4 or 5 CANNOT be considered for promotion.

#### Early Promotion Policy

After completing their first block at OHLA, students with an average score of 80% in their current level can qualify to move up a level by achieving an overall score of 75% or more on the Comprehensive Exam for their current level along with a Written and Oral assessment.

#### Repeating and Conditional Promotions

OHLA levels are divided between General and Academic English:



Students who fail any level must repeat it automatically. Students are allowed to repeat only one (1) level of the General English and one (1) level of Academic English.

Students failing any given level twice or two levels within either the General or Academic English groups will be required to move on to the next level and to attend additional private lessons (5 hrs. per week for a period of 4 weeks) to ensure that students can handle the new level. Note that the cost for the private lesson will be the students' sole responsibility.

Students who do not meet the passing requirements will not be promoted to the next level. However, under certain circumstances and upon the teacher's recommendation and Academic Director/Leader's approval, a student may be allowed to pass **conditionally** to the next level. In such cases, the Academic Director/Leader will meet with the teacher to monitor the student's performance during the following session. Together, they may decide to re-assign the student to the lower level.

### **How is the overall score calculated?**

Comprehensive Exam	60% of the final mark
Written Assessment using OHLA's Written Task Rubrics	20% of the final mark
Oral Assessment using OHLA's Oral Task Rubrics	20% of the final mark

### **Please note:**

1. Students are to complete the above assessment within the following timeline:

***By the end of Block 1 (week 2) for all sessions***

2. Level changes can only take effect in the first block.
3. A student can only have one attempt at moving up a level.
4. Students changing level are required to buy the new books.

**Make-up Block Exams** Any student with *an excused absence* can make up a block exam.

**Other Make-up Work** It is the students' responsibility to make up any missed work. Upon their return to school after an absence, students must make up missed work by the end of the session. They must check with their teacher about all work missed because of being absent.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY POLICY

At OHLA, we uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity to ensure the fairness and credibility of our programs. Academic dishonesty undermines the learning process and devalues the achievement of our students. The following guidelines outline our commitment to promoting honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior among our students:

1. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism, including the use of another person's words, ideas, or work without proper citation or acknowledgment, is strictly prohibited. Students are expected to cite all sources accurately and adhere to academic referencing guidelines.
2. **Cheating:** Cheating in any form, including but not limited to copying from another student, using unauthorized materials during exams or assignments, or seeking/exchanging unauthorized information during exams, is prohibited. Students are expected to complete all academic tasks independently and honestly.
3. **Complicity:** Students are prohibited from assisting others in engaging in academic dishonesty, including sharing answers, providing unauthorized assistance, or assisting on assignments without teachers' permission.
4. **Fabrication and Falsification:** Fabricating or falsifying academic credentials, data, results, research, doctors' excuses, or any other information is strictly prohibited. Students are expected to present accurate information.
5. **Forgery:** forgery, including the alteration or falsification of signatures, documents, or academic records is prohibited. Students are expected to maintain the integrity of academic records and refrain from any form of fraudulent activity.
6. **Use of AI tools without permission:** The use of artificial intelligence tools without the explicit permission of the instructor or failure to use AI tools responsibly is another form of academic dishonesty. It is imperative that students understand the limitations of AI tools and ensure that their use is supplemental rather than substitutive to their own efforts.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to:

- Receiving a failing grade for the assignment or exam
- Requiring the student to redo the assignment or exam under supervision
- Receiving a written warning on academic dishonesty that will be added to the academic file of the student
- Suspension or expulsion from the school, depending on the severity of the offense

The severity of the penalty is left to the discretion of the instructor and the academic leader, except for the issuing of an academic dishonesty suspension or expulsion which requires the School Director's approval.

Students can contest a decision of academic dishonesty to the Academic Director unless it involves suspension or expulsion.

If the penalty involves suspension or expulsion, students have the right to appeal directly to the President.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within seven days of the original decision.



## TYPICAL CLASS SCHEDULE

*(ACTUAL CLASS TIMES MAY VARY FROM CAMPUS TO CAMPUS)*

MIAMI BRICKELL					
Program	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Semi Intensive</b>	<i>09:00 to 12:45</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:30</i>
<b>Intensive</b>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 14:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 14:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 14:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 14:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:30</i>
<b>Super Intensive</b>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 15:30</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 15:30</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 15:30</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 13:00 to 15:30</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:30</i>
<b>Exam Prep</b>	<i>14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 17:00</i>
<b>One to one</b>	<i>14:10 to 16:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 16:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 16:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 16:00</i>	<i>14:10 to 16:00</i>
<b>Semi + Exam Prep</b>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:45 14:10 to 17:00</i>	<i>09:00 to 12:30 14:10 to 17:00</i>

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Open Hearts Language Academy's** programs move at a quick pace, so it is very important that you do not miss class. At OHLA, class attendance for F1 Visa Students is mandatory. They must attend 80% of classes per session to maintain their F1 visa status. More than 20% absences will automatically result in the student being put on official probation. Students accumulating more than 20% absences in any two months will face dismissal from the program.

### **Absences**

This is how absences are calculated: you will be counted absent from a period if you are not in class for any reason. However, absences might be excused if you can provide official documentation supporting that you were away for a medical, dental, police, court or immigration appointment. Students are to attend a minimum of 80% of their classes per session.

Depending on their program, students will attend 80% of class per session if they meet the following requirements:

1. For 20 lessons, students attend an average of 16 hours per week
2. For 25 lessons, students attend an average of 20 hours per week
3. For 30 lessons, students attend an average of 24 hours per week
4. For 35 lessons, students attend an average of 28 hours per week

*Note: 1 lesson is 50 minutes long; therefore, Period 1 and Period 2 each count for 2 lessons.*

### **Late Policy**

A student will be allowed into class, by the teacher, up to 15 minutes after the scheduled start time. After this initial grace period, students will not be allowed into class and will be marked absent.

*Keep in mind that to be successful it is very important to be present as much as possible.*

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO CALL IN WHEN SICK**

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - PROMOTION**

When a student challenges his/her promotion, the following procedures should be followed:

- A. Teacher is responsible for making the recommendation to the Academic Director regarding possible promotion to the next level, based on the student's speaking/listening ability, reading/writing ability, as well as grammar knowledge before recommending any changes.
- B. After reviewing the teacher's recommendation, the Academic Director will make the decision as to whether a change should be made. The Academic Director might take other factors, such as student's goals and objectives, into consideration.

ALL CHANGES MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN THE END OF THE FIRST BLOCK OF THE NEW SESSION. NO CHANGES WILL BE APPROVED THEREAFTER.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES - GENERAL**

Students who have academic or personal concerns will have the opportunity to address the grievance through the following procedure:

- A. If the concern relates to classroom difficulties, the student will discuss the matter with the teacher of the particular class. If not resolved, the student may appeal to the Academic Director. If the concern is still not addressed to the student's satisfaction through these means, he/she may appeal to the School Director.
- B. Students with concerns, which are very personal in nature, will be given the opportunity to counsel with any Staff or Faculty members, who will address the matter to the School Director.
- C. Concerns with organizational policy should be discussed with the School Director. If the concern is not resolved, the student has the right to gain consultation with the President of Open Hearts Language Academy.
- D. The resolution of any conflicts is best solved as close to the source as possible. Students must first contact their teachers to discuss concerns. If the conflict cannot be resolved with the teacher, the student may meet with the Academic or the School Director. Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Academic or the School Director, must respond and take appropriate action within 10 days. Students should move from one level to another only if an acceptable resolution cannot be reached at the lower level. Anyone retaliating against a student who files a complaint under this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The ultimate responsibility for the resolution of such complaints will reside with the School Director.

## ***DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES***

Students who feel that they are subject to discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status or any category protected by civil statute or regulation or Sexual Harassment are to contact the School Director office immediately to file a proper complaint.

## **PAYMENT, CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICIES**

### **Payment policy**

#### Deposit

The initial application fee of \$200 is due upon registration and can be paid by credit card. OHLA accepts all major credit cards.

#### Note about accommodation

If you are also booking one of our residence options, keep in mind that all options are subject to availability at the time of the booking. Residence space is to be secured by paying the school application fee, the residence booking fee, and the first week of the weekly residence fee. This can also be paid by credit card.

#### Final payment

Tuition fees, housing or residential weekly fees and airport service fees are to be received in full at least 15 days before your schedule start date. This can be paid by sending a payment by wire transfer or by international money order or via FlyWire.

### **Cancellation and Refund Policy**

1. All requests for cancellation must be received in writing.
2. If you are denied a visa to enter the United States, all tuition and fees will be refunded except; the initial application fee and, if requested, the University Placement Processing fee.
3. If subsequent to your enrollment, Open Hearts Language Academy cancels your program, all tuition & fees including the initial application fee, will be refunded.
4. If you cancel your enrollment less than 15 days before your schedule start date a cancellation fee equal to a 10-week tuition period (or up to your proposed length of study, if less than 10 weeks) will apply. The Homestay or Residence Placement Fee is also non-refundable as well as the first week of the Residence fee. However, additional housing fees paid, and airport transfer fees paid will be refunded.
5. Open Hearts Language Academy will process all refunds within 30 days of receipt of the cancellation request and of the bank account or card details needed to be able to process the refund. OHLA can only refund the individual/entity who made the initial payment.
6. If students' tuition and fees are paid through an OHLA representative the refund shall be processed through this representative.

**After the start of your class, the following cancellation fees shall apply:**

**Tuition**

1. Tuition for the full 10-week session (or to the proposed length of study, if less than 10 weeks) is non-refundable.
2. If students test above our highest English level, tuition and fees paid shall be refunded.
3. If during the session students shall return to their home country for a documented emergency, the unused portion of tuition shall be held as credit for a period of one academic year, for use upon return.
4. If you decide to cancel your classes, subsequently to your initial 10-week period of study, a cancellation fee equal to a 2-week tuition period will apply. Book fees paid will not be refunded but additional tuition paid will be refunded.

**Residential Fee**

1. Residential placement fee is non-refundable. If at any time you decide to cancel your residence accommodation, a cancellation fee equal to a 2-week period past your last day at the residence will apply. Additional residence fees paid will be refunded.

**Others**

1. For any session in which students cancel, fees paid for materials, books, student services and health insurance (if applicable) are non-refundable.
2. If a student is terminated by OHLA due to violations of OHLA written disciplinary and/or attendance policies and/or local, state, or federal laws, no refund shall be permitted.

**WHAT OTHER EXPENSES DO YOU HAVE TO PAY OTHER THAN TUITION?**

The other additional expenses are:

1. Books: varies from \$60 for \$120 per session (compulsory)
2. Public transportation: \$60 per month (optional)
3. **Off-campus Activities:** OHLA offers its students a number of activities, some of them free of cost while other optional activities require payment from the students. Prices can vary between \$10 (for an Afternoon at the Movies) to \$400 (trip to Universal Studios in Orlando from Miami).

***Sports and Entertainment:** This section concentrates on a few of America's original contributions to world entertainment: the sports of baseball and basketball; movies; and three kinds of popular music -- jazz, rock and roll, and country.*

## **Baseball**

The sport that evokes more nostalgia among Americans than any other is baseball. So many people play the game as children (or play its close relative, softball) that it has become known as "the national pastime." It is also a democratic game. Unlike football and basketball, baseball can be played well by people of average height and weight.

Baseball originated before the American Civil War (1861-1865) as rounders, a humble game played on sandlots. Early champions of the game fine-tuned it to include the kind of skills and mental judgment that made cricket respectable in England. In particular, scoring and record-keeping gave baseball gravity. "Today," notes John Thorn in *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, "baseball without records is inconceivable." More Americans undoubtedly know that Roger Maris's 61 home runs in 1961 broke Babe Ruth's record of 60 in 1927 than that President Ronald Reagan's 525 electoral-college votes in 1984 broke President Franklin Roosevelt's record of 523 in 1936.

In 1871 the first professional baseball league was born. By the beginning of the 20th century, most large cities in the eastern United States had a professional baseball team. The teams were divided into two leagues, the National and American; during the regular season, a team played only against other teams within its league. The most victorious team in each league was said to have won the "pennant;" the two pennant winners met after the end of the regular season in the World Series. The winner of at least four games (out of a possible seven) was the champion for that year. This arrangement still holds today, although the leagues are now sub-divided, and pennants are decided in post-season playoff series between the winners of each division.

Baseball came of age in the 1920s, when Babe Ruth (1895-1948) led the New York Yankees to several World Series titles and became a national hero on the strength of his home runs (balls that cannot be played because they have been hit out of the field). Over the decades, every team has had its great players. One of the most noteworthy was the Brooklyn Dodgers' Jackie Robinson (1919-1972), a gifted and courageous athlete who became the first African American player in the major leagues in 1947. (Prior to Robinson, black players had been restricted to the Negro League). Starting in the 1950s, baseball expanded its geographical range. Western cities got teams, either by luring them to move from eastern cities or by forming so-called expansion teams with players made available by established teams. Until the 1970s, because of strict contracts, the owners of baseball teams also virtually owned the players; since then, the rules have changed so that players are free, within certain limits, to sell their services to any team. The results have been bidding wars and stars who are paid millions of dollars a year. Disputes between the players' union and the owners have at times halted baseball for months at a time. If baseball is both a sport and a business, late in the 20th century many disgruntled fans view the business side as the dominant one.

Baseball became popular in Japan after American soldiers introduced it during the occupation following World War II. In the 1990s, Hideo Nomo, became a star pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Baseball is also widely played in Cuba and other nations. In the 2004 Olympics, it was a measure of baseball's appeal outside the United States that the contest for the gold medal came down to Australia and Cuba.

## **Basketball**

Another American game that has traveled well is basketball, now played by more than 250 million people worldwide in an organized fashion, as well as by countless others in "pick-up" games. Basketball originated in 1891 when a future Presbyterian minister named James Naismith (1861-1939) was assigned to teach a physical education class at a Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) training school in Springfield, Massachusetts. The class had been noted for being disorderly, and Naismith was told to invent a new game to keep the young men occupied. Since it was winter and very cold outside, a game that could be played indoors was desirable.

Naismith thought back to his boyhood in Canada, where he and his friends had played "duck on a rock," which involved trying to knock a large rock off a boulder by throwing smaller rocks at it. He also recalled watching rugby players toss a ball into a box in a gymnasium. He had the idea of nailing up raised boxes into which players would attempt to throw a ball. When boxes couldn't be found, he used peach baskets. According to Alexander Wolff, in his book *100 Years of Hoops*, Naismith drew up the rules for the new game in "about an hour." Most of them still apply in some form today.

Basketball caught on because graduates of the YMCA school traveled widely, because Naismith disseminated the rules freely, and because there was a need for a simple game that could be played indoors during winter. Naismith's legacy included the first great college basketball coach, Forrest "Phog" Allen (1885-1974), who played for Naismith at the University of Kansas and went on to win 771 games as a coach at Kansas himself. Among Allen's star players was Wilt Chamberlain, who became one of professional basketball's first superstars -- one night in 1962, he scored a record 100 points in a game.

The first professional basketball league was formed in 1898; players earned \$2.50 for home games, \$1.25 for games on the road. Not quite 100 years later, Juwan Howard, a star player for the Washington Bullets (now called the Washington Wizards), had competing offers of more than \$100 million over seven seasons from the Bullets and the Miami Heat.

Many teams in the National Basketball Association now have foreign players, who return home to represent their native countries during the Olympic Games. The so-called Dream Team, made up of the top American professional basketball players, has represented the United States in recent Olympic Games.

## **The Movies**

The American film critic Pauline Kael gave a 1968 collection of her reviews the title *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*. By way of explanation, she said that the words, which came from an Italian movie poster, were "perhaps the briefest statement imaginable of the basic appeal of movies." Certainly, they sum up the raw energy of many American films.

If moving pictures were not an American invention, they have nonetheless been the preeminent American contribution to world entertainment. In the early 1900s, when the medium was new, many immigrants, particularly Jews, found employment in the U.S. film industry. Kept out of other occupations by racial prejudice, they were able to make their mark in a brand-new business: the exhibition of short films in storefront theaters called nickelodeons, after their admission price of a nickel (five cents). Within a few years, ambitious men like Samuel Goldwyn, Carl Laemmle, Adolph Zukor, Louis B. Mayer, and the Warner Brothers -- Harry, Albert, Samuel, and Jack -- had switched to the production side of the business. Soon they were the heads of a new kind of enterprise: the movie studio. The major studios were located in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles, California. Before World War I, movies were made in several U.S. cities, but filmmakers gravitated to southern California as the

industry developed. They were attracted by the mild climate, which made it possible to film movies outdoors year-round, and by the varied scenery that was available.

Other moviemakers arrived from Europe after World War I: directors like Ernst Lubitsch, Alfred Hitchcock, Fritz Lang, and Jean Renoir; actors like Rudolph Valentino, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Ronald Colman, and Charles Boyer. They joined a homegrown supply of actors -- lured west from the New York City stage after the introduction of sound films -- to form one of the 20th century's most remarkable growth industries. At motion pictures' height of popularity in the mid-1940s, the studios were cranking out a total of about 400 movies a year, seen by an audience of 90 million Americans per week.

During the so-called Golden Age of Hollywood, the 1930s and 1940s, movies issued from the Hollywood studios rather like the cars rolling off Henry Ford's assembly lines. No two movies were exactly the same, but most followed a formula: Western, slapstick comedy, *film noir*, musical, animated cartoon, biopic (biographical picture), etc. Yet each movie was a little different, and, unlike the craftsmen who made cars, many of the people who made movies were artists. *To Have and Have Not* (1944) is famous not only for the first pairing of actors Humphrey Bogart (1899-1957) and Lauren Bacall (1924- ) but also for being written by two future winners of the Nobel Prize for literature: Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), author of the novel on which the script was based, and William Faulkner (1897-1962), who worked on the screen adaptation.

Moviemaking was still a business, however, and motion picture companies made money by operating under the so-called studio system. The major studios kept thousands of people on salary: actors, producers, directors, writers, stuntmen, and technicians. And they owned hundreds of theaters in cities and towns across the nation; theaters that showed their films and that were always in need of fresh material.

What is remarkable is how much quality entertainment emerged from such a regimented process. One reason this was possible is that, with so many movies being made, not everyone had to be a big hit. A studio could gamble on a medium-budget feature with a good script and relatively unknown actors: *Citizen Kane* (1941), directed by Orson Welles (1915-1985) and widely regarded as the greatest of all American movies, fits that description. In other cases, strong-willed directors like Howard Hawks (1896-1977) and Frank Capra (1897-1991) battled the studios in order to achieve their artistic visions. The apogee of the studio system may have been the year 1939, which saw the release of such classics as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Stagecoach*, *Only Angels Have Wings* (Hawks), *Ninotchka* (Lubitsch), and *Midnight*. The studio system succumbed to two forces in the late 1940s: (1) a federal antitrust action that separated the production of films from their exhibition; and (2) the advent of television. The number of movies being made dropped sharply, even as the average budget soared, because Hollywood wanted to offer audiences the kind of spectacle they couldn't see on television.

This blockbuster syndrome has continued to affect Hollywood. Added to the skyrocketing salaries paid actors, studio heads, and deal-making agents, it means that movies released today tend to be either huge successes or huge failures, depending on how well their enormous costs match up with the public taste.

The studios still exist, often in partnership with other media companies, but many of the most interesting American movies are now independent productions. The films of Woody Allen (1935- ), for example, fall into this category. Critics rate them highly and most of them make a profit, but since good actors are



willing to work with Allen for relatively little money, the films are inexpensive to make. Thus, if one happens to fail at the box office, the loss is not crushing. In contrast, a movie featuring Tom Cruise or Arnold Schwarzenegger typically begins with a cost of \$10 million or more just for the star's salary. With multiples of a sum like that at stake, Hollywood studio executives tend to play it safe.

## Popular Music

The first major composer of popular music with a uniquely American style was Stephen Foster (1826-1864). He established a pattern that has shaped American music ever since -- combining elements of the European musical tradition with African American rhythms and themes. Of Irish ancestry, Foster grew up in the South, where he heard slave music and saw minstrel shows, which featured white performers in black make-up performing African American songs and dances. Such material inspired some of Foster's best songs, which many Americans still know by heart: "Oh! Susanna," "Camptown Races," "Ring the Banjo," "Old Folks at Home" (better known by its opening line: "Way down upon the Swanee River").

Before the movies and radio, most Americans had to entertain themselves or wait for the arrival in town of lecturers, circuses, or the traveling stage revues known as vaudeville. Dozens of prominent American entertainers got their starts in vaudeville -- W.C. Fields, Jack Benny, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Buster Keaton, Sophie Tucker, Fanny Brice, Al Jolson, and the Three Stooges, to name just a few -- and the medium demanded a steady supply of new songs. Late in the 19th century, music publishing became a big business in the United States, with many firms clustered in New York City, on a street that became known as Tin Pan Alley.

Vaudeville and the European genre of operetta spawned the Broadway musical, which integrates songs and dancing into a continuous story with spoken dialogue. The first successful example of the new genre -- and still one of the best -- was Jerome Kern's *Showboat*, which premiered in 1927. Interestingly, *Showboat* pays tribute to the black influence on mainstream American music with a story centered on miscegenation and, as its most poignant song, the slave lament "Ol' Man River."

Songwriter Irving Berlin (1888-1989) made a smooth transition from Tin Pan Alley to Broadway. An immigrant of Russian-Jewish extraction, he wrote some of the most popular American songs: "God Bless America," "Easter Parade," "White Christmas," "There's No Business Like Show Business," and "Cheek to Cheek." Cole Porter (1891-1964) took the Broadway show song to new heights of sophistication with his witty lyrics and rousing melodies, combined in such songs as "Anything Goes," "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," "You're the Top," "I Get a Kick Out of You," and "It's De-Lovely."

Black composers such as Scott Joplin (1868-1917) and Eubie Blake (1883-1983) drew on their own heritage to compose songs, ragtime pieces for piano, and, in Joplin's case, an opera. Joplin was all but forgotten after his death, but his music made a comeback starting in the 1970s. Blake wrote the music for *Shuffle Along*, the first Broadway musical by and about blacks, and continued to perform well into his 90s. Blues songs, which had evolved from slaves' work songs, became the rage in New York City and elsewhere during the 1920s and 1930s; two of the blues' finest practitioners were Ma Rainey (1886-1939) and Bessie Smith (c.1898-1937).

## Jazz

W.C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues" is one of the most frequently recorded songs written in the 20th century.

Of all those recordings, one stands out: Bessie Smith's 1925 version, with Louis Armstrong (1900-1971) accompanying her on the cornet -- a collaboration of three great figures (composer, singer, instrumentalist) in a new kind of music called jazz. Though the meaning of "jazz" is obscure, originally the term almost certainly had to do with sex. The music, which originated in New Orleans early in the 20th century, brought together elements from ragtime, slave songs, and brass bands. One of the distinguishing elements of jazz was its fluidity: in live performances, the musicians would almost never play a song the same way twice but would improvise variations on its notes and words.

Blessed with composers and performers of genius -- Jelly Roll Morton (1885-1941) and Duke Ellington (1899-1974), Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman (1909-1986) and Bix Beiderbecke (1903-1931), Billie Holiday (1915-1959), and Ella Fitzgerald (1918-1996) -- jazz was the reigning popular American music from the 1920s through the 1940s. In the 1930s and 1940s the most popular form of jazz was "big-band swing," so called after large ensembles conducted by the likes of Glenn Miller (1909-1944) and William "Count" Basie (1904-1984). In the late 1940s a new, more cerebral form of mostly instrumental jazz, called be-bop, began to attract audiences. Its practitioners included trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993) and saxophonist Charlie Parker (1920-1955). Trumpeter Miles Davis (1926-1991) experimented with a wide range of musical influences, including classical music, which he incorporated into such compositions as "Sketches from Spain."

## **Rock and Roll and Country**

By the early 1950s, however, jazz had lost some of its appeal to a mass audience. A new form of pop music, rock and roll, evolved from a black style known as rhythm and blues: songs with strong beats and often risqué lyrics. Though written by and for blacks, rhythm and blues also appealed to white teenagers, for whom listening to it over black-oriented radio stations late at night became a secret pleasure. To make the new music more acceptable to a mainstream audience, white performers and arrangers began to "cover" rhythm and blues songs -- singing them with the beat toned down and the lyrics cleaned up. A typical example is "Ain't That a Shame," a 1955 hit in a rock version by its black composer, Antoine "Fats" Domino, but an even bigger hit as a ballad-like cover by a white performer, Pat Boone.

Shrewd record producers of the time realized that a magnetic white man who could sing with the energy of a black man would have enormous appeal. Just such a figure appeared in the person of Elvis Presley (1935-1977), who had grown up poor in the South. Besides an emotional singing voice, Presley had sultry good looks and a way of shaking his hips that struck adults as obscene but teenagers as natural to rock and roll. At first, Presley, too, covered black singers: One of his first big hits was "Hound Dog," which had been sung by blues artist Big Mama Thornton. Soon, however, Presley was singing original material, supplied by a new breed of rock-and-roll songwriters.

A few years after its debut, rock and roll was well on its way to becoming the American form of pop music, especially among the young. It spread quickly to Great Britain, where the Beatles and the Rolling Stones got their starts in the early 1960s. In the meantime, however, a challenge to rock had appeared in the form of folk music, based largely on ballads brought over from Scotland, England, and Ireland and preserved in such enclaves as the mountains of North Carolina and West Virginia. Often accompanying themselves on acoustic guitar or banjo, such performers as the Weavers, Joan Baez, Judy Collins, and Peter, Paul, and Mary offered a low-tech alternative to rock and roll.

Bob Dylan (1941) extended the reach of folk music by writing striking new songs that addressed contemporary social problems, especially the denial of civil rights to black Americans. The division between the two camps -- rock enthusiasts and folk purists -- came to a head when Dylan was booed for "going electric" (accompanying himself on electric guitar) at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. Far from being deterred, Dylan led virtually the entire folk movement into a blend of rock and folk.

This merger was a watershed event, setting a pattern that holds true to this day. Rock remains the prevalent pop music of America -- and much of the rest of the world -- largely because it can assimilate almost any other kind of music, along with new varieties of outlandish showmanship, into its strong rhythmical framework. Whenever rock shows signs of creative exhaustion, it seems to get a transfusion, often from African Americans, as happened in the 1980s with the rise of rap: rhyming, often rude lyrics set to minimalist tunes.

Like folk, country music descends from the songs brought to the United States from England, Scotland, and Ireland. The original form of country music, called "old-time" and played by string bands (typically made up of fiddle, banjo, guitar, and base fiddle), can still be heard at festivals held each year in Virginia, North Carolina, and other southern states.

Modern country music, original songs about contemporary concerns, developed in the 1920s, roughly coinciding with a mass migration of rural people to big cities in search of work. Country music tends to have a melancholy sound, and many classic songs are about loss or separation -- lost homes, parents left behind, lost loves. Like many other forms of American pop music, country lends itself easily to a rock-and-roll beat, and country rock has been yet another successful American merger. Overall, country is second only to rock in popularity, and country singer Garth Brooks (1962- ) has sold more albums than any other single artist in American musical history -- including Elvis Presley and Michael Jackson.