

Laura L. Stachowski, Ph.D.  
Director, Cultural Immersion Projects  
Indiana University  
1044 Wright Education Building  
201 N. Rose Avenue  
Bloomington, IN 47405-1006  
Telephone: (812) 856-8507  
Fax: (812) 856-8518  
E-mail: [stachows@indiana.edu](mailto:stachows@indiana.edu)  
<http://education.indiana.edu/cultural>



## OVERSEAS PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTATIONS

*If you are thinking about a unique student teaching experience, consider these goals of the Overseas Project:*

- Develop a broader understanding of the pluralistic world in which we live and of the mutual influences of nation upon nation.
- Provide intercultural teaching and community involvement experiences in overseas nations - experiences which offer realistic, in-depth exposure to other ways of life and schooling.
- Facilitate professional and personal growth through increased self-confidence and self-esteem, greater adaptability, and acquisition of new and different teaching methods, ideas, and philosophies.

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Overseas Student Teaching Project is an optional, challenging, and rewarding supplement to conventional student teaching through which participants request placements in cooperating schools, families, and communities in **Australia, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, India, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Russia, Scotland, Spain, Turkey, or Wales**. IU students seeking certification in elementary, early childhood, secondary, all grades, and special education may participate, as well as those from other teacher education institutions within reasonable driving distance of Bloomington.

The Overseas Project is organized around three stages: the **preparatory phase**, a minimum of ten weeks of **Indiana student teaching**, and the eight-week **overseas immersion experience** itself. Each of these phases is described in greater detail later in this handout.

### **REQUIRED COURSES**

**T550: Cultural/Community Forces & the Schools** - Required of all participants in the Overseas Project, this 3-credit, graduate-level course receives a letter grade representing a culmination of the academic components of the Project (those completed both during the preparatory phase and while on-site).

**M550 Practicum: Ethnic & Cultural Studies** - This course is designed to immerse students within the culture, events, lives, and conditions of the host nation citizens through school, family, and community involvement. Overseas Project participants earn 6 credits of graduate level M550, which also receives a letter grade.

**Student Teaching Credit** - All participants must enroll in a minimum of 10 credits of elementary, secondary, or all-grades student teaching at the 400-level. Those who are adding other areas of certification to their basic license must enroll in at least 16, 400-level credits. Participants who are

graduate students will enroll in student teaching courses at the 500-level. Guest participants from other universities will enroll in student teaching courses through their home campus.

## EXPENSES

All Project-related expenses are the student's responsibility and will depend in part on the student's own lifestyle and spending habits. Any financial aid for which the student is eligible may be applied towards Project costs.

A general outline of Overseas Project expenses follows. More specific information will be provided at the first organizational class session of the Overseas Project, held early in the fall semester.

* I.U. tuition (in state or out-of-state)	Enrollment in a minimum of 10 credits for Indiana student teaching <b>and</b> 9 credits for the Cultural Immersion Projects.
* Standard student teaching fee	\$210.00
* M550 practicum fee	\$90.00
** Overseas placement fee	\$200.00
Living expenses during Indiana student teaching	will depend on each student's own arrangements
Round trip airfare to host nation (approximate - can vary significantly)	\$400-\$700 plus or minus for Costa Rica, Ecuador \$700-\$900 plus or minus for Britain, Ireland, Spain \$1000-\$1400 plus or minus for Russia, Turkey, China \$1500 plus or minus for Australia, New Zealand, India, Japan, Kenya  Remember, airfares can fluctuate often and vary widely from one carrier to the next. Further, some airlines may be offering deeply discounted fares at the time you book, resulting in lower costs than shown here.
Room and board paid to overseas host family (approximate)	Variable – depends on host nation, placement site within host nation, and currency exchange rates at the time the student goes overseas. General budgeting guidelines will be discussed at first organizational class session.
*** Free-time traveling expenses while overseas (transportation, lodging, food, admissions, souvenirs, etc.)	will vary by student
* Subject to change as I.U. trustees increase fees	
* * Subject to small increase by Dr. Ross Korsgaard of the Foundation for International Education	
*** Students are advised to establish a weekly budget while overseas to ensure that adequate funds are retained for necessities (e.g. room and board).	

Notes: Overseas travel requires possession of a passport. In addition, visas are required for entry into some of the host nations. Further, special health precautions are necessary for certain countries. Be sure to budget for these expenses.

## **COMPONENTS OF THE OVERSEAS PROJECT**

A. During the **preparatory phase**, Project applicants will:

- attend all evening class sessions and participate in the intensive Spring Workshop
- read and abstract articles on education, history, culture, and contemporary issues (social, economic, political) in the host nation
- interview with Project staff
- prepare an Overseas Project Journal
- submit overseas placement application to the Foundation for International Education.

B. **Indiana Student Teaching**

- Participants in the Overseas Project must successfully complete at least 10 weeks of student teaching in an Indiana elementary or secondary school before reporting overseas. Participants in the Teaching All Learners program must student teach for at least 16 weeks.
- Students seeking license additions may, in some cases, be able to complete the related practicum overseas.
- The Indiana classroom teacher, school principal, and I.U. supervisors must concur that a student teacher's 10 or more weeks of student teaching were "strong" before placement overseas will be finalized.

C. **The Overseas Experience**

- The overseas placement periods spans 8 full weeks (40 days of teaching).
- Overseas school placements are made by Dr. Ross Korsgaard, Director of the Foundation for International Education (based in Wisconsin). Dr. Korsgaard has been providing this service for several U.S. universities and colleges since 1969.
- Housing in the overseas community is typically arranged by the headteacher of the school that accepts the student teacher. Student teachers generally live in the homes of families who provide many nice "extras." In some instances, student teachers may live in boarding facilities in their placement community.
- While overseas, Project participants are required to do the following:
  - a) put in full days at school for the entire, 40-day placement period
  - b) complete the weekly Cultural Reflection reports and submit them to Project staff
  - c) complete all evaluative scales and surveys during the last week on-site
  - d) complete the graduate project(s), which may vary from year to year
  - e) be involved in the community as appropriate for the locality
- Overseas Project participants should expect differences in organization, structure, procedures, and philosophy between their Indiana schools and host nation schools. Further, many of the overseas schools are likely to have fewer instructional support materials than are typically found in Indiana. Such differences will be explored during the preparatory phase of the Overseas Project.

## **APPROXIMATE STUDENT TEACHING DATES**

Specific dates will be set each year. Roughly, for an elementary or secondary student teacher receiving no license additions, the following time frames apply:

Semester I: August 14 - October 20 in Indiana  
October 23 - December 20 in host nation

Semester II: January 2 - March 8 in Indiana  
March 11 - May 17 in host nation

Notes: These overseas dates include 8-week placement, plus 1 or 2 week intervals when schools may close for term break. Adjustments must be made for participant completing the 16 weeks of student teaching in Indiana, and for other special cases.

## **STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR OVERSEAS PROJECT EXPERIENCES**

These statements were written by recent participants near the conclusion of the overseas experience:

"I found it absolutely amazing to come into a new and different culture as an apprehensive foreigner, adapt and gain acceptance, and leave as a well-rounded and culturally sensitive individual. It is a definite challenge coming into and living in someone else's home - flexibility, spontaneity, and a positive attitude make the transition smooth and worthwhile. I've learned to take certain people and situations with a grain of salt. Sometimes one little mishap can be a huge milestone to learn from, and then you move on full force." (Student teacher in Sydney, Australia)

"I met a lot of different people from all walks of life that I never would have met if I had not come to Scotland. So often we get caught up in our own little worlds and we forget that there is a whole planet out there that we can explore." (Student teacher in Inverness, Scotland)

"The opportunity of teaching and living within Indian society was an opportunity few people get. Many tourists come to India and all they see is old temples and markets. This project gave me access to the true Indian culture. Indian culture is so radically different than the west that every one witnesses such a contrast they come to better understand their own culture. (Student teacher in Amritsar, India)

"I grew as a person. I never knew I was the type to adapt as well as I did. I have come out of my 'shell' on this trip and gained the confidence and independence I so desperately needed." (Student teacher in Orange, Australia)

"I have had the opportunity to gain more insights about the people and culture of Ireland than merely traveling would ever allow. Becoming a "familiar face" meant that slowly people let down their masks and got beyond asking how I find the weather. I was able to get to know people well enough to have 'real talks' about family, relationships, religion, etc. Passing through town as a tourist would not allow that closeness." (Student teacher in Gort, Ireland)

"Kenya was easily the best experience of my life. I have traveled to places around the world before, but I have never found a place that just grabbed my heart, embraced it, never to let go. I felt at home from the minute I walked into the Lubanga home. The people of Kenya are absolutely the most warm, generous, thoughtful, and genuine people I have ever met. Every day their joy for life and their appreciation for family and friends never ceased to amaze me. They consistently humbled me, made me think, and helped me to realize that I owe it to myself and the world to live generously and to the fullest extent." (Student teacher in Bungoma, Kenya)

"Living in Ireland has taught me to live my life in a slower gear, savoring every person I meet, every conversation, every Guinness, every moment of life. All the world is indeed a classroom, and we are students, teachers, and mentors - each a part of another's life, learning every day." (Student teacher in Limerick, Ireland)

The Overseas Project offers a demanding, challenging, and highly rewarding experience to individuals seeking to learn about and build close relationships with host nation citizens of all ages. The Project requires mature, dedicated, sensitive, and industrious students willing and able to adapt to a different education system and to the culture of another nation. Overseas Project participants must be good representatives of Indiana University and the United States while abroad.

### **Questions?**

Please contact the Cultural Immersion Projects office at 812-856-8507, stop by in Education 1044, or email Dr. Laura Stachowski, Director, at [stachows@indiana.edu](mailto:stachows@indiana.edu).