

Dear Prospective Summer Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in serving for the summer term at Yanbian University of Science and Technology (YUST). My name is Dana Estrem and I am the Dean of the Western Language College. For the 2017 summer semester, I am tentatively the Director of the English Conversation Office as well. We are very happy that you have expressed an interest in working here, and being involved in the lives of our students and the Yanji community. We want to provide you with a picture of how the 2017 summer will be, that is as realistic as possible.

For those who are serious about “M” work, we always recommend a full semester (fall or spring) or a whole year here rather than just the summer. Volunteering here in the summer is a fun and rewarding opportunity, but it's difficult to get a complete picture of what goes on at YUST unless you are here during a regular school year.

Our requirements:

Usually our summer teachers are native speakers of English, but if you are not a native speaker but your proficiency is high, we encourage you to apply. We prefer volunteers who have finished their junior year of college. However, mature persons who have finished their sophomore year will be considered, too. It is not necessary to have a teaching background, although that would be helpful. There will be a lot of demands on you, so you need to be in good health. You should be willing to work as part of a team as soon as you arrive. Also, we are seeking people who are in fellowship (regular attendance) at a good “Ch” (Sunday morning company).

Workload:

Unless you indicate that you don't want to teach, you will be part of our English Conversation Office (ECO) staff. You should expect to teach about one to two hours of English Conversation class every day (Monday to Friday) and, of course, the job includes other hours of lesson preparation, homework grading, student interaction, etc. This is not just a tutoring session. It is a normal university semester for which the students receive academic credit. You will be involved in all parts of teaching this class from leading classroom activities, to grading homework, and to preparing and grading exams. You will have a team leader who is one of our regular semester teachers, and he or she will give you a syllabus as well as curriculum. There will be regular team meetings and sharing of teaching ideas and materials. By the way, we will collect 150 RMB from each summer teacher for our ECO operating fund, which is used for office dinners, drinking water, snacks, etc.

We want you to spend time with your students outside of class as well to form relationships through which you can share your home culture with them as well as learn from them about their culture.

*Many of you will also be involved in English House (see below)

When:

For the coming summer, 2017, our summer semester begins Wednesday, June 28th (the first day of class) and ends Friday, July 28th so you can depart on Saturday July 29th. However, our first orientation meeting will be on Monday, June 26th, tentatively at 8:00 AM. You need to be here in time for that meeting. We suggest that you plan to arrive at YUST not later than Saturday, June 24th to give you time to settle in. After the summer term ends, you will not be able to stay in the dormitory very long, so please book your return flight for July 29-31.

English House:

An option for summer volunteers (SVs) is living in English House (EH), which is a special opportunity for our students to improve their conversational English, and learn the culture of their volunteers by living with them. EH is an English immersion program by another name. As the SV, you will have a great opportunity to get to know our students, and provide them an atmosphere to use English daily for 30 days.

This is going to require sacrifice on your part. You will have to give much of your out of class time every day to your EH roommates. There are group EH activities every Friday and Saturday. We would also like each of you to have at least one meal per week with each of your roommates one on one. If you have five roommates that would be five meals a week you would need to reserve, so that you can have a real one-to-one conversation with each of them each week. In practice, SVs and their EH students end up doing a lot of informal activities together for the entire month.

Please remember that you are not coming to China to meet and hang out with other foreigners, but rather to spend time with our (mainly) Chinese/Korean-Chinese students. Going out every night or every weekend with the other SVs is unacceptable. The students want to spend time with you, even if they don't say it. Their understanding of EH is a month to hang out and learn from their SV, who is from an English-speaking country. This is a time they may be able to make real friendships with a foreigner. Your relationship with your roommates is crucial to how the EH experience goes for them.

If you speak either Korean or Chinese, we would ask that you refrain from using those languages and use only English during EH. Of course, it would be much easier to communicate with your roommates if you just spoke together in Korean or Chinese, but that is not the purpose of EH. The students need to be stretched and really forced to use their English, otherwise it will not improve.

Finally, EH will have at least two to three group activities a week, mostly on Friday and Saturday. These activities are mandatory for you and all your roommates. If a student fails to attend EH events, he or she will receive an "F" for his or her EH grade. If a SV fails to participate at a satisfactory level, he or she could be sent home early. These E.H. activities are intended to be bonding experiences that allow students use and learn more about the English language and your culture. Chances for something like this, in China, are quite rare, so you need to be encouraging your roommates and be genuinely excited about these activities as well.

Room & Board:

If you do not want to participate in EH, we can arrange for you to stay in a faculty dormitory room. There is a rental fee (around 200-300 RMB for the month) for using a faculty dorm room. For those who participate in EH, you will be living in a student dorm

with YUST students, using the common bathrooms and eating in the cafeteria that serves Korean-Chinese style food. The dormitory room that you live in will have four or five YUST students. It will be small and the beds will be much harder than you may be used to. In most of the dorms at the school, the lights go out at midnight. Hot water is purchased with a shower card. We realize this is going to be very unusual for most people coming from more developed countries.

Volunteers all receive a cafeteria stipend for meals. This should be enough to cover most of the cost of meals per day in the cafeteria. If you go to restaurants downtown you will have to cover the costs yourself.

How your family can contact you:

Please remember that we are in China, so please do NOT have sensitive material communicated to the ECO via email, video chat, phone, or mail. The English Conversation Office phone number is 011-86-433-291-2609. The address is (if they send a package by post):

Yanbian University of Science and Technology
(Your name)
3458 Chaoyang St.
Yanji City
Jilin Province,
People's Republic of China (CHINA) 133000

If they send a package by ordinary post, it could take over a month.

Weather:

Anything goes. The temperature has a habit of fluctuating between (60 – 95 °F). Heavy rains are quite possible in July.

Wardrobe:

You will be expected to dress BUSINESS CASUAL and be presentable when you teach. The best thing to bring would be 3-4 polos/oxfords and 3-4 pairs of khakis/capris/longish skirts. You may also bring more casual clothes for your time outside the office, but in the office, you will NOT be allowed to wear or teach in shorts, tank tops, sleeveless, etc. We prefer that you do not wear blue jeans for teaching, but you may bring a pair or two for activities outside the office. One or two sweatshirts are a good idea. Also, bring a pair of shoes that you can teach in, besides a pair of more comfortable ones for the dorm. Clothes do not always dry well and the closet in the dorm is small, so we do not recommend bringing your entire wardrobe, or even your best clothes. Also, you will be changing rooms a few times, so we recommend light packing. Please remember, ladies especially, to dress modestly. You're a teacher here and an "outsider." Much of what you do and say will make an impression on your students and roommates, may it be to His glory.

Funds:

If you're living in EH, your room is provided. If you need a faculty dormitory room, there is a 200-300 RMB fee. As for food, the stipend given to each SV will cover most

of your food expense. You are responsible for the airfare and your spending money. Your mileage may vary, but a round-trip ticket between the U.S. and Yanji seems to be in the range of \$2500-\$3000 USD for this summer (I hope you can find something cheaper). Please do not buy a ticket until you have been approved. As for spending money, \$500 should be enough for the month you're in Yanji (unless you plan to do a lot of shopping).

Website:

You can check the YUST website and go to the section about Summer Activities. The website is: www.yust.edu. The site is in Korean, but there is an English button at the top right corner which you can click on to get the English translation. Find the section on the Summer Program (as of the time of this writing, there's nothing there). There's an English department website, www.english.yust.edu, which will have an option for "Summer." This can give more information on EH, etc. If you have any problems with the site for some reason, please contact me.

VISA:

Apply for the "L" visa, which means tourist or visitor's visa. Please be aware that there are expenses for the VISA processing. Definitely put down "tourism" as the reason for visiting. Please do NOT put down "teaching," which would require a different type of visa, taking unworkably more time and trouble to process.

For more information see the website: www.china-embassy.org (search for "tourist visa"). If you can get a 60-day (or longer) visa, that's great. If you come on a 30-day tourist visa, you will have to have it extended for an additional 30 days as our semester requires around 35 days. Our Foreign Affairs office will extend it for you, but you will have to pay a fee. Please wait for your application to be approved before applying for a visa.

City of Yanji:

YUST is located in Yanji, Jilin Province, in the northeastern part of China. Yanji is a small city (pop. around 350,000) by Chinese standards (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yanji>). You may experience some things that surprise you. For example, many of the students are from this area and have never left or been far outside of it, and they are proud of their city. Remember you are a guest in their country; so please show respect and appreciation. We will likely get out into the city with your students and, of course, take lots of pictures.

Things to bring:

Bring just enough for one month. Bring a few photos of your family and friends to share with students, dental care items (toothbrush, paste, floss), deodorant (not so available in Yanji), your medication, one pair of running shoes, one pair of jeans, your favorite junk food, a good book, and a small **reliable, battery powered** alarm clock. Different brands of your favorite candy, coffee, etc. are available here. In fact, you can get just about everything necessary here. Yanji now has a Starbucks, McDonald's and more.

If you have a laptop, you need to bring it, as it will help you in your teaching. Those that have an Apple product will need to bring a VGA adapter to connect to the classroom overhead projectors.

Closing:

After reading our expectations, I hope you are not discouraged. If at this point you think this is not the program for you, please let me know as soon as possible. The summer can be demanding, but also very rewarding. SVs make a huge impact on our students. At the end of July, 2017 I hope to hear about your great summer and about the wonderful relationships you've formed with our students.

Grace and peace,

Dana Estrem

Dean of Western Languages and
Summer English Conversation Office Director
danaestrem@yust.edu
Office phone 86-433-291-2565