

Conversation Partner Program Guidelines

The IEI Conversation Partner Program is a great way for international students to practice their English, to make friends and to experience the USA at a deeper level than their classes can provide. It is also a great way for UM students to make friends and to get to know people of other cultures.

The goals for our IEI students are:

1. To provide them with opportunities to use English in real-life situations
2. To provide them with opportunities to socialize and form lasting friendships
3. To provide them with opportunities to experience American life and culture and to explore Memphis and the Mid-South Area

The goals for the UM students are:

1. To help them develop an appreciation for different cultures, ideas and ways of looking at the world
2. To increase their awareness of internationals around them on The University of Memphis campus
3. To provide them with opportunities for service and friendship

To be a conversation partner with IEI students, UM students should:

1. Be able to commit to meeting regularly with our students on the days and times they set up together. If they have to cancel or postpone, they should notify their partners as soon as possible.
2. Be able to speak English clearly and as it is used at the university level
3. Understand that the main purposes of this program are to help the IEI students practice English and to develop friendships with them

Steps for getting a conversation partner:

1. Fill out a Conversation Partner Application and return it to the IEI office.
2. Nina Clark will contact you about meeting with her to pick out a partner. (If you have to pick out a partner when she is not in the office, she will contact you later to talk with you about your selection.)
3. Write a note to the IEI student telling them that you are his or her partner and leave it in his or her IEI mail box in 125 Patterson Hall.
4. Contact the student to arrange a time to meet. Decide with your partner when and where you wish to meet on a regular basis.
5. If you have problems contacting your partner, let Nina know as soon as possible so that she can assist you in making this contact.
6. Nina will contact you periodically to check on your progress with your partner.
7. If for any reason you cannot continue meeting with your partner, please notify Nina as soon as possible so that she can make other arrangements for your partner.

Please note: Please be aware that due to the varying number of participants each session and other factors, completing an application does not guarantee that you will be placed with a partner. We will make every effort to try to place everyone, but each pairing must be a good "fit."