



# Teacher Exchange Programs



**Teacher exchange programs** of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) focus on the critical importance of the teacher's role in society. Participating teachers reach thousands of students worldwide from all social, economic, and ethnic groups; contribute to mutual understanding throughout their communities by integrating new methodologies and international perspectives into their classrooms; help students become responsible citizens; and provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the global marketplace.

ECA supports academic exchange opportunities for both foreign and U.S. teachers. Approximately, 500 teachers from 50 countries and 290 U.S. teachers participate annually in ECA teacher exchange programs

**Programs for Beginning Teachers** provide new foreign secondary school teachers the opportunity to begin their careers with a significant international experience. Programs range from eight weeks to three months and include seminars at U.S. universities on American culture and society, teaching methodologies, and technology training. International teachers also participate in teaching internships with mentors in secondary schools.

**Professional Development Programs** offer foreign teachers of English, mathematics, science, and social studies opportunities to further develop their teaching skills, increase their subject-matter expertise, audit courses at a host university, and teach at a U.S. school. Programs range from six weeks to a semester. Most participants are from non-elite schools in the developing world. After returning home, alumni convey a more nuanced understanding of the United States to their students, engage them in dynamic, project-based curricula, and promote the use of technology. Alumni also share their new perspectives and knowledge with colleagues through ECA-sponsored workshops.

**Specialized educational seminars** introduce teachers and school administrators from abroad to American educational practices. The international participants foster collaborative relationships with U.S. counterparts. Following the program, U.S. teachers and administrators make a reciprocal visit to the foreign participants schools where



they learn more about their host country's community and educational system, and further strengthen cooperation between U.S. and foreign schools.

**The Fulbright Program** provides opportunities for both U.S. and foreign teachers. Under the Fulbright Classroom Teacher Exchanges, U.S. and foreign teachers assume classroom responsibilities of their counterparts for a semester or a year. The Distinguished Fulbright Awards in Teaching enable U.S. teachers to travel abroad and international teachers to travel to the United States to develop individual projects, conduct research, take courses for professional development, and lead master classes and seminars.

**Critical Language Teacher Exchanges** and professional development help to strengthen foreign

language teaching in the United States. ECA brings native-speaking foreign language teachers from China and Egypt to teach critical languages in U.S. elementary and secondary schools for one academic year.

Additionally, ECA supports intensive summer language study institutes overseas for American secondary school teachers, teaching degree students, and community college instructors of Chinese, Arabic, and Russian.

*[The exchange] has indeed touched our lives.... Though we have 42 students in my class, I do not follow the lecture system, I prefer cooperative learning, and the student learning methods are my first priority. I have become more open to discussions in class. I see my students getting more confident day by day. Since my methodology has changed, I am more confident, too. The U.S. Program has undoubtedly changed a lot of outlooks and perceptions.*

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