

TSIE Conversation Partner Program – Guidelines

Program Overview: The TSIE Conversation Partner Program is dedicated to helping international students become more comfortable communicating in English and in understanding American culture. This program achieves this by individually pairing international students to native English speakers during the fall and spring academic semesters.

Both Conversation Partners will need to have the flexibility to arrange meetings outside of class time to discuss topics that both partners are interested in. Although these discussions may be academic in nature, it is hoped that a more casual and relaxed atmosphere is maintained during the partners' meeting.

The following items are **guidelines** for anyone interested in participating in the TSIE Conversation Partner Program:

1. Notify the TSIE office if you would like a Conversation Partner. If you have any special requests about the partner you are assigned to, TSIE will do its best to match you appropriately, however, there is no guarantee that all requests can or will be met.
2. Meet with your assigned partner for a minimum of one hour per week. You may meet more than one hour or you may schedule longer meetings less often. The average semester is 15 weeks long, so it is recommended that partners meet around 15 hours throughout the entire semester. Weekends are okay as long as both partners agree.
3. Partners should discuss and agree where they would like to meet for each of the communication exchanges. This place should be an easily-accessible, safe, public, and comfortable place for both partners. TSIE suggests sporting events, movies, restaurants, or even using the first floor room (THOR 101) of the Thornton International House to hold discussions.
4. Do not use your partner to promote your personal agendas (e.g., commercial, political, or religious interests). Topics discussed may cover these areas, but each partner should be careful to ensure the other person is not feeling threatened or imposed upon.
5. Topics for each meeting will be determined by the partners. These topics may include cultural differences, personal interests, or anything that promotes communication. It is sometimes helpful to bring objects or pictures of the topics you'd like to discuss, or participate in an event together.
6. Each partner should talk to and listen to their partner during each of the meetings.
7. Each partner should strive to only speak in English. Other languages may be used to help communicate or to express ideas about another culture, however, the goal should be to improve English acquisition and fluency by using English at all times possible.
8. Try to attend TSIE Conversation Circles and other international events with your partner when possible.
9. As a form of courtesy and respect, answer all emails or phone calls from your partner.
10. If you need to reschedule or cancel a meeting with your partner, you need to contact them as far in advance as possible. Decide on an alternative time and place to meet to make up for that lost meeting.
11. If you have any complaints or concerns about your partner, please contact the TSIE office as soon as possible.
12. If your partner does not contact you or return your messages, please tell the TSIE office after one week's time. TSIE will reassign partners if contact cannot be made.

To apply, please complete the TSIE Conversation Partner Program Application Form

TSIE Conversation Partner Program

Application Form

*Name: _____, _____
Last Name (Family Name) First Name (Given Name)

Texas State ID #: A0 *Texas State Net ID: _____
(Your Net ID will be added to a special Conversation Partner TRACS site)

*Email Address (only if you are not a current Texas State student): _____

*Phone Number: _____

City & State of Birth: _____

Native Language: _____ Current Major: _____

I would prefer a partner who is... male. female. either male or female.

Describe any preferences in a Conversation Partner you may have (if any):

Example: speaks Japanese; likes to surf; is an accounting major

How did you hear about the Conversation Partner Program?

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the guidelines for participating in the TSIE Conversation Partner Program; I release all information above to TSIE and all information marked with an asterisk (*) to my assigned partner for the purposes of contacting and being paired to a Conversation Partner, and that I will work with my assigned partner(s) to the best of my ability throughout the remainder of the current semester.

Signature

Date

Please submit completed forms in person at the TSIE office:

Thornton International House, Room 300

344 West Woods Street

San Marcos, TX 78666

Map: <http://www.maps.txstate.edu/campus/buildings/thor.html>



FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/> TSIE Student	<input type="checkbox"/> International Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Partner Assigned: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Native English-speaker	<input type="checkbox"/> Tutor	<input type="checkbox"/> Partners Notified: ____/____/____