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Program Overview
The Global Buddies Program is an initiative between UGA's Student Government Association and the Department of International Student Life to promote cross-cultural relationships amongst UGA students. The Global Buddies Program pairs international students with a buddy student from the U.S. to meet periodically and share cultural perspectives and build long-lasting friendships.

**Expectations of the Global Buddies Program**

The Global Buddies Program is a voluntary commitment. For the duration of the program, each buddy should:

- Maintain a one semester commitment;
- Meet for a minimum of one hour, twice a month (2 hours per month); however, it is strongly encouraged to meet for one hour a week 😊
- Understand the purpose of the program, and work to create a productive and mutually beneficial language buddyship;
- Complete a monthly check-in;
- Contact the Department of International Student Life (706-542-5867) if any problems develop during your meetings.

**Monthly Check-In**

Each month, you and your buddy will be required to report on what you did together, how often you met, and how long you spent together. On the first Monday of each month, you will receive an email from an ISL staff member who will direct you to complete a short survey. Please complete this survey within 24 hours of receiving the email.

*Checking in is an important part of the Global Buddies program, as it helps ISL and SGA improve the program and create a positive experience for all participants, as well as allows you to share what you did with your buddy that month!*
Goals of the Global Buddies Program

Participation goals for all students include:
- Sharing one’s own culture
- Learning about a different culture
- Making a new friend from a different part of the world
- Expanding one’s worldview
- Experiencing personal and professional growth
- Experience UGA traditions and culture

Record other goals for participation below!

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The First Meeting: Where to Start & What to Do

There are many ways to engage with your buddy! Consider the following during your first meeting to ensure you both feel comfortable and prepared:

- Meet your buddy on campus at a mutually agreed upon location so you are both familiar with your surroundings.
- Learn how to properly pronounce each other’s names. Teach your buddy how to spell and say your name, and then ask them to help you with their name. Don’t be afraid to ask your buddy to repeat their names a few times, as you want to make sure you are saying it correctly.
- Bring other materials! Travel guides, pictures, maps, books, or other belongings may help you explain your country and/or cultural heritage, and give you something to share about.
- Discuss the best method(s) of contacting each other (text, phone, social media, etc.) in case you have to cancel or reschedule a meeting.
- Bring a calendar to have your work and school schedules available so you can know what days you are able to meet with your buddy. Set a date to meet and add it to your calendar.
- Remember to stay friendly, flexible, and invest time in order to develop the relationship.
Tips & Suggestions for Communication between Global Buddies

Be Culturally Sensitive. If you do not know if your question is appropriate, you may say, “Is it okay if I ask...?” You may find that your buddy has different expectations for how men and women should interact, for the amount of personal space between the two of you, or for what topics are considered appropriate. This is an opportunity to open up discussion about the differences and similarities in norms and values of your respective cultures.

Speak Clearly & Slowly, NOT Loudly! Ask your partner if you are speaking too fast. Enunciate and speak clearly, but there is no need to raise your voice.

Be Aware of Slang and Idioms. If you use a phrase that cannot be translated literally into your partner’s language, write it down and ask your partner if they know it. Do not rely too heavily on slang or colloquialisms.

Show Interest. Express interest by using appropriate body language (leaning forward, maintaining eye contact, etc.) and listening actively. Invite your partner to participate by asking, “What do you think?”

Don’t Overcorrect. Let your partner know if they made a grammatical mistake by echoing the phrase in its correct form. Always remember, comprehension over perfection! Overcorrecting can hinder the development of fluency, so only correct errors that block communication.

Don’t Interrupt! Don’t finish your partner’s sentences. Let them learn and grow by practicing.

Keep it a Two-Way Conversation. Ask clarifying statements, use open-ended questions, and ask for details about topics of interest.

Try New Things. Spend time getting to know your Global Buddy by participating in the culture of Athens. Be open to trying new experiences with your buddy.

Meet Regularly. The more time you commit to getting to know your buddy, the better experience you will have. It is recommended that you meet with your buddy at least two hours per month. Set a long-standing scheduled time that you meet each month or week.
Suggested Activities & Topics for Global Buddies

1. Getting to Know You

Objective
Learn about your buddy, family structures, cultural values, and lifestyle.

Optional Activities:
- Share photos of family, friends, favorite places, etc.

Conversation Ideas
- Discuss likes and dislikes, activities, academic study, future plans, etc.
- Share favorite memories about your family, relatives, friends, etc.
- Tell each other about any pets (dog, cat, fish, bird, etc.) you or your family own.
- Discuss parenting customs in your country.
- Discuss key lessons your parents taught you.

2. Food

Objective
Learn about daily meals and special foods for celebrations. Possibly try new foods and exchange recipes.

Optional Activities
- Eat at the campus café or dining hall.
- Meet at a restaurant and try new dishes.
- Exchange a favorite recipe or dish from each other’s culture.
- Host each other for lunch or dinner at home.
- Take turns teaching one another how to cook a favorite dish.
Conversation Ideas

- Discuss what food is served during a typical day – do meals include breakfast, lunch, and dinner?
- Discover what foods are prepared on holidays and special occasions (birthdays, weddings, etc.)
- Talk about eating norms (etiquette, manners, eating utensils, etc.) and rituals
- Talk about dining out (ordering food, proper tipping, etc.)
- Discuss conceptions of your home country’s food and cooking, including regional differences.

3. Sports and Recreation

Objective
Learn about national pastimes and each other’s interests and hobbies.

Optional Activities

- Bring a deck of cards or favorite board game and play together.
- Support UGA’s athletic program by attending a sporting event together.
- Watch a sporting event on television.

Conversation Ideas

- Discuss what people enjoy doing as a pastime when not working or studying.
- Introduce favorite hobbies and crafts (comic books, jewelry making, etc.)
- Explain the basics of popular national sports (for example, baseball vs. cricket).
- Discuss the sports you like (and don’t like) to play and those you enjoy watching on TV.
4. *Arts and Entertainment*

**Objective**
Learn about culture through the discussion of movies, T.V., books, music, art, etc.

**Optional Activities**
- Go to a movie, play, concert, or ballet.
- Go to a cultural festival, art festival, or museum.
- Listen to music from your buddy’s country.

**Conversation Ideas**
- Discuss favorite movies and T.V. shows and compare popular series.
- Compare and contrast music and dance styles between your home country and your buddy’s home country. Ask about popular artists, bands, and other entertainers.
- Talk about other creative expressions such as art or literature.

5. *Education*

**Objective**
Learn about educational systems and teaching methods.

**Conversation Ideas**
- Find out what your buddy is studying/doing at UGA, why they chose their academic major or career field, etc.
- Talk about primary and secondary schooling, the ages when children begin their education, the length of the school day and year, and preparations for college.
- Discuss how and why your buddy decided to study in the U.S./UGA, and what their experience has been like at UGA thus far.
- Talk about how teaching styles and professors are different in each culture.
- Share success tips on studying.
6. Travel and Vacation

Objective
Learn about geography and tourism.

Optional Activities
- Share photos of vacation/travel
- Attend an event in Atlanta
- Using maps, share fun places around Athens.

Conversation Ideas
- Explain how you prepare for a big trip – planning, packing, mental preparation, etc.
- Show on the map which places (countries, provinces, states, cities, etc.) you have toured and visited, and where you would like to go in the future.
- Make suggestions for spring break travel or plans for vacations during breaks.

7. Holidays

Objective
Learn about special days throughout the year and how they are celebrated.

Optional Activities
- Invite each other to celebrate a special holiday.
- Carve a pumpkin, go to a haunted house, decorate a Christmas tree, etc.

Conversation Ideas
- Compare and contrast common holidays (New Year, Valentine’s Day, etc.) and how each is celebrated.
- Discuss other special days, such as legal holidays, religious celebrations, etc.
Holidays in the U.S.
The following are examples of holidays in the U.S. Typically, government offices and many businesses are closed on these dates.

- New Year's Day, January 1st
- Martin Luther King Day, 3rd Monday in January
- Memorial Day, Last Monday in May
- Independence Day, July 4th
- Labor Day, 1st Monday in September
- Veterans Day, November 11th
- Thanksgiving, 4th Thursday in November
- Christmas, December 25th
Social Media Guidelines

We want to see what Global Buddies are up to throughout the year! Each month, there will be a social media competition that is monitored by the Student Government Association.

Remember to always use the hashtag #GlobalBuddiesUGA on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook!

Follow International Student Life and Student Government Association to see featured Global Buddies!

@UGAISL
@UGASGA

#GLOBALBUDDIESUGA
The Cultural Iceberg

Although we can often see differences in cultures, there are many cultural differences that can’t be seen. The Global Buddies Program allows participants to learn more about surface culture and deep culture by offering opportunities that invoke critical thought through conversation.
Event and Location Suggestions

Athens is always bustling with fun events and activities. Here are some ideas for fun things to do around Athens with your Global Buddy!

- Exploring downtown Athens for unique shops, activities, delicious restaurants, and coffee shops.
- Taking walks in the UGA Botanical Gardens.
- Check out local events in Athens through the Flagpole magazine at [www.flagpole.com/events](http://www.flagpole.com/events)
- Attending UGA sporting events, many of which (except football) are free with a student ID.
- The University Student Union often hosts many events, all of which should be free for you to attend as long as you’re a university student. Events include:
  - Comedy Shows
  - Dawgs after Dark (a fun themed activity where food is often included)
  - Skate in Tate
  - Movie Showings
  - And much, much more. Check out [www.ugaunion.com](http://www.ugaunion.com) and click under Event Calendar for the current year. Each month is packed with fun activates right on campus!

If you ever find yourself feeling adventurous, Atlanta is not too far away! Of course, if you and your Language buddy mutually agree on venturing out to Atlanta, there are many events happening every day - a great place to find out where and when events will take place is at [www.atlanta.net/events/#events](http://www.atlanta.net/events/#events). Example of some events around Atlanta are:

- Annual Sky High Hot Air Balloon Festival
- AJC Decatur Book Festival
- High Museum of Atlanta
- Six Flags Over Georgia
- Georgia Aquarium
- World of Coca-Cola
- Ferris Wheel/Skyview
- Civil Rights Museum
**Resources & Referrals**

International students are encouraged to seek help as necessary, and both partners are encouraged to help make referrals to these numerous other campus resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Can help with…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td><a href="http://writingcenter.english.uga.edu/home">http://writingcenter.english.uga.edu/home</a></td>
<td>Class assignments, graduate school essays, job or internship application essays, lab reports, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Student Activities &amp; Involvement</td>
<td><a href="https://involvement.uga.edu/">https://involvement.uga.edu/</a></td>
<td>Events and organizations to get involved on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.career.uga.edu/">http://www.career.uga.edu/</a></td>
<td>Graduate school essays, job or internship application essays, resumes and cover letters, mock interviews, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Resource Center</td>
<td><a href="http://tutor.uga.edu/arc/">http://tutor.uga.edu/arc/</a></td>
<td>Class assignments and readings, grammar, research, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Care &amp; Outreach</td>
<td><a href="https://sco.uga.edu/">https://sco.uga.edu/</a></td>
<td>Customized networks of care and support to help students reach individual goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting to Know Your Global Buddy

Ask your buddy to share the following information about themselves:

Name: ___________________________________________________

Phone Number: _____________________________________________

Best Way to Stay in Contact: ________________________________

Favorite Food: ___________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Favorite Thing to Do on the Weekends: ______________________

________________________________________________________

Favorite Memory: _________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Somewhere They Would Like to Travel: _______________________

________________________________________________________

Favorite Book: __________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Favorite Movie or TV Show: ________________________________

________________________________________________________

Dream Job: ______________________________________________
Global Buddies Program

Student Affairs
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Student Government Association

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