**Mexico**

**COUNTRY OVERVIEW**
CAPITAL: Mexico City
POPULATION: 111,211,789
ETHNIC GROUPS: Mestizo (60%), Amerindian (30%), Caucasian (9%), Other (1%)
LOCATION: Middle America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, between Belize and the United States and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and the United States
CLIMATE: Varies from tropical to desert
RELIGIONS: Roman Catholic (76.5%), Protestant (6.3%), other (0.3%), unspecified (13.8%), none (3.1%)
LANGUAGES: Spanish, indigenous languages (i.e. Mayan, Nahuatl)

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

TEACHING STYLES – Classes are typically teacher-fronted. Students are expected to listen and learn from the teacher. Therefore, students are only allowed to participate when they are asked to do so. Developing critical thinking skills is not focused on in class activities.

LEARNING STYLES – Students prefer to memorize information, and there is a high degree of structure in classes with highly kinesthetic activities. A global versus analytic approach to solving problems and digesting information is preferred by many Mexican students. Students take direction from teacher lectures, since most tests are taken more from lecture and less from books.

INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING – Public schools rarely own a sufficient amount of media equipment. Private schools tend to be more fortunate.

DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT - Teachers are very strict with discipline. With minor infractions, students may be punished by being removed from the classroom. For more serious violations, students will be punished with a few days of suspension. If students are caught cheating on tests, they are usually awarded a grade of zero.

EDUCATOR-RE RELATIONSHIP – Students view their teachers as a source of knowledge, not as potential friends. It is not common for teachers to act as a counselor for students in Mexico.

STUDENT-RELATIONSHIPS – Relationships between and among students is usually very tight. Young Mexican learners often collaborate on assignments and while taking tests. Classmates expect each other to offer help. This behavior is generally not tolerated by teachers. On the other hand, university students are more competitive.

POLITE/IMPOLITE TOPICS/BEHAVIORS – The topic of sex/sexuality is not openly discussed. Abortion and out-of-wedlock births are also inappropriate topics for discussion. On the other hand, topics such as money, politics, and religion are frankly discussed among Mexicans. Mexicans tend to avoid open disagreement or offense, because they are eager to please others and hesitate to hurt each other’s feelings. Eating in class or putting one’s fete on the desk is considered rude.

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