China**

COUNTRY OVERVIEW
CAPITAL: Beijing
POPULATION: 1,338,612,968
ETHNIC GROUPS: Han Chinese (91.5%), Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uyghur, Tujia, Yi, Mongol, Tibetan, Buyi, Dong, Yao, Korean, and other nationalities (8.5%)
LOCATION: Eastern Asia, bordering the East China Sea, Korea Bay, Yellow Sea, and South China Sea, between North Korea and Vietnam
CLIMATE: Extremely diverse; tropical in south the subarctic in north
RELIGIONS: Daoist, Buddhist, Christian (3%-4%); Muslim (1%-2%); note: officially Atheist
LANGUAGES: Standard Chinese or Mandarin

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
TEACHING STYLES – Because of larger classroom size, approximately 60 or more students in a class, teaching tends to be formal and teacher-fronted. Teachers’ authority is highly respected. Teachers are expected to be strict, well prepared and give very structured lectures so that students are capable of producing a set of complete, detailed and accurate notes. On the other hand, teachers don’t expect a great deal of participation and discussion from students.

LEARNING STYLES – Students are expected to sit, listen, and work hard. They read or write only when instructed to do so by the teachers. Meanwhile, they accept as much work as the teacher is ready to assign, and they have the acute study skills to handle it. Working as a group is a nature of Chinese people, and students develop group solving/planning skills. Chinese consider young people to be too inexperienced to generate responses and therefore most students prefer not to share an opinion or reaction to classroom discussions.

INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING – Typical student housing is characterized by living in simple dormitories with as many as four students in a small room, a single desk and fluorescent lighting. The school provides textbooks. Not every school has a library on campus.

DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT - When students misbehave in classes, teachers send notes home that become a source of shame to the family. Summer school can be considered as a form of punishment because only students who fail the regular school year are required to attend.

EDUCATOR-Student RELATIONSHIP – Even though some teachers are involved in students’ personal and private lives, they maintain the formality of teacher-student relationships. Teachers are role models for students and show them how to complete tasks efficiently and with more confidence. Verbal communication between a teacher and student is considered private, but students are very open with one another about remarks made on papers and tests.

STUDENT-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS – Because Chinese students spend their first six years of schooling together, they have strong bonds with each other both socially and academically. In college, social groups are composed of roommates or classmates.

POLITE/IMPOLITE TOPICS & BEHAVIORS – Death, sex, homosexuality, religious beliefs, and prodemocracy ideas are inappropriate topics in public. Addressing the difference between China and other countries is acceptable, unless it is for the purpose of advocating for the adoption of other country's politics, activities, or values. For example, discussing Taiwan or Republic of China are both very sensitive topics. One's salary, the costs of purchases, foods, and age, are all considered to be likely topics.

**All information from the “CIA World Factbook” and “Understanding Your International Students: An Educational, Cultural, and Linguistic Guide” (October, 2010)