El Salvador**

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

**COUNTRY OVERVIEW**
CAPITAL: San Salvador
POPULATION: 7,185,218
ETHNIC GROUPS: Mestizo (90%), White (9%), Amerindian (1%)
LOCATION: Central America, bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and Honduras
CLIMATE: Tropical; rainy season (May to October); dry season (November to April); tropical on coast; temperate in uplands
RELIGIONS: Roman Catholic 57.1%, Protestant (21.2%), Jehovah’s Witnesses (1.9%), Mormon (0.7%), other (2.3%), none (16.8%)
LANGUAGES: Spanish, Nathua (among some Amerindians)

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

**TEACHING STYLES** - Traditional teaching styles will prevail in El Salvador. Teachers tend to be authoritarian and discourage active student participation. The teachers have full control over the content, pace, and structure of the classroom. One of the most prevalent teaching strategies is dictation. Teachers read from the text while students record the lecture’s verbatim in their notebooks, or teachers write notes on the blackboard for students to copy carefully.

**LEARNING STYLES** - Standard practice is learning that occurs by role memorization on the notes, followed by recitation either individually or in chorus. Teachers may also base their lectures off of the textbook rather than reading it aloud verbatim. This allows the students to clarify the concepts and the terms of the material. The students' comprehension of the homework is determined by the day after it is assigned by posing questions about the text that corresponds to the level of difficulty and master expected of the students. If they have difficulty with the questions, the teacher will explain and elaborate upon the concepts to prepare students for upcoming exams.

**STUDENT LEARNING PRACTICES** - Students study independently when the subject matter is theory oriented, but nevertheless may gather together in one place to keep each other company. Sometimes students will also form study groups to solve or work on projects.

**EDUCATOR- STUDENT RELATIONSHIP** - The relationships between teachers and students is similar to that of North America. At the beginning, interactions tend to be more formal but may later, become friendlier yet still respectful. In terms of strictness, Salvadoran teachers are considered to be less lenient than U.S. teachers with misbehavior, and are more serious in their expectations of students. Teachers expect their students to be attentive and quiet during the lessons.

**STUDENT- STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS** - It’s not uncommon for traditional teachers to use mild corporate punishment to respond to inappropriate behavior. Some teachers may strike a student on the hand with a modern ruler, but more modern teachers may simply send the misbehaving student to the principal’s office. Another common practice is moving the student’s desk outside of the classroom and obliging them to sit there until class is finished. Sometimes the teacher will even report offensive behavior to the parents via the student’s daily pocket agenda.