



**COLORADO  
COLLEGE**

**Career Center**



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# Teaching Abroad

Teaching abroad is a great opportunity to explore another country and culture before beginning a career or entering a graduate school there. Teaching English in another country is one of the easier ways to spend some time abroad without incurring too much cost. You typically don't need to be an English major, nor do you need to be fluent in the host country's language; organizations are mostly interested in your ability to speak native and fluent English.

**Warning! International scams and "fly by night" programs are on the rise.** Scammers are getting better at making opportunities look legitimate online. Always be wary of programs that haven't been around for more than a few years, make huge promises, have hefty up-front costs, or are vague. Always watch for hidden expenses and ask a lot of questions.

**This packet is introductory. Information and rules change quickly. Do your research!**



## Terms and Acronyms

**CELTA:** Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults, administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and Royal Society of Arts, based in England. This is a specific, brand name TEFL certificate course.

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language (used in Europe).

**ELD:** English Language Development.

**ELT:** English language teaching or training (used internationally).

**ESL:** English as a Second Language.

**ESOL:** English for Speakers of Other Languages.

**NAFSA:** Now the Association of International Educators.

**RSA:** Royal Society of Arts, part of the Oxford Cambridge RSA group which administers exams for lifelong learning.

**TEFL:** Teaching English as a foreign language, often used to refer to teacher education programs in EFL or TEFL certificate.

**TESL:** Teaching English as a second language, often used to refer to teacher education programs in ESL.

**TESOL:** Teaching English to speakers of other languages, a professional activity that requires specialized training and also the name of an association.

**TOEFL:** Test of English as a Foreign Language, an exam administered worldwide to international students applying to US institutions of higher education.

**UCLES:** The University Of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), an institution of the University of Cambridge in the UK. UCLES offers five main EFL examinations covering a range of abilities for EFL students.

## Preparation

Good programs usually provide training and curriculum, but some teachers must develop their own curriculum; in case you find yourself in that situation, it's a good idea to prepare before you get into the classroom.

- Volunteer to teach or tutor English in a local ESL program, or tutor English and/or reading at local elementary schools. Contact the Collaborative for Community Engagement to get started.
- Take an ESL course during Half Block or over the summer to get training and hands on experience. There's also a similar ACM Urban Education Program in Chicago. Contact International Programs for more information.
- Complete a one-month TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) or CELTA (Certificate in English Language Training to Adults) certificate course. TEFL teaches more modern and less structured teaching methods; CELTA is more traditional and in-depth, and is the highest credential in TESL. One of these certifications may make you more competitive for positions in Western Europe, but is not necessary for all programs or opportunities. If you complete the TEFL online, you'll need to gain hands on experience on your own.
- Make yourself a more competitive candidate by learning another language while at CC, taking advantage of opportunities to study abroad, living in a language house and participating in the language tables, and getting to know international students. It doesn't have to be the language of the country you're planning on teaching; the experience of learning a second language yourself will make you a more empathetic teacher.

## Costs and Payment

Participants are typically responsible for round-trip transportation and health insurance, as well as additional program fees. Often, these costs have to be paid up front.

Whether you get paid and how much depends on the country you're in and the program you choose. In **general**:

- **Japan:** Pay similar to American wages.
- **South Korea and Taiwan:** Pay somewhat less than American wages.
- **China and the Eastern Europe:** Pay can be enough to get by in that country, but little more.
- **Africa and Latin and Central America:** Usually only unpaid opportunities and possible additional fees to volunteer on top of your living and transportation expenses.
- **Western Europe:** Opportunities are slim for Americans because English speaking members of the European Union can teach without work permits and Visas. North Americans can, however, teach English to a family 15 hours per week in exchange for room and board.

## The Job Search

Start your search about **9 months before you plan to teach**; the application process itself can take up to 6 months. Visit our website's Online Resources page to explore websites devoted to international opportunities.

### ■ *Applying through US-based organizations:*

The easiest and safest option is probably to apply through US-based or affiliated organizations, which are often associated with an American college or university. These organizations usually arrange placement and handle logistical matters, such as housing and a work permit.

### ■ *Applying through verified, official organizations in other countries:*

A similar method is to apply through well known official programs associated with other countries. You can also write directly to overseas schools, sending a country-specific resume and cover letter, but keep in mind that chances of success are limited without visiting the country for an in-person interview. Unless you already have a connection with someone in that country who can help you, this method involves luck. **Consider contacting CC alumni who are already living in your preferred country**; come by the Career Center for more information on how to do so.

### ■ *Of course, you could just go for it.*

If you can swing it financially, you could go to country where you want to work and apply to teaching positions in person. We realize that's a big "if:" you run the risk of not finding a position for all of your time and money. Think about airfare, housing (possibly paying several months' rent up front), and travelling to a third country to get a work permit once you land a job (you cannot apply for visas while "in country"). Without a program, the total up-front costs could easily be \$2,000 or more; program fees might be lower and involve less risk.

## Comparing Programs

*While you research programs, think about:*

Cost	Salary	Class Size	Visas
Job Placement	Health Insurance	Personal Support	Safety
Accommodations	Certifications	Materials, curriculum, on-site training	Intercultural Experience