

## **Questions and Answers about the NTNU-MU Cultural Immersion Program**

### **Q: What is the NTNU-MU Cultural Immersion Program?**

**A:** Two top ranked counseling psychology programs from very different parts of the world have joined together to promote students learning. One program is from a western culture in the US, while the other is from an eastern culture, Taiwan. The basic idea is that the two programs will promote the cross-cultural development of their graduate students in counseling psychology through a Cultural Immersion Program. The counseling program at National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) has a very distinguished history, and is well known for innovative training and outstanding faculty that are leaders in Southeast Asia. Similarly, the counseling psychology program at MU has just celebrated 50 years of continuous accreditation, and is widely regarded as one of the top training and research programs in the US. This group of students represent the inaugural immersion group. If successful, the idea would be to immerse small groups of graduate students in the others program's culture on alternate years.

### **Q: What is the purpose of the program?**

**A:** The purpose of this cross-national immersion program is to promote cross-cultural awareness, knowledge and skills by providing a short but intense experience living and studying in another culture. Another goal of the program is to promote personal and professional cross-cultural relationships among students, faculty, and host families. In particular, the benefits of long-term professional collaboration are encouraged.

### **Q: Can you tell me about the students?**

**A:** Sixteen graduate students in counseling, and two Professors, will be coming to MU; the students currently are all studying at NTNU (Taipei, Taiwan), one of the most densely populated cities in the world. Some of these students are enrolled in a masters degree program, while others are doctoral students in counseling. All of the students were born and raised on the island of Taiwan. The students are a select group of highly qualified students, and possess a broad range of knowledge and skills about traditional Asian culture, arts, literature, religion, and history. They have been saving money for this trip to the US, and are eager to learn about American culture. After graduation, some of the students will find employment in Taiwan working in the schools, universities, and communities around the island. Other students will pursue a Ph.D. degree in counseling.

To give you a few more details about the students, below (or attached whichever works best) is a typical description from one of the students.

### **Q: What are the expectations of the host?**

**A:** The primary expectations are to provide clean lodging for 1-2 students.

### **Q: What is the typical day like for the students?**

**A:** Day to day activities will vary, but in general students will typically have MU program activities starting around 9am, and ending around 7pm.

**Q: Will hosts need to provide transportation to and from the University, or anywhere else?**

**A:** Hosts are not expected to provide any transportation to the University. They will be taken to the University and returned to the host's home in the evening.

**Q: Are hosts expected to provide any meals for students?**

**A:** Hosts are not expected to provide any meals to students, although occasional meals (e.g., breakfast, dinner) can be arranged if the host so desires, and it does not conflict with the MU program activities.

**Q: Are there any weekend commitments?**

**A.:** Other than lodging, no.

**Q: What is the time frame of the program?**

**A:** The students will arrive Oct. 26, and leave on Nov. 11, 2007.

**Q: Do hosts receive any monetary benefits?**

**A:** Yes, hosts will receive \$150 for taking two students.

**Q: What other benefits are there to participating in the program?**

**A:** It depends on a number of factors such as the amount of time this host family spends with the student, but in general it would be expected that the host family would increase their awareness and knowledge of an Asian culture. In addition, the host family may also find it very enjoyable to make interpersonal connections with bright students from an eastern culture, and sometimes these relationships develop and grow over time in many unforeseen ways. In this time in our history when cross-national understanding seems paramount, this program provides a very tangible way for hosts to increase their cross-national awareness, knowledge and skills.

**Q. What is host family's potential role in this Cultural Immersion Program?**

A. The University of Missouri is looking for host families that will provide a room for 1 or 2 of these students. It is felt that the experience of living in an American home is essential to these students. Next year, the American students will engage in homestays in Taiwan.

**Q. What are the expectations for the host?**

A. The primary expectation is to provide clean lodging for 1-2 students. Each student should have a bed with clean linen and some space where they can be alone. Beds may be traditional beds or foldout couches. They will be welcome to join the family when time permits.

**Q. Will the host or his or her family have any weekend commitments with these participants?**

A. Other than lodging, no. The weekends are heavily scheduled with trips and activities.

**Q. We don't speak Chinese. How will we communicate with these students?**

A. No problem at all. The students speak fairly good English. Most of them studied English for more than 10 years in middle school, high school and college.

**Q. Will the student expect to use my phone? kitchen?**

A. The students will have international calling cards to make calls. They are not likely to use your kitchen facility much.

**Q. Will I be provided with a schedule of activities and events?**

A. Yes, we plan to have an informal reception in the afternoon (time TBD) on August 21<sup>st</sup> to have everyone introduced and distribute the schedule.

**Q. What if there are problems? Who will resolve these?**

A. The contact persons' information will be given at the beginning of the program.

**Q. Are we eligible to serve as host families if we have animals?**

A. Yes! We're aware of a couple of students who might be allergic to cats and/or dogs, but we should be able to find right matches.

**Q. Are there events that will involve the host families too?**

A. Yes, there will be a few events to involve host families.