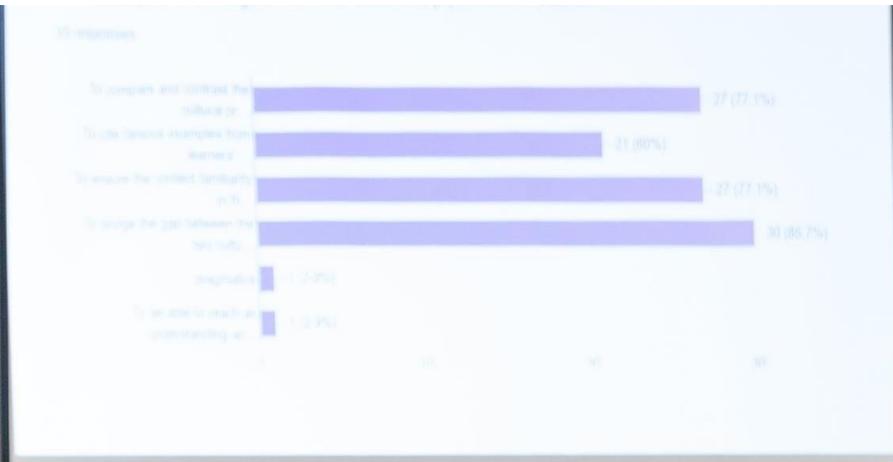




FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANT (FLTA) PROGRAM SUPERVISOR GUIDEBOOK



FLTA SUPERVISOR GUIDEBOOK

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PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL

Introduction

The successful performance of a supervisor is critical for the success of the FLTA and the Fulbright FLTA Program. We hope the information contained herein will provide some useful guidance and make the challenge of supervising an FLTA more enjoyable and rewarding professionally and personally.

A good supervisor places a high priority on the coaching of an FLTA. This includes working with the FLTA to establish goals, plans, and timelines. The supervisor delegates but also provides ongoing guidance and support. Rarely can goals be established without considering other aspects of an FLTA's life - e.g., the time they have available, personal preferences, strengths, and weaknesses, etc. The best supervisors treat their FLTAs as individuals. They understand that FLTAs have other interests and responsibilities and take them into account when they plan the FLTA's workload.

The supervisor understands the bureaucracy of their institution better than the FLTA. It's not uncommon that FLTAs are confused or frustrated by all of the new policies and procedures, and need further clarification and support. A good supervisor provides that support. Consequently, the supervisor is in a unique position to give ongoing advice. The FLTA will look to the supervisor as a model for direction and development. An effective relationship requires the supervisor to accept the responsibility of mentorship. Having a good supervisor will be a priceless addition to the experience of the FLTA in the U.S.

An FLTA supervisor should also be a motivator. FLTAs should be rewarded for a job completed well and allowed the opportunity to correct poor/inaccurate work. Good supervisors provide structured supervision and training to their FLTA on college/university culture, procedures, and specific duties. They schedule regular meetings, give constructive advice, and provide opportunities for an FLTA to gain additional training.

FLTAs come from over 50 different countries and have varying levels of understanding on the American protocols for arranging housing, registering for classes, commuting from airport to campus, establishing friendships, banking, the use of technology, constructing a course and the other tasks pertinent to a successful year as a language teaching assistant, student, and colleague. Patience and understanding are required. The "sink or swim" mentality will not work and will make for a very uncomfortable experience for the supervisor, FLTA, and IIE.

Being an FLTA supervisor means having significant responsibility; it means having a lasting impact on a young professional in the field of language teaching. A strong supervisor ultimately allows for the goals of the FLTA Program to be achieved, as it results in creating strong ties between the people of the U.S. and the people of other countries while simultaneously strengthening foreign language instruction in the U.S.

Fulbright FLTA Program Sponsor

The Fulbright FLTA Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE).

The Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program enables young educators to refine their teaching skills, increase their English language proficiency and extend their knowledge of the cultures and customs of the United States while engaging in non-degree studies at accredited Colleges or Universities. FLTAs may serve as an instructor of a foreign language class or have a purely teaching assistant role. FLTAs may also act as resource persons in conversation groups, cultural representatives, attendants in language laboratories, coordinators of extra-curricular activities, guest speakers in civilization courses, heads of language clubs, houses, tables, and much more.

The United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) sponsors the Fulbright Program under policy guidelines established by the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) and in cooperation with bi-national Fulbright Commissions/ Foundations and Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies abroad.

As the administrative and executive arm of the Fulbright Program, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has fiscal responsibility for the preparation of an annual budget request to Congress and makes decisions on funding allocations to participating countries. Under policies established by the **Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, ECA** also holds primary responsibility for the administration of the Program, together with the assistance of cooperating non-profit organizations.

Within a U.S. Embassy abroad, exchange program activities are the responsibility of the Public Affairs Section. At least one of the Public Affairs Section is a member of the local **Bi-national board of the Fulbright Commission** and maintains liaison with the Fulbright Commission on policy and program matters on behalf of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. In countries without a Fulbright Commission, the Public Affairs Section administers the educational exchange program

Fulbright FLTA Program Funding

Please refer to the Foreign Fulbright website for up to date information on FLTA program funding: <http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/about/fulbright-flta>.

Fulbright FLTA Program Expectations for Grantee Performance

To better understand the policies and expectations expressed to grantees, please see the Fulbright FLTA handbook here:

<https://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/uploads/files/current/flta/FLTAHandbook.pdf>

BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF YOUR FLTA

Many of the most important aspects of the FLTA Program occur (or should occur) before your FLTA arrives on your campus.

Host institution supervisors should contact the FLTA about matters vital to their successful adjustment to campus life and the fulfillment of their assistantship duties. It would be helpful if materials such as brochures or view books are sent directly to the assistant.

FLTAs are provided links to campus and departmental websites during the matching process and upon receipt of Terms, but further web pages and campus material, in particular those specifically designed for teaching assistant or international students, will help them further acclimate to your campus environment.

Defining their Role(s)

From the start of direct communication with an FLTA, the supervisor should establish a collegial tone and begin to make the FLTA aware of how they will be viewed and treated on campus and in the department. They must begin to understand the “hats” they will wear, and which one is most predominant. This varies from one institution to the next. You will likely need to consult with your Registrar, Bursar, Graduate and Undergraduate Admissions Office, and International Students and Scholars Office. The unique role of an FLTA often requires that some offices on campus classify an FLTA in one way and another office classify them in another way for things to run smoothly.

The classification assigned to your FLTA at your institution is not an issue for the Fulbright FLTA Program, IIE, or the Department of State as long as the program’s goals are achieved and its policies and regulations are followed. FLTAs can be classified on your campus as degree-seeking graduate students, visiting non-degree students, adjunct faculty, part-time instructor, graduate student assistant, teaching assistant, or any combination of these. In some cases, classification may be reliant on your institution’s course waiver requirements or human resources policies. It is critical for supervisors to clarify how an FLTA on their campus needs to be classified and to discuss it with the FLTA.

When an FLTA is on your campus they are Fulbright grantees and the United States Department of State (DOS) is responsible for the sponsorship of their J visa. Your institution will not be in violation of any SEVIS regulations by allowing FLTAs to conduct their program by employing them as teaching assistants for 20 hours a week or less at the college or university.

FLTAs are sponsored as J-1 students in the non-degree category.

Please note the federal regulations regarding the “Student non-degree” category:

- Section 62.23(e)(4) exempts those in non-degree programs engaged in a prescribed course of study from the full course of study requirement;

- Section 62.23(g)(ii) states that an exchange visitor, under the J-visa sponsorship of the DOS, may engage in part-time employment that occurs on the premises of the post-secondary accredited educational institution the visitor is authorized to attend

We recognize that many universities have specific policies and requirements for their J- visa students in the “student-non-degree” category, but as your institution is not sponsoring the FLTA’s visa, your policies should not apply to them.

Fulbright FLTAs are funded for one academic year. There are no renewals permitted for individual FLTAs. Fulbright FLTAs are sponsored as J-1 non-degree students. Sponsorship cannot be transferred to host institutions when their Fulbright grant is complete. We request that host institutions honor this program requirement and not offer FLTAs an additional year as an assistant.

FLTAs are Language Teachers

Institutions hosting FLTAs are free to tailor teaching programs to meet the school's needs. FLTAs often teach beginning and intermediate classes or offer tutorial sessions to improve students’ language acquisition. On many campuses they serve as directors of language houses or language floors. Under J-1 visa regulations, FLTAs can work up to 20 hours per week.

All teaching assistant opportunities for FLTAs must have a language sharing component. FLTAs cannot assist in cultural elements alone. Furthermore, FLTAs should have substantive programs where they interact with at least several students in the course of performing their assistantship duties. IIE and ECA expect that supervisors and other responsible faculty/staff have conducted an in-depth investigation and have requested an FLTA’s assistance with an appropriate level of student interest and institutional support to offer substantive assistantships.

A minimum of 8-10 hours per week of duties should be scheduled. If supervisors find, after FLTA arrival, that due to unforeseen circumstances, there is insufficient student interest or insufficient administration support to provide substantive programming, they should contact IIE immediately.

FLTAs are Cultural Ambassadors

FLTAs should add a youthful, up-to-date cultural component to foreign language classes, as well as add a dimension to student life on campus. FLTAs host language tables, cooking sessions, cultural presentations, and other co-curricular events, allowing U.S. students to work with young native speakers in non-traditional settings.

FLTAs are Students

All FLTAs are sponsored as J-1 non-degree students and are required to enroll in at least two classes per semester. **FLTA grantees are permitted to take undergraduate as well as**

graduate courses; however, graduate courses are preferable whenever possible. FLTAs can also take courses on either a credit or audit basis; although many grantees prefer to have the option of credit courses. IIE prepares the necessary documentation to provide FLTAs with their J-1 status and monitors their stay to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

Schools are free to tailor the program to meet their unique pedagogical needs, however, it is important to clearly define and prepare your FLTA for their dual/triple personalities on campus. This has been a common complaint of FLTAs post arrival. They may have thought they were going to have their own class and that they would be independent. They have been surprised when some of the students they teach are actually in the classes they must take. They have been frustrated when a school has not gone through the necessary preparation and they do not have access to the library (office, gym, etc.), because it is not known what kind of ID card to give them.

Housing/What to Bring

Without a doubt, housing is the **MOST IMPORTANT** issue for an FLTA and their supervisor before their arrival. ALL FLTAs are anxious and nervous about housing arrangements. All FLTAs are anxious and nervous about the cost, location, and amenities available. All FLTAs are anxious and nervous about housemates, apartment-mates, or roommates if they are expected to share housing.

If inexpensive, safe, clean, modern, quiet, centrally located housing is arranged or can be arranged for your FLTA, 95% of settling in issues will be solved before they arise and the likelihood of your FLTA experience being positive is almost assured.

Providing complete information on housing which has been arranged, or a plan for obtaining housing both prior to and upon arrival on campus is absolutely critical. These arrangements may be made by you, or through the institution's housing or international students' services offices. FLTAs can be instructed to make arrangements on their own, but housing or apartment site links should be shared. Additionally, it is important that FLTAs are put in touch with faculty, staff, or graduate students that will be able to answer questions they may have about accommodations. Assistance really must be provided, since most FLTAs will be ill-equipped to obtain their own housing.

Apartments or campus housing and obtaining meals: If you have arranged an apartment for the FLTA, please make sure that the FLTA has a private space for living and is not sharing a room or sleeping in a common living area. The apartment should have adequate heat, hot water, and basic furnishings. It is important to provide the FLTA, or have the housing office provide, information on rules and whom to contact in case of a housing problem or emergency.

If the purchase of wares such as bedding, kitchen and bath supplies, etc., will be required, please notify the FLTA before their arrival. Arranging a trip to an affordable “big box” type store would be appreciated by your FLTA since their stipend is limited.

If the FLTA will be arranging an apartment on their own upon arrival in the U.S., please plan for them to have temporary housing so they have a place to go and rest on the day of arrival. Please advise them regarding what specifically to investigate when searching for housing in your area. Sending website links will be helpful but information on names of specific streets/neighborhoods or areas where they should focus their search would be more helpful. Additionally, some review and discussion on the signing of a lease will be necessary to ascertain if they fully understand the document and the binding nature of their signature. An international student advisor or housing representative should be enlisted to help in advising if you are not able to do so.

FLTAs have funds for the 9-10 month period of their program; your FLTA should not sign a 12-month lease unless they have outlined a budget that details how they will afford this cost. In some cases, FLTAs will not be able to cover a 12-month lease and will sign without consideration of the consequences. Any negotiations that can be made for a lease appropriate for your FLTA's budget will be appreciated.

If the FLTA will reside in on-campus housing, it is important for the FLTA to be informed of campus rules and regulations. Discuss meal plan or cooking options with the FLTA, or direct them to the appropriate office. They will need to be provided with an outline of the expected payments for housing; in particular, any added costs for internet and phone installation. Although students are ordinarily given packets to read, highlighting rules/regulations and payment schedules for housing/meal plans may be necessary.

IMPORTANT: If you have arranged for your FLTA's housing, please make them aware if a change/move will be (or will not be) possible during the year. In the past, supervisors have signed leases on behalf of their FLTA's or negotiated with housing offices without properly consulting with their FLTA, without providing an accurate description of the housing arranged and without outlining the monthly/yearly cost. This can create major difficulties at the start of the year. The FLTA may decide they want to find other accommodations. The FLTA may not understand the legal and financial commitment that has been made on their behalf. They should know upfront if moving elsewhere will be problematic or unacceptable. A safe home and happy living arrangement will be the key to a successful transition for them.

Host Families:

If you have arranged for the FLTA to stay with one or more host families, it is a good idea to create some guidelines for the host families. This process will help to clarify expectations for everyone and create arrangements with which everyone will be comfortable. FLTAs do not typically reside with host families, but grantees occasionally request to do so, and we recognize that at some institutions this may be the best arrangement. However, you are encouraged to

thoroughly investigate this option and to have a plan B in the event this arrangement does not work out. In the past FLTAs have agreed to live with a host family and later indicated they wished to change to more private and independent accommodations. IIE recommends off-campus apartments or on-campus housing for FLTAs.

Below are suggested guidelines for host families. Feel free to use or adapt this information to your local situation.

The host family should be:

- **Caring and involved:** Consider the fact that the FLTA is far away from family and friends, and maybe experiencing culture shock. The family's support and understanding will be invaluable to the FLTA, especially in the beginning, as they try to adjust quickly to a new way of life and new responsibilities.
- **Enthusiastic:** The FLTA is a great cultural resource, who can share a lot about the rich culture and history of their country, as well as current day-to-day life. The host family should have some curiosity about the FLTA's culture and be excited by the prospect of learning more.
- **Adaptable and tolerant:** The FLTA's and American cultures are very different in many respects, so the host family must be open to unfamiliar customs and habits, and slow to judge. Cultural tolerance is very important for mutual understanding and a good relationship.
- **Respectful and Courteous:** In most of the FLTAs' cultures, guests are extremely polite toward their hosts and may even be somewhat formal. It is important that the host family is patient and willing to gauge the most appropriate manner in which to interact with the FLTA based upon their cultural sensitivities.

The host family should provide:

- ✓ **Separate room:** The FLTA should have private space for living and not be sharing a room or sleeping in a common living area.
- ✓ **House rules or expectations:** The FLTA should be informed about the lifestyle of the host family, such as bedtime hours, or rules for use of phone, TV, and computer, as well as any chores/responsibilities (not to include childcare or major housecleaning).
- ✓ **Food arrangements:** What is the family willing to provide? Does the family expect a financial contribution toward groceries? Will the FLTA be able to select certain foods?
- ✓ **Transportation offered by the host family (rides or bicycles):** What will the family provide? If the FLTA will need to ask for a ride, they may not be comfortable doing so, for fear of "inconveniencing" the family. Be sure the family informs the FLTA clearly of any transportation they can offer.

- ✓ **Socializing:** invite the FLTA on outings when possible (but also ensure “down time” for the FLTA).

Other Renters and Roommates: *Some of the tips above can also be shared with faculty/staff who may rent rooms to FLTAs, as well as graduate students that may room with FLTAs.*

FLTA Mentors

Many supervisors have found it helpful to assign teaching, cultural and academic mentor(s) to help them in assisting the FLTA to become familiar with American culture, the college/university system, and the local community. Suggested mentors include: another language teaching assistant, a language professor, an international graduate student, or a community member with an understanding of the FLTA’s language/culture.

Possible mentors are not exclusive to this list. Supervisors should feel free to determine the most appropriate mentor(s) for their FLTA.

Teaching Mentor

The FLTA’s understanding of the teaching standards that exist at your institution will be paramount to their success.

If you as their supervisor cannot act as the teaching mentor, we suggest you assign another professor/associate professor/instructor within the department to act as the mentor. The teaching mentor’s primary responsibility would be to help the FLTA reflect on their teaching and help them to learn new teaching strategies. This type of reflection should be cultivated even if the FLTA serves a purely assistant role (i.e. only tutoring, running a language lab/table, etc.). In addition, the hope would be that the mentor introduces the host institution’s rules and practices and reinforces those rules and practices when necessary. The teaching mentor could also offer to help the FLTA organize their classes at the beginning of the year, and make sure to involve the FLTA in staff activities.

Each school’s situation is different, but it is essential for the FLTA to know who to go to with questions and concerns about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom management. It might also be very productive for a department chair or college dean to meet regularly – monthly, for example – to discuss the FLTA’s work. Through these regular conversations, we hope the FLTA will acquire a better and complete understanding of their progress and whether their efforts are meeting the teaching standards and expectations of your institution.

Cultural Mentor

If you as their supervisor cannot serve as their cultural mentor, we would recommend that you look into the possibility of assigning one. Possible cultural mentors for an FLTA would be an

international graduate student, another language teaching assistant, or a member of either the on-campus or off-campus community from or familiar with the FLTA's home country.

The cultural mentor could:

- Help the FLTA get settled. Show them where the local mosque, church or synagogue is located.
- Introduce the FLTA to on- and off-campus community members. It would be particularly beneficial for the cultural mentor to identify groups/associations affiliated with the FLTA's home country's culture or language.
- Help the FLTA find local resources that connect the FLTA to familiar cultural staples, such as restaurants with menu items from the FLTA's home country, markets/groceries stores that sell foods and garments reminiscent of the home country and media (TV stations, newspaper, books, movies, etc.) in the FLTA's home country language.
- Help raise the FLTA's cultural awareness by organizing outings, activities, and participation in social events where community members from different cultural backgrounds are invited.
- Facilitate cross-cultural understanding of American culture by explaining specific behavior, language, social rules/etiquette, and other aspects of American culture that the FLTA may not understand.
- Identify specific community service opportunities to the FLTA.
- Arrange activities for the FLTA or guide the FLTA in participating in activities on campus or in the local community that further introduces the FLTA to general American and/or local culture.

The cultural mentor should be in frequent contact with the FLTA during the “settling in” process—every few days at first, and perhaps once a week after the first month. After the first three months, the mentor should check in with the FLTA at least once a month to make sure things are going smoothly.

Academic Mentor

If you as their supervisor cannot serve as the academic mentor, we would suggest that you assign a volunteer to this role. Possible academic mentors for an FLTA include: an international graduate student, another language teaching assistant, a professor, or a colleague.

The academic mentor could:

- Assist the FLTA in selecting and registering for classes.
- Clearly outline the coursework, GPA, and any other academic expectations of the department which has agreed to host the FLTA.

- Provide documentation that states (and then verbally explain) the academic standards and penalties at the institution, as well as explicitly states which apply to the FLTA.
- Specifically state what the consequences will be if the FLTA fails to meet academic standards.
- Contribute to formulating a plan/schedule that balances the FLTA's coursework and TA duties.

It will be very important for the academic mentor to go over the syllabi the FLTA will receive for their courses to make sure they fully understand the expectations of the professor(s). To be effective, we recommend the academic mentor check in on the FLTA periodically to see how they are progressing with assignments and class attendance.

Please note: *The FLTA supervisor with whom IIE is in contact would still be responsible for collecting information on the FLTA's progress from all assigned mentor(s) as IIE will be communicating with only one point of contact in most cases. It is recommended that a meeting schedule (at least twice a semester) be set for all mentors and the supervisor to communicate about the FLTA.*

Assigned Duties Relevant to the Sharing of Culture

There should be opportunities for the FLTA to share aspects of their culture (i.e. media, clothing, food, etc.) during their time in the United States. Many schools already program these kinds of activities into an FLTA's schedule. If you and your FLTA are satisfied with only them attending the language class, neither you nor the FLTA will gain much from the experience.

Ask the FLTA to plan cultural outings or cultural nights where they can share music, movies, art, media, etc. from their home country with students in their classes or with the wider campus community.

Please discuss in detail your expectations with regard to these activities so an agreement can be reached. Do you want the FLTA to:

- Have their lunch in a dormitory cafeteria or with faculty? If so, how often?
- Participate in a particular social club? If so, how is it relevant to their purpose on your campus?
- Participate in the observations of American holidays (such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas)? If so, how can this be done with sensitivity to their cultural and/or religious beliefs?

Preparing Other Faculty to Work with the FLTA

Although you may have a clear outline of how the FLTA will function within your department, other departments may find it beneficial to have your FLTA guest lecture. If this becomes a component of the FLTA's program at your institution, it is important to clarify to the other faculty that the FLTA's primary responsibility is sharing their language and culture and they may not be experts in fields for which they are being invited to guest lecture. They can be looked upon to give a broad sense of their understanding of various topics, but other professors should be cautious about viewing them as resources. Essentially, having an FLTA in your institution provides a unique opportunity for faculty to gain insight into a youthful, modern perspective on the FLTA's home country.

If it will not interfere with the FLTA's other responsibilities, encourage other faculty to invite the FLTA into their classes, preferably as an observer first and then as a speaker/cultural informant. Also provide information in writing to the faculty about the FLTA's teaching schedule in your school, areas of expertise and interests, and other information provided by the FLTA. Guest lecturing should only take up a small fraction of an FLTA's time. Professors that invite FLTAs to participate as guest lectures should not expect the FLTA to take over tasks that should be assigned to teaching assistants within their department, for example, making photocopies for courses.

Despite the necessary parameters, involving the FLTA across the curriculum will help the FLTA feel a part of the community and expose them to how their culture is being studied by U.S. students. Typically, successful FLTAs have been asked to share the following from their home country:

- Songs and instruments
- Art and calligraphy
- Traditional dance
- Poetry
- Inventors and scientists
- Maps and geography
- Food
- Current events
- Home life and family structure

If the FLTA becomes involved in guest lecturing, it is important that they do not overextend themselves. Please encourage other faculty to always keep in mind the number of other responsibilities the FLTA may already have.

Other Important Pre-Arrival Topics

Your FLTA asks if their mother, brother, cousin, wife, husband boyfriend/girlfriend can come with them/visit, is this okay? *You are not expected to accommodate this request and should contact IIE.*

FLTAs are informed that the program will not sponsor dependents. It is only appropriate to have family and friends visit during vacation periods. Neither your institution, the program sponsor, or IIE could or would prevent an FLTA's family member from independently arriving in the U.S. and making their own arrangements to stay. However, FLTAs are expected to have their primary focus on their assistantship. Should you determine that a family member's visit or presence is causing an FLTA to ignore his or her duties, please inform IIE.

ARRIVAL OF YOUR FLTA

Airport Meet and Greet

The FLTA is responsible for sending the final flight itinerary and arrival times to you (or the person you designate) as soon as it's available. Please ensure that a host institution representative will be at the airport to pick up the FLTA (preferred) or that the FLTA is provided with a comprehensive, reasonable plan on how to get from the airport to their accommodations.

Ideally a faculty member or designate would be there to welcome the FLTA. A sign with the FLTA's name (or FULBRIGHT) would be helpful. Bringing a bottle of water and some snacks would help create a great first impression. Travelers appreciate that gesture after the physical discomfort of a long flight and the anxiety of landing in a foreign environment.

We suggest planning for very light activities or meetings on the day of arrival. They may wish to go straight to their accommodations to rest for a short while, change, gather their thoughts, etc. Having access to something to eat or planning to meet for a meal later on in the day/evening would be a great idea.

We suggest putting together your own information packet (see below for an outline) with clear instructions about what they will need to do that day and, when and where they need to go the next day.

Before being left alone after arrival, the FLTA should know:

- Where to obtain food, drinks, and other basic necessities—as well as how to go about getting them.
- How to make local and international calls—if in a dorm, what number should be dialed for an outside line. Does a local call require the use of an area code? A "1"?
- Where to access the internet.
- How to contact you in case of any immediate problems and concerns.

Information packets

The following are suggested items to include, but feel free to add as much local and/or school information as you like:

- Information about your school, college or university
- School calendar
- List of key contacts who will interact with the FLTA (include names, titles, contact info, and roles/responsibilities)
- School ID badge (or instructions to obtain one)
- Necessary keys for housing and school facilities
- Map of the area
- Community resources (post office, banks, library, grocery stores, fitness centers, area colleges, DMV's, etc.)
- You may want to check with your local Chamber of Commerce or city/town hall for welcome packages to new residents in the area, as well as with Student Life and the International Advisor's Office. Some or all of this information may be relevant to share with the FLTA.

MANAGING THE EXCHANGE FLTA

FLTA Names

FLTAs' names often appear different on different documents. It will be important to ask the FLTA what name they would like to use in their interactions with faculty and students; however, we recommend using their names as they appear on the passport for any documents submitted to on- and off-campus offices. FLTAs may have several first, middle and/or last names. Some will ask to be called by their surname alone. Some will prefer to follow the American practice and use a nickname. Some will choose to use an English name, especially if their name is difficult for Americans to pronounce. Some may want their names to appear in a certain order or be spelled in a certain way on websites. Discussing these issues will save a great deal of confusion for you, mentors, and other individuals involved with the FLTA's program.

Additionally, please discuss with the FLTA whether they will be addressed as Mr./Ms. by faculty and students or more informally by their first names.

Computer and E-Mail Access

It will be helpful to provide the FLTA with computer access and an e-mail account so they can communicate by e-mail and use the internet. E-mail will be the predominant way in which FLTAs communicate with family and friends in their home country, colleagues, and IIE. If the FLTA is expected to select course material, the internet will be an important source of information. If the FLTA brings their own computer, help them to get the system ready for use

in the United States. Many of the FLTAs are interested in learning about the latest technology used in the school/classroom. Most of the FLTAs are adept at using computers. Some, however, may need training on the use of the computers in your institution. If your institution offers training, please make sure that the FLTA knows when and where the training takes place. If the school does not provide training, it is highly recommended for someone to assist the FLTA in becoming more technologically savvy. A student can be enlisted or one of their mentors. If possible, please make the FLTA's language software available on a computer the FLTA can use regularly – in the library, department office, or computer lab.

Introducing the FLTA to their Surroundings

Prior to the start of school, provide the FLTA with a school map, transportation schedule, school schedule, and school calendar. If the FLTA will be using public transportation to get to school, have a mentor accompany them on a trial run so any questions about getting to campus can be addressed. Also take the FLTA on a tour of the building(s) in which they will work with special attention to key facilities such as the classroom, library, office space for the FLTA, copy machines, shared lounges, and eating facilities. Please ensure the FLTA has access to the appropriate facilities. This may mean providing them with keys or working with the appropriate offices on campus so they have an identification card for students/faculty.

We like to suggest that a staff meeting be scheduled prior to the start of classes during which your FLTA can be welcomed to the school and introduced to key persons and colleagues. It is standard practice in many countries to acknowledge a guest formally and doing so sends an important message to the FLTA.

It would also be beneficial if you could arrange for the department chair and/or dean to invite the FLTA to their office for a welcome.

If lunch invitations could be solicited from other faculty and staff in the first few weeks until your FLTA has established friends with whom to share the meal, that would also help provide for a smooth transition.

Host Institution Orientation

An organized orientation will welcome the FLTA to the host institution and provide them with knowledge of on-campus facilities and procedures, as well as an insight into the faculty and student body. A comprehensive orientation will include the following:

- A campus tour
- An international students' specific orientation meeting
- A formal introduction to faculty and other key staff members
- Scheduled classroom observations (to get the FLTA familiar with students behavior and expectations of courses, as well as teaching practices and the expectations of instructors leading courses)

Clarifying Details of the FLTA's Teaching Assignment

Although the FLTA will have knowledge of their teaching assistant duties from their Terms of Awards and email correspondence with you, it is important to reiterate and clarify the finite aspects and come to a clear agreement on expectations. To that end, it is recommended that supervisors prepare a detailed description of the FLTA's assignment and eventually, a calendar and schedule for the assigned duties. These document(s) will be an important reference for the FLTA and supervisor to set expectations and to avoid any misunderstanding. It should include information about:

- ✓ The teaching assignment (course names and descriptions, existing course syllabi, course level, and student information, course schedules, etc.)
- ✓ Curriculum development or planning tasks
- ✓ Other duties or responsibilities

Materials

Provide the FLTA with as many materials as possible, including any available textbooks, sample lessons, and other resources. If your institution has not yet selected textbooks for the FLTA's classes, provide the FLTA with instructions on obtaining copies of potential texts to try out in the classroom. It may also be a good idea to share successful textbooks for other foreign languages and explain why they are effective. This information may help the FLTA choose an appropriate textbook for use, and may also assist them if they need to create their own materials in the interim. Please note that the use of the materials allowance provided to the FLTA should be agreed upon between the supervisor and the FLTA. The supervisor cannot mandate what an FLTA must purchase with the materials allowance.

Work Space

It is important to ensure that the FLTA has a workspace at the school and access to a computer. In particular, if your FLTA will be functioning as the primary instructor, developing lesson plans, grading assignments, etc. They should be provided office space. This can be shared space or private but the FLTA should have adequate space and the tools (computer, access to appropriate software, database, etc.) to effectively address their duties.

Specific/Local Information

FLTAs will receive general information and instructions about the following topics in the program handbook: social security, money, medical care, housing, transportation, food, shopping, communications (mail, phone, internet), community resources, and traveling.

They will also receive in-depth instructions at one of the FLTA summer orientations; however, neither the handbook nor the orientation can cover procedures and policies specific to your institution and local community. They also cannot cover rules/regulations specific to your city and state. For this reason, supervisors and/or mentors should try to assist by providing specific

local information and assistance to the FLTA with important procedures such as those listed below.

Welcoming Activities

Helping the FLTA Make Social Contacts

- If possible, acknowledge the FLTA on your department website.
- Encourage the sharing of pictures and family stories.
- Notify the school newspaper or newsletter of the FLTA's presence on campus.
- Send a memo to other departments encouraging them to invite the FLTAs to events they may find of interest.
- Arrange a series of dinners with FLTAs from various departments.
- Please ensure that the FLTA has a place to go for all holidays. The FLTA may also experience acute homesickness around the time of home country holidays. It would be a nice gesture to find out what home country holidays are important to your guest and recognize them in some way.

Helping the FLTA Participate in School Activities

- Help the FLTA set up a monthly calendar and point out how they will be informed of meetings and what they are expected to attend.
- Invite the FLTA to attend special events such as plays, concerts, field trips, and sporting events.
- Provide the FLTA with a list of clubs and activities on campus.

Clarifying Policies and Procedures

- Explain the concept of 'zero tolerance' as it pertains to discipline in the school.
- Make them aware that certain situations require outside intervention.
- Introduce and clarify written and unwritten policies and rules, for example, reasons for which students can be excused from an exam and the importance of not leaving the class unattended.
- Familiarize the FLTA with school practices related to attendance, discipline, grading, and the school's communication process, for example, newsletters, mailboxes, and email.
- Since the FLTA will be inundated with information in the first weeks, provide them reminders of meetings and deadlines.
- Tell the FLTA in advance what they should do during emergencies such as natural disasters.
- Make your school's telephone usage regulations clear to the FLTA (especially with regard to long-distance and overseas usage). You should monitor their usage and report any violations to IIE.

FACILITATING SUCCESS FLTA

FLTA Duties & Coursework

To meet J-1 visa regulations, FLTAs must take two courses per semester (or one per quarter/term) on audit or credit basis and be engaged in TA duties **up to** 20 hours per week. Host institutions are required to provide the FLTA's coursework free of charge, which includes the coverage of tuition and any associated fees.

FLTAs will not receive a Certificate of Completion if proof of their successful completion of the minimum two-course per semester (one course per quarter) requirement is not met. Each FLTA will submit the aforementioned Student Report form to be completed as proof of coursework. The supervisor's or academic mentor's signature on this form indicates that the FLTA has taken the required course load.

For more information about FLTA Duties and Coursework, please refer to the [FLTA Handbook](#) section, "*Academic Regulations*" and "*Reporting to IIE*"

Observe the FLTA's Classes

We recommend that supervisors formally observe the FLTA's classes on a monthly basis, if possible. (Ideally, your schedule will be arranged to allow for observations.) Decide with the FLTA the focus of your observations. For example, if they are attempting a new teaching strategy, focus your observations primarily on how the FLTA is implementing that strategy. Or if you are aware of concerns regarding classroom management, focus on that aspect of the class. Follow the observation with a dialogue with the FLTA about their experience in the class and your observations. Address any concerns that emerge in the observations. In conjunction with the FLTA, develop an evaluative tool by which the teaching mentor can track the FLTA's progress, and to which the mentor can add a narrative on a monthly basis. Address any concerns that emerge.

Encourage your FLTA

The FLTA might go through a period of adjustment and struggle a bit with teaching. A supervisor or teaching mentor that maintains a positive, encouraging demeanor can make a positive difference. **Please consider:**

- sharing professional and school publications
- inviting them to attend presentations, socials, workshops, and conferences
- offering them the opportunity to develop specific skills - research, writing, computer, presentation skills, etc.

Professional Development

Build time into the FLTA's schedule for them to learn about American approaches to education. The FLTA should participate in any regular activities for new teaching assistants.

Even though your FLTA might be an experienced teacher in their home country, they are new to American education, and the differences are enormous.

Providing time for the FLTA to observe before teaching is important. The amount of time an FLTA spends observing classes may vary. If possible, it would be best for the FLTA to spend a week or more observing an instructor in the classroom. If this is not possible due to scheduling problems, assign a language instructor or another teaching assistant to the FLTA's classroom in the beginning to help with classroom management. Team teaching is a very effective way of introducing the FLTA into the American classroom. Additionally, it is beneficial to allot time throughout the year for the FLTA to observe classes to deepen their understanding of teaching methods commonly used at a U.S. institution.

Helping with the Teaching Assignment

Review the teaching assignment with the FLTA. Attempt to assess which aspects the FLTA is comfortable with and those with which they are uneasy. Consider whether or not adjustments need to be made in the teaching assignment or if issues can be addressed with the FLTA through continued observations, dialogue, and feedback. For example, it might be preferable for some FLTAs to begin with small groups before taking on an entire class; or co-teaching might be a good first step. It might also be helpful to:

- Show the FLTA where to find resources and equipment to use in daily lesson planning.
- Present the FLTA with possible scenarios that might develop in the classroom and provide suggestions on dealing with them.
- Help the FLTA to organize their schedule.
- Help them establish appropriate boundaries between themselves and the students.

Providing Ongoing Assistance

As the school year progresses, the focus should move from dealing with logistics and procedures to teaching and instruction. Though the frequency of meetings with the FLTA may be reduced, it is still important to make a regular meeting schedule. The FLTA may be comforted by the formality of a regularly scheduled time to discuss concerns that develop as the year progresses.

Developing Professional Goals

Discuss the FLTA's professional goals for the year. Review these periodically and assist the FLTA in arranging desired experiences. Expect the FLTA to keep a professional journal during the year. In this journal, they could include topics covered in the courses, effective lesson plans, problems encountered and how they were solved, and materials used for various lessons. Review this journal periodically over the year, possibly at the end of each marking period, and provide feedback on their work. Help the FLTA to understand what they are teaching and why it is important. Clarify benchmarks and frameworks for the courses.

Assisting with Curriculum Development

The course curriculum may or may not be well developed. Provide available information and encourage the FLTA to develop a syllabus or plan for the course. The FLTA will likely need and welcome assistance in curriculum development. They tend to be enormously surprised by the lack of textbooks for their languages in the United States, and by the expectation that they will be able to pull together materials. The teaching mentor will need to be available to answer curriculum development questions and to help find resources. Keeping in mind the available materials and developed/developing syllabus, the teaching mentor will need to make sure the FLTA is:

- Aware of any resources available in student libraries.
- Reminded that they should be planning coherent lessons and units, not just doing isolated activities.

Being focused on methodology, cooperative learning, hands-on activities, and student-centered learning may not be common in the FLTA's home country. Encourage the FLTA to attempt new strategies, as appropriate, in their classes. Some FLTAs are more open to new ideas and more willing to try new teaching strategies than others. Move forward from the point where they are.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Surveys and FLTA Reports

For more information about reports and surveys required of the FLTA, please refer to the [FLTA Handbook](#) section, "*Reporting to IIE*".

Surveys

The host institution is required to submit surveys to IIE. IIE will send a survey link to supervisors in the middle of the first semester of the academic year. The supervisor's evaluations will help IIE determine whether FLTA Program objectives are being met and whether there are issues that need to be addressed with the FLTA(s). In April of the spring semester, IIE will send an additional abbreviated follow-up survey.

The surveys will provide an opportunity for the host school to reflect on the contributions of the FLTA and provide suggestions for improvement to the FLTA Program staff. Despite the surveys, host institutions are always encouraged to contact IIE with any issues they encounter as soon as possible. We must review surveys for approximately 400 FLTAs annually and this can take time. Please do not hesitate to contact us, rather than wait for us to read your survey response.

IIE also requests your timely response to surveys and that you complete these reports to support and improve our partnership with your institution.

FLTA Reports

The host school is required to notify IIE of any changes in the FLTA's status. Please report to IIE, **as soon as possible**, any behavior or activity of which you become aware and that you believe may be of concern, such as:

- a) Abuse of phone or computer usage. FLTAs should be notified of restrictions, before being given access and their usage monitored.
- b) Poor academic performance or attendance. FLTAs are expected to maintain passing grades. We realize their FLTA duties can be time-consuming; however, they should be aware that successful completion of program requirements includes passing grades and course attendance.
- c) Failure to successfully handle FLTA duties.
- d) Involvement in any social activity or occurrence that may distract them from successfully completing program requirements. **Specifically, if you learn that they have been married, are expecting a child, or have an illness please notify IIE.**
- e) Working more than 20 hours per week on campus or at another job off-campus.
- f) Poor social behavior, any sign of disrespectful, unbalanced, or inappropriate behavior.

REPORTING CHANGES OR PROBLEMS

If Problems Arise

Over the course of the FLTA's term, issues and problems will inevitably arise. Most will be minor issues, often caused by cultural misunderstandings or miscommunication and can be rectified with clear communication to the FLTA. However, there may arise more serious issues. In such cases, here are some steps you can take:

- 1) Talk to them privately. Since FLTAs are often shy about discussing their problems openly, it is best to avoid a confrontation with a group of people. Try to identify the nature and source of the problem, and engage the FLTA in coming up with solutions. Have the mentor/trusted colleague then talk with any other parties involved to help try and resolve the situation without direct confrontation.
- 2) No matter the outcome of this initial discussion, the supervisor and the FLTA should notify IIE to explain the situation individually. This will allow both parties to state their understanding of the problem. IIE staff will then contact the FLTA and school contact to work toward a solution.
- 3) If a solution cannot be reached via email or phone conference, a formal written warning and/or addendum to the FLTA's Terms of Award may be drafted, which would need to be signed by the FLTA and a representative of the host institution.
- 4) IIE will notify the U.S. Department of State representative, U.S. Embassy, and/or Fulbright Commission if a warning or an addendum has been determined as the best course of action to an FLTA.

- 5) The addendum would stipulate a deadline for a resolution to the problem or improvement in the situation. Should the issue in question continue beyond the deadline, the FLTA's Program may be ended and the FLTA dismissed.

Note: It is imperative that IIE is notified immediately if there is a serious problem with an FLTA. In many cases, IIE will need to report serious cases to the program sponsor, the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. FLTAs cannot be dismissed without a warning and appropriate overseas and U.S. partners being notified. It is expected that FLTAs will not be dismissed from host institutions without being provided an opportunity for improvement, unless they pose a physical danger to themselves or students, or indicate an unwillingness to be professional, cooperative or courteous. IIE and ECA also understand that there are instances when host institutions must consider reputational implications if there are issues with FLTAs. However, ongoing communication between IIE and supervisors can alleviate escalation of any FLTA behaviors that might cause host institutions concern.

Changes in the FLTA's Status

Remaining for Another Academic Year

The FLTA Program is for one academic year. In general, FLTA programs are not renewed for another academic year.

Extending an FLTA's Program

Although the FLTA Program is for one academic year, short extensions are permitted if the following conditions are met:

- 1) The FLTA will continue to work up to 20 hours per week
- 2) The FLTA will continue to engage in coursework. Depending on the length of the extension requested, normally, one course for each summer session
- 3) The host institution assumes all financial support (provides free room and board plus a monthly stipend or a monthly stipend large enough to cover the cost of room and board)
- 4) The program sponsor and the relevant overseas partner are agreeable to the extension

Host institutions should contact IIE at the start of the spring semester with any extension requests. In some instances, the FLTA or host institution may need to be prepared to assume a change fee or other costs for a change to the grantee's return ticket.

Transfer of Sponsorship

IIE is not authorized to transfer visa sponsorship to a host institution under any circumstances.

The 2-Year Home Residency Requirement

Fulbright FLTAs are subject to the two-year home residency requirement (212e). This means that following their sponsorship as an FLTA, the individual must reside and be physically present in the country of nationality or last legal permanent residence for an aggregate of at

least 2 years following departure from the U.S. before the exchange visitor is eligible to apply for:

- a *nonimmigrant* H visa as a temporary worker or trainee, or
- a *nonimmigrant* L visa as an intracompany transferee.
- an *immigrant* visa or permanent residence

Applying to Graduate School

While sponsored as an FLTA, the individual can apply to graduate programs in the United States. If admitted, they would have to return home (at the conclusion of their FLTA Program) and apply for a new entry visa to the United States (F-1 or J-1). FLTAs are able to apply for a student visa immediately upon completion of their sponsorship as an FLTA. They can also apply for tourist visas immediately upon completion of the Program. They cannot apply for H, L, or immigrant visas until they have satisfied the two- year home country physical presence requirement or applied for and have been granted a waiver of that requirement.

Applying for a waiver of the two-year home-country physical presence requirement (212e)

IIE does not support an FLTA's application for a waiver. IIE cannot offer advice or guidance on waiver pursuit. If an FLTA requests assistance with a waiver application, they should be directed to an immigration attorney.

PLEASE NOTE

An institution's participation in the Fulbright FLTA Program requires that they provide a waiver of tuition and fees associated with the two-course per semester requirement.

For LCTL FLTAs, billing issues that may arise during the year should be addressed to:

flta@iie.org

and

GlobalProgramOperations@iie.org

Fulbright FLTA Program

Institute of International Education

One World Trade Center

36th Floor

New York, NY 10007

THE DEPARTURE

Several weeks prior to your FLTA's departure, IIE will request they submit a final report and a departure survey. The final report and departure survey is used to confirm the FLTA has successfully completed the coursework and their duties and officially informs IIE of the departure plans of the FLTA (departure dates, flight number, etc.) In some cases, IIE will

arrange departure travel for grantees. Once these documents are on file, your FLTA can receive a certificate of successful completion.

You will have a final survey to complete; however if there is anything about your FLTA's performance which we should know since your last survey submission, please email flta@iie.org. This would include poor academic performance or failure to attend classes.

We strongly recommend that you discuss departure plans with your FLTA early in the final semester/quarter. There are no additional allowances provided by the program for the FLTA to get to the airport or pay for additional luggage.

We strongly recommend that you discuss outstanding bills that may need to be settled by your FLTA several weeks before their departure.

If you had a positive experience with your FLTA and will be hosting a new FLTA in the following year, we strongly encourage you to put your outgoing FLTA in communication with your incoming FLTA. The FLTA who is leaving can provide a unique perspective and offer good advice to your incoming FLTA.

If appropriate, a final lunch, dinner, or small celebration of some kind would be a wonderful send-off and hopefully put the final touch on what was a wonderful experience for you and your FLTA. We hope that plans are put in place for you to stay in contact or have others from your campus and community stay in contact so that the Fulbright program's goal of creating closer ties between the people of the United States and other countries is achieved.

The hours you spend managing your FLTA are reported from a time commitment survey we issue in the spring. Your participation in the program and the hard work put into hosting are sincerely appreciated by all Fulbright FLTA Program stakeholders.