



***Frequently Asked Questions:
Intensive Summer Language Institute Program (ISLI)***

• **Where will teachers be placed in China?**

In China, participants will be placed at the [College of Humanities and Sciences of Northeast Normal University \(NENU\)](http://www.chsenu.edu.cn) in Changchun, Jilin Province (<http://www.chsenu.edu.cn>).

• **What are the objectives of the Intensive Summer Language Institute Program?**

1. To contribute to the teaching and learning of Chinese in the U.S.
2. To refresh and expand participants' language skills through intermediate to advanced grammar, conversation, and phonetics classes
3. To provide participants an opportunity to study in an immersion environment
4. To allow teachers the opportunity to establish professional and collaborative relationships that contribute to mutual understanding

• **What are the program dates?**

The program begins on June 18, 2013 and concludes on August 3, 2013.

• **Why choose to apply to the Intensive Summer Language Institute?**

ISLI, a fully-funded program, is tailored to the needs of current and future teachers of Chinese in the U.S. Some of the benefits of the ISLI program include: cultural excursions, a stipend to purchase and ship books and materials, and 10 hours of graduate-level credit.

• **How will this program benefit me as a teacher?**

ISLI provides a challenging immersion environment for increasing target language proficiency and cultural understanding.

• **I am a native speaker of Chinese with U.S. citizenship. Am I eligible?**

Unfortunately, you must be a non-native speaker in order to qualify.

American Councils defines a native speaker of Chinese as a person who has finished high school (or equivalent) in China. A heritage speaker is someone who speaks the target language at home, but has not spent an extended period of time in China. Heritage speakers may be eligible if they do not possess native fluency in the target language.

• **I am a U.S. citizen teaching Chinese as a foreign language overseas on a United States military base. Am I eligible?**

Yes, you can apply to this program.

• **I am a graduate student and not currently working. Can I apply?**

Yes, but only if your graduate degree is preparing you to teach Chinese as a Foreign Language in K-12 schools or in a community college.

- **I've never been to China before. Can I apply?**

Yes, you can apply to this program.

- **Is there a language placement test to determine my eligibility?**

Yes, applicants must complete a 30-minute Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) via telephone as part of the application process. This test determines each applicant's level of Mandarin proficiency. The test is offered again at the conclusion of the program to measure participants' progress as well as to determine the program's effectiveness. For more information about OPI standards, please visit <http://www.languagetesting.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/OPI.FamiliarizationManual.pdf>. Costs for the tests are covered by the program.

- **What is the average size of the participant group?**

In the summer of 2012, 15 teachers were selected.

- **After several years of advanced study, my language skills have been rated as "superior". Are all program participants at about the same language level?**

No, ISLI was designed for participants at intermediate and advanced-level proficiency in the Chinese, but those at a superior level have been admitted on a case by case basis. Participants attend classes that are designed to accommodate different proficiency levels.

- **What type of preparation/training will I receive before the program?**

Finalists will be sent the Participant's Handbook that provides program details such as academic and cultural components and what to expect in China. In addition, the Pre-departure Orientation in Washington, DC provides participants with a comprehensive overview of the program.

- **Does the program allow for spouses and/or children to accompany the participant?**

No, ISLI does not allow dependents to accompany the participants.

- **Will I have internet access while I'm on the program?**

Yes, a wired (Ethernet) connection is provided in each dorm room.

- **Will meals be provided during the program?**

Yes, the campus provides daily meals.

- **Is campus housing safe?**

The program provides participants with lockable desks and cabinets, and the dorm is located within a gated campus monitored by security guards.

- **How much does it cost for me to participate in the program?**

ISLI is a fully-funded program. Books, room, board, tuition, travel insurance, fieldtrip costs, and airfare are all covered. Souvenirs, snacks, and end of program travel are the responsibility of the participant.

- **Is there a language policy?**

Participants are strongly encouraged to speak Chinese at all times. Exceptions to this policy are limited to group and individual meetings with representatives of American Councils and the U.S. Department of State.

- **What additional in-country support is provided?**

There will be an on-site Resident Director who is available at all times to assist participants during the program in China. Additional resources include Chinese staff that live in the dormitories, peer tutors, and fellow colleagues in the program.

- **What is the daily schedule in China?**

7:15 – 7:50 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 – 8:50 a.m.	First class
9:00 – 9:50 a.m.	Second class
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	Third class
11:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Fourth class
11:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	One-on-one conversation class, fieldtrip, or arts & crafts/other on-campus group activity depending on the day of the week.

Weekends are Saturdays and Sundays. In the evenings, participants study and meet with their peer tutors. Cultural excursions take place on afternoons and/or weekends. Past cultural excursions have included visits to area schools, bookstores, markets, parks, temples, and historical sites of interest such as the Puyi Palace of the Manchu State and Haerbin. Arts and crafts offerings have included workshops about Chinese calligraphy, Chinese knots, kite making, and Chinese music for the classroom.

- **What is the academic program like in China?**

The academic program is intensive, with approximately 20 hours per week spent in class; participants also work independently with a Chinese peer tutor for 4 hours each week. Peer tutors provide participants with opportunities to practice colloquial speech and to seek help with problems encountered in class. The academic week is four days, with Fridays devoted to cultural excursions, seminars and other language-learning activities. Academic offerings are supplemented with arts and crafts classes designed to provide participants with student-friendly activities in the classroom such as calligraphy and paper cutting.

- **Where do program participants live?**

Participants live in single occupancy dorm rooms with a private bath in the Dormitory for International Students, which is located on Northeast Normal's School of Humanities and Sciences campus. Each room has a bed, desk, chair, small refrigerator, television, and wired internet access. Laundry facilities, a microwave, and water dispensers are located in common areas on the floor.

- **Will I be able to travel on my own at any point during the program?**

Participants are encouraged to explore Changchun. Since the program is short, one free weekend may be used to explore neighboring areas, independently or in a group. After completing the program participants are free to travel independently.

- **I will already be in China at the start of the program. Will I be able to stay in-country and travel on my own to the program site to begin the program?**

Participants are required to attend the Pre-departure Orientation in Washington, DC. If you are residing in China you will not need to return to the United States at the end of the program.

- **How can I change the dates of my return flight?**

Once accepted on the program, American Councils' staff will arrange round-trip domestic and international travel. Changes to travel itineraries should be requested as soon as possible.

- **I have a question that isn't answered here. Whom should I contact?**

Please email the American Councils' ISLI program staff at isli@americancouncils.org.