

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Study of the U.S. Institutes for Secondary Educators

2. Study of the U.S. Institutes for Secondary Educators are intensive post-graduate level academic programs with integrated study tours whose purpose is to provide foreign secondary educators the opportunity to deepen their understanding of U.S. society, culture, values, and institutions. The ultimate goal of the Institutes is to strengthen curricula and to enhance the quality of teaching about the United States in secondary schools and other academic institutions abroad. Posts and prospective applicants are encouraged to visit our website page to obtain general information about the Institutes. The address is: <http://exchanges.state.gov/susi>.

3. The Study of the U.S. Institutes for Secondary Educators will take place over the course of five weeks beginning in or after June 2015. Three Institutes for Secondary Educators will be offered, two with a focus on classroom teachers and the third with a focus on administrators, teacher trainers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, and ministry of education officials, among others. Each Institute includes a four week academic residency component and a one week integrated study tour.

INSTITUTE DESCRIPTION:

4. **The Study of the U.S. Institutes for Secondary Educators** will provide a multinational group of **20** experienced secondary school educators with a deeper understanding of U.S. society, education, and culture - past and present. The focus of the Institute will be on providing materials for participants to develop high school level curricula about the United States. To this end, the Institute may be organized around a central theme or themes in U.S. civilization. Through a combination of traditional, multi-disciplinary, and interdisciplinary approaches, program content will elucidate the history and evolution of U.S. institutions and values, broadly defined. The program will also serve to illuminate contemporary political, social, and economic debates in American society. The four week academic residency will be complemented by a one week study tour. The aim of the study tour is to showcase the rich cultural, geographic, and ethnic diversity of the United States. The University of Illinois will host one Institute for teachers; the hosts for two additional Institutes (one for teachers and one for administrators) will be communicated at a later date.

OTHER ESSENTIAL PROGRAM INFORMATION:

5. **Program Funding:** The program will cover all participant costs including: program administration; travel and ground transportation in the United States; and book, cultural, housing, subsistence, mailing, books, and incidental allowances.

6. **Housing and Meal Arrangements:** Participants may be asked to share living quarters during the residency portion (four weeks) of the Institute. Private room accommodations cannot be guaranteed during the residency portion of the program. During the study tour (up to one week), participants may share a hotel room with a participant of the same gender. During the residency, housing will typically be in college or university owned housing. Most meals will be provided at campus facilities, though participants may have access to a kitchen to cook some meals on their own.

7. Care will be taken to ensure that any special requirements regarding diet, daily worship, housing, and medical care are satisfied.

8. **Travel Arrangements:** The Embassy will arrange economy class round trip international travel for each competitively selected participant. These tickets will be funded by the Study of the U.S. Branch.

9. **Health Benefits:** All participants will receive the Department of State's coverage of up to \$100,000, with a \$25 co-pay per medical visit, for the duration of the program. Pre-existing conditions are not covered. Information on the health benefit program may be found online at usdos.sevencorners.com.

10. **Program Requirements and Restrictions:** All participants are expected to participate fully in the program. Selected participants must attend all lectures and organized activities and complete assigned readings. Family members and/or friends cannot accompany participants on any part of the program. Candidates should be aware that this is an intensive Institute and there will be little time for personal pursuits unrelated to the program. The Institute is not a research program.

CANDIDATE DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

11. Study of the U.S. Institutes are highly competitive. Priority will be given to candidates who have firm plans to enhance, update or develop courses and/or educational materials with a U.S. studies focus or component, who have no prior or limited experience in the United States, and who have special interest in the institute topic as demonstrated through past scholarship, accomplishments, and professional duties.

12. Candidates should be mid-career, typically between the ages of 30-50, highly-motivated and experienced secondary school educators. This Institute is for secondary school teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, ministry of education officials, secondary school administrators, or other related professionals with responsibility for secondary education. Ideal candidates are individuals who are seeking to introduce or enhance aspects of U.S. studies into their curricula or to offer specialized seminars/workshops for education professionals in U.S. studies or related fields. While the nominee's scholarly and professional credentials are an important consideration, the potential impact and multiplier effect of the Institute is equally important.

13. Candidates must demonstrate English language fluency. Institutes are rigorous and demanding programs; participants will be expected to handle substantial reading assignments in English and to fully and actively participate in all seminar and panel discussions. English fluency is vital to a successful experience in the Institute, both for your participant and participants from other countries.

14. Candidates should be willing and able to fully take part in an intensive post-graduate level academic program and study tour. It is important that posts and Commissions nominate only persons who are likely to be comfortable with campus life and an active program schedule. While senior and entry level educators are eligible applicants, the program urges the Embassy to give first consideration to mid-career professionals and to persons who are likely to be comfortable with campus life and an active program schedule.

15. Candidates will be notified regarding selection or non-selection of candidates by April 2014.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- a. What degree of English proficiency should I have?** All participants must be fully proficient in English; throughout the Institute they will need to fully understand lectures, actively participate in discussions, and read and write assignments in English.
- b. Can I participate if I'm a dual citizen (U.S. and Paraguay) in Study of the U.S. Institutes?** No. U.S. citizens and permanent residents (green card holders) are **NOT** eligible to participate in this program.
- c. I am not a citizen of Paraguay, can I be nominated?** Yes. Study of the U.S. Institutes are programs designed to further mutual understanding between U.S. citizens and people of other countries. If you wish to nominate someone who is not a citizen of the nominating country, please explain clearly on the application the reasons for the nomination.
- d. I have been to the U.S. before; would I be disqualified?** No. Nominees with some experience in the United States can be considered for the program. Please be sure to clearly indicate the purpose of the nominee's prior visit(s) to the United States, the year, and the length of his/her stay as requested on the nomination form. Preference will be given to nominees with little or no experience in the U.S.
- e. How much free time/time for independent research will I have during the program?** There will be some free time during the program as well as some time designated for independent research. However, nominees **MUST** understand that this is an intensive academic program and they are expected to participate in all lectures, activities, and scheduled events. Participants in Secondary Educator Institutes may, at their own expense, opt to extend their stay in the U.S. after the close of their program to the extent allowed by visa regulations.

- f. If I have relatives in the U.S., would I have time to see them?** Because of the intensive nature of the Institutes, participants will **NOT** be able to leave the Institute to visit relatives or friends. Participants in Secondary Educator Institutes may, at their own expense, opt to extend their stay in the United States after the close of their program to the extent allowed by visa regulations.
- g. Can a relative travel and stay with me during the Institute?** No. Relatives are **NOT** permitted to travel or stay with a participant during the program. There are no exceptions to this rule. Participants in Secondary Educator Institutes may, at their own expense, opt to extend their stay in the U.S. after the close of their program to the extent allowed by visa regulations.
- h. Can I arrive early/late for the Institute?** The Embassy will arrange flight itineraries so that participants arrive on the Institute start date. Occasionally, flight schedules necessitate that a participant arrive a day early. These situations will be addressed on a case by case basis.
- i. Can I stay after the end of the Institute?** Yes. Under the terms of their J-1 Visas, participants generally have up to 30 days after the end of the program to depart from the U.S. However, the participant must be aware that he/she is responsible for all arrangements and expenses after the end of the Institute and will no longer have the government's-sponsored health benefits.
- j. Can I miss one part or component of the Institute?** No. All participants are expected to participate in all scheduled lectures, events, site visits, trips, and activities.
- l. How much money will I need to bring for the program?** The Study of the U.S. Institutes cover all costs of an individual's participation including transportation, lodging, and meals. Generally, host institutions provide for meals through a combination of a cafeteria meal plan and cash allowance to permit participants to cook or eat at local restaurants. Information on housing and meal arrangements will be provided by the host institution six weeks prior to the start of the Institute. Participants should bring their own spending money if they wish to purchase souvenirs or other items during their time in the United States. Participants will receive a stipend to

purchase books and research materials while in the United States.

NOMINATION FORMAT:

16. Candidate nominations must be received by **midnight Friday, December 5, 2014.**

17. The Study of the U.S. institutes requires that candidates complete an **application**. Please write to espinosar@state.gov and request an application format.