



International Student Teaching Handbook

Welcome to International Student Teaching! As part of the CEHS Grand Vision, working together to positively impact the human condition, we are proud to offer a global experience for pre-service teachers.

This handbook is designed to provide an overview of the international student teaching experience and to serve as a practical resource for those considering or preparing for a placement abroad. It outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and opportunities that come with teaching in a new cultural and educational context.

International student teaching offers the unique opportunity for students to immerse themselves in another culture while gaining real-world teaching experience. They return home with a better understanding of their host country through the relationships built with students, teachers, and members of the community. Students gain a new perspective on their own teaching practices in the United States and a broader worldview—qualities that are increasingly valuable in today's interconnected classrooms.

This handbook includes essential information about the application process, placement details, cultural considerations, professional expectations, and support resources. It is intended to help prospective student teachers make informed decisions and feel prepared for the challenges and rewards of teaching internationally.

We hope this guide helps clarify what to expect and how to make the most of this enriching experience. Participating in an international student teaching program is a rewarding and transformative experience. By stepping into a new educational context, students develop global competence, cultural awareness, and a deeper understanding of teaching and learning. This handbook is the first step in preparing for that journey.

For more information, please contact the International Student Teaching Campus Director.

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Collaboration

The College of Education & Human Sciences (CEHS) collaborates with Global Gateway for Teachers, an international student teaching placement program offered through the College of Education at Indiana University since the 1970's. This program provides the structures, school and placement vetting, and country consultants for participants. Global Gateway is also used by several peer institutions, including other Big 10 universities.

This collaboration provides CEHS students with:

1. Established structures
2. Vetted school and homestay placements
3. Country consultants for participants

Program Structure

Students complete a 16-week student teaching experience for licensure, with ten weeks completed in the United States and six weeks in an international setting. This structure meets Nebraska licensure requirements and provides:

1. Rigorous, high-quality preparation
2. Completion of licensure and graduation requirements
3. Meaningful global teaching experience for on-time graduation
4. A unique advantage for CEHS students versus those from other state educator preparation programs that do not offer this opportunity

Should a one- or two-week school vacation fall during the 6-week international placement, participants may be required to remain in-country for seven or eight weeks to complete six weeks in school to meet graduation and state licensure requirements.

International Placement Sites

Australia, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Scotland, Spain, Tanzania, and Wales.

* Refer to the Global Gateway Program Booklet for detailed information about each host country. This booklet is available upon request.

Entry and Exit Requirements

U.S. citizens must have a valid passport for international travel. Participants who do not already have a passport are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as they confirm their participation.

Some countries require a visa for legal entry. Visa requirements may differ if participants intend to remain in the host country beyond the program dates or plan to travel to other countries before, during, or after their international student teaching. Participants may also need to demonstrate proof of sufficient funds for their stay. It is important to research the specific entry requirements for your country of choice prior to applying to the program. For detailed country requirements and/or visa information, please consult the [UNL Global Experiences Office](#).

Application Process

Eligibility Requirements:

- Completion of prerequisite coursework.
- Good academic standing; cumulative GPA 2.75+.
- Professional coursework; C+ or better.

- Successful completion of previous field experiences and a successful 10-week student teaching placement in the U.S.

Verification of academic eligibility is provided by CEHS advisors and clinical supervisors.

Registrant Attributes and Characteristics

Successful candidates for international student teaching typically have the following attributes and characteristics:

- Emotional stability, good health, and willingness to adjust and adapt to unfamiliar and sometimes difficult circumstances.
- Access to adequate financial resources while overseas.
- Established professional and personal objectives for the overseas experience.

Application Materials

The following materials are required for a completed application.

- **Completed Global Gateway Registration Set**
 - Submission of a complete registration set to the Campus Director at least six months before the student teaching semester begins.
 - After careful review and signatures, it is sent to Global Gateway to initiate the placement process. The registration set is provided to country consultants to help secure placements.
- **Additional Registration Set items**
 - Criminal history report (no more than 6 months old)
 - Validation Letter from the Campus Director

- Proof of health insurance (AIG) and professional liability insurance (Aspiring Educators Membership)
- Completed UNL Global Experiences Office application and all related materials.

*** at least four weeks prior to departure for the international student teaching experience, participants must provide the IST Campus Director with proof of required health and professional liability insurance coverage.*

Estimated Costs

Different countries have varying costs based on a myriad of factors, however there are some standing expenses regardless of the destination.

Requirement	Cost
Global Gateway for Teachers Placement Fee	\$1,000*
Global Gateway for Teachers Registration Fee (non-refundable)	\$350*
Program Medical Insurance	\$65 **
UNL Education Abroad Fee	\$750
Professional Liability Insurance	\$50 **
Room & Board	Varies
TOTAL	\$2,215

**Subject to increase by Global Gateway*

***Approximate cost*

Students are responsible for documents for entry to the country (i.e. passports, visas), UNL tuition and fees, meals, and airfare in addition to the costs outlined in the preceding table.

Before submitting registration materials, participants should ensure they have adequate financial resources to support their overseas experience. It is recommended that they consult with the UNL Global Experiences and Financial Aid Offices to explore available grants, scholarships, and loans. In addition, local, state,

and national organizations may also offer funding opportunities for academic and professional experiences abroad.

Participants should not plan to seek employment during their international placement. Student teaching is a full-time commitment, and outside work may interfere with professional responsibilities and could impact both legal status and liability in the host country.

Section of a Host Country

When selecting a host country, participants should consider several important factors, including the type of school experiences available in different locations. Options may include countries where English is the primary language, one of several official languages, or where it is taught primarily as a foreign language.

The Nebraska Department of Education requires all participants to complete their student teaching in their designated content area and in English, unless they demonstrate fluency in the host country's native language. In addition to language considerations, other key factors include:

- **Financial considerations**, such as airfare, cost of living, and local travel expenses.
- **Professional goals**, such as gaining experience teaching English as an additional language, exploring specific curricular areas, or adopting new instructional approaches.
- **Personal interests**, such as a passion for the host country's literature, history, music, or art.
- **Individual readiness**, including the extent to which participants are comfortable stepping outside their cultural and personal comfort zones.

Carefully reflecting on these aspects can help participants select a placement that aligns with their educational goals and personal growth objectives.

Placement Details

Country Consultants

Consultants serve as overseas representatives, responsible for coordinating international school placements. In some host countries, they may also arrange accommodations. Global Gateway maintains active communication with consultants in all established placement regions. These individuals are experienced educators who possess in-depth knowledge of the schools in their respective areas and are strongly committed to promoting internationalism in teacher education. They may also serve as an in-country contact for participants, if needed, once the school placement is confirmed.

Living Arrangements

Accommodations will vary depending on location. Some participants may choose to live with a family (homestay), while others may live in a dormitory. Students can also make their own living arrangements, in consultation with Global Gateway and the country consultant, but a homestay is highly recommended.

Host Schools Placement and Locations

- School site placement determined by academic fit and availability.
 - Consultants are encouraged to finalize school placements within two months of receiving the registration materials. However, due to circumstances beyond control, timely placement may not always be possible in all locations.
- After placement confirmation by the Consultant, Global Gateway notifies the participant and Campus Director via email.
- After receiving placement details, participants should promptly contact the overseas school

coordinator/director and the homestay family to begin arranging the specific aspects of the placement.

***Throughout this period, you are expected to keep all relevant parties—including the Campus Director, Consultant, Global Gateway, and the School Coordinator/Director—informed of any updates or changes, such as revisions to the starting or ending dates.*

Roles and Responsibilities

- Plan and deliver lessons aligned with the host school's curriculum and learning objectives.
- Adapt teaching strategies to fit cultural and linguistic classroom contexts.
- Follow the host school's policies, procedures, and expectations for conduct and dress.
 - Demonstrate cultural respect and professionalism at all times
 - Uphold high standards of professionalism and ethics.
- Maintain open communication with cooperating teachers, supervisors, and university coordinators.
- Engage in self-care and seek support when needed to handle challenges abroad.
- Submit a weekly or bi-weekly reflection to your US Supervisor.

Performance Evaluation

- Ongoing feedback from cooperating teachers and supervisors, including progress entries.
- Formal assessment at the end of the placement.

Cultural Considerations

Cultural competence is essential for international student teachers because it enables them to understand and respect the different backgrounds, values, and learning styles of their students. It helps build strong, trusting relationships and fosters an engaged classroom where all students feel seen and supported. By being culturally aware, student teachers can adapt their teaching methods to be more effective and avoid unintentional misunderstandings.

Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity

- Learn about the host country's customs, values, and norms.
- Respect cultural norms and values of the host country, both in and out of the classroom.
- Act as a cultural ambassador, sharing perspectives and cultural/education norms when appropriate.

Language and Communication

- English may not be the primary language; prepare accordingly.
- Practice active listening and clear communication.
- Build relationships with students and colleagues across cultural and language differences.

Adaptation and Flexibility

- Expect differences in teaching styles, school structure, and student behavior.
- Stay open-minded and adaptable.
- Manage time effectively for lesson planning, classroom responsibilities, and coursework.

Health

Participants are encouraged to take proactive measures to support both their physical and mental well-being while abroad. Health-related planning is a critical part of preparation for international student teaching placements.

All participants must purchase international travel insurance through AIG Insurance. Additionally, a health clearance form—completed and signed by a licensed healthcare provider—is required. UNL students can access free appointments at the UNL Health Center. The UNL Global Experiences Office will provide step-by-step instructions for fulfilling these requirements.

Additional resources and up-to-date guidance on health risks, preventive measures, and travel advisories can be found on the following official websites:

- U.S. Department of State: <http://www.travel.state.gov>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov>

It is also common for participants to experience homesickness and culture shock while adapting to a new environment. These reactions are normal and should be anticipated as part of the adjustment process. Prior to departure, participants are encouraged to discuss these potential challenges with their families and/or the Campus Director, to develop strategies for managing emotional well-being during their time abroad.

Participants are strongly encouraged to have access to contingency funds while abroad. In the event of an emergency, neither UNL nor CEHS can provide financial assistance. Students should be prepared to cover unexpected medical or other expenses. Although international health insurance is required, some medical providers may require payment upfront, with reimbursement to follow. Participants should plan accordingly to manage such costs.

Predeparture Requirements

Two pre-departure orientation sessions are required for all students traveling internationally. These sessions provide information and details for international travel including:

- Cultural training, safety guidelines, and logistical support are provided.
- Registering with STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program).

Support Resources

International student teachers can access a variety of resources before, during and after their experience.

On-Site Mentorship

- Designated cooperating teacher at host school.
- Regular check-ins with CEHS supervisors and/or Campus Director.

Emergency Contacts

- 24/7 contact information for institutional support through UNL's Global Experiences Office.
- International Student Teaching Campus Director.

Re-Entry Support

- Institution support and opportunities to share experiences.

Accommodations

If a student teacher requires assistance through physical and/or academic accommodations during student teaching for a disability, they must first contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, in 117 Louise Pound Hall, prior to the start of their student teaching placement. Once eligibility for services has been determined, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the Office of Accreditation, Placement & Licensure about the accommodations, the semester prior to the student teaching placement. It is also the student's responsibility to communicate all accommodations with their university supervisor and the cooperating teacher.

Services will remain confidential and every attempt will be made to accommodate student needs. It is recommended that students work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities as early as possible to allow sufficient time to determine what accommodations may be made for overseas placements. If accommodations are not able to be met in an international placement, students will complete their student teaching requirement at the U.S. placement site.

In the Weeks Prior to Departure

Please complete these items in the weeks before you leave.

- **Insurance** – Keep copies of all insurance information with you, place an extra copy in luggage, and leave another copy with someone at home.
 - AIG Health Insurance
 - Professional Liability Insurance

- **Expenses** – when possible, it is best to have a variety of ways to access money while abroad.
 - ATM Cards
 - Credit Cards
 - Traveler's Checks
 - Cash – US currency and foreign currency
 - Be sure to have foreign currency for food and possible departure taxes for the return trip. Keep in mind, most countries will likely accept credit cards.
- **Homestay Payments** – Homestay hosts will determine the appropriate charge. A discussion to determine 'board' arrangements should take place before departure.
 - Amount – Payment type: what currency, cash, check, Venmo, etc.
 - Day of week to make payment
 - Receipt for payment (if needed)
- **Travel Documents** – be organized
 - Keep originals & a copy with you. Place an extra copy in your luggage and leave another copy with someone at home.
- **Climate/Clothing** – Research and communicate with host families and local contacts about the weather, pack accordingly.
- **Phone** – Prepare a list of phone numbers (emergency and other). Don't rely on a cell phone to 'work' to find emergency numbers.
 - Check with cell service providers regarding international phone usage.
 - Install *What's App* for in country and US communication.
 - Inquire about landline usage upon arrival.
- **Inexpensive Gifts** – It is a nice gesture to give gifts of appreciation to host families, school community members and country consultants (ask about CEHS/UNL small gifts).

- **Internet/Wi-Fi** – Wi-Fi is not easily accessible in all countries. Discuss internet/Wi-Fi usage and costs with host families and school communities prior to departure as it may be available for an additional fee.
- **Travel Plans** – Communicate all travel plans with the host family and school correspondent – welcome their ideas regarding arrival plans.
 - How to travel from the airport to the placement destination?
 - Weekend travel plans/arrangements?
 - Local transportation options.
- **Host Country** – Research. Learn as much as you can about the placement country.
- **Prepare for Emergencies** – Ensure your family knows how to contact you in case of an emergency. Consider using location sharing with a family member.
 - Locate and know how to contact the local authorities as well as the nearest US embassy or consulate.
 - Understand local laws, customs and norms.
 - Be aware of travel advisories.
 - Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

Checklist for International Student Teaching

- Meet with the CEHS IST Campus Director.
- Meet with the CEHS Global Coordinator.
- Thoroughly read the Global Gateway Program Booklet.
- Complete the registration set and email it to the Campus Director.
- Meet with the Campus Director to review the registration set.
- Pay Global Gateway Fees, using the online portal.
- Complete UNL global experiences application in VIA-TRM.

- Pay global experiences fee and complete all paperwork.
 - Complete health clearance form with health provider.
- Once placement is received, initiate communication with homestay, country consultant and school personnel.
- Secure flights, passport, visa (if needed).
- Enroll in STEP program (<https://mytravel.state.gov/s>)
- Attend pre-departure meetings.
- Complete background check – no more than 6 months prior to departure.
- Become a member of Aspiring Educators for professional liability insurance.
- Send proof of membership and health insurance to the Campus Director.
- Locate the in-country US embassy.

Emergency Contacts

- **IST Campus Director** – 402.472.8620 or 402.472.5428
- **UNL Global Experiences Office** – 402.472.5358
- **UNL Global Experiences Director** – 402.472.5393

Helpful Websites for International Travel

- UNL Global Experiences- <https://global.unl.edu/global-experiences/>
- Global Gateway for Teachers- <https://education.indiana.edu/programs/global-gateway/overseas/index.html>
- US Travel- <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/>
- Locate US Embassies- <https://www.usembassy.gov/>
- US Travel Advisors- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

- US Passport Applications -
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>
- Visa Requirements for traveling abroad -
<https://www.usa.gov/visas-citizens-traveling-abroad>
- Learn About Your Destination -
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>
- International Traveler's Checklist -
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-checklist.html>
- Your Health Abroad -
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/your-health-abroad.html>
- Custom and Import Restrictions -
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/customs-and-import.html>

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