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Education College Introduces New International Teaching Opportunity

Winthrop University

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Education College Introduces New International Teaching Opportunity

Quick Facts

- The college has a similar partnership with Shanghai Far East schools, but this opportunity will expand the experience into other areas.
- The program has two initiatives: a one-month experience and a year-long teaching experience open to different candidates.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — K-12 teachers across the nation are seeing increased diversity in their classrooms, whether diversity in ethnicity, learning needs, students' backgrounds or more.

A new partnership between Winthrop University's **Richard W. Riley College of Education** and **Ellson Elite Schools in Shijiazhuang, China**, will help teacher candidates, practicing educators and university faculty develop the knowledge and skills to meet these diversity needs through study abroad opportunities.

"Immersion experiences, such as teaching in a different country, provides educators an opportunity to hone their craft of meeting diverse learning needs while also building their knowledge of other cultures," said **Lisa Johnson**, associate dean. "They not only have an opportunity for professional development, but also grow personally as they experience and internalize what it means to 'live' in a country where they do not speak the language. This is extremely helpful as educators return to their classrooms here and work with a growing population of second language learners."

The college currently has a very successful partnership with the Shanghai Far East School, but faculty wanted a more expanded program that would be open not just to more Winthrop teacher candidates per year, but to university faculty and teachers in the Partnership Network as well. Established in 2009, the network is a collaboration between nine local districts to improve student learning and professional learning, strengthen pre-service teacher education and expand support for new teachers/leaders.

Marleah Bouchard, an assistant professor of curriculum and pedagogy, had spent a summer teaching English to students at the Ellson Elite School. Based on her glowing feedback, College of Education leaders began exploring an Ellson partnership.

"The curriculum Ellson uses for their teaching is a design with which we are very familiar as teachers," said **Beth Costner**, associate dean. "The Ellson leaders share a goal of enriching students' education through authentic learning experiences."

The program includes two initiatives:

1. A one-month teaching and cultural experience to be offered each July at Ellson's summer camp programs. This is open to upper-level teaching candidates, recent Winthrop graduates and faculty/teachers who are part of Winthrop's Partnership Network.
2. A year-long teaching experience, open to licensed teachers or graduates of teacher preparation or associated fields.

Program leaders at Winthrop and Ellson hope to expand the program through a collaborative summer camp on Winthrop's campus. This experience would bring together Chinese and American students and teachers as well as university faculty and teacher candidates for a two-week cultural adventure.

[\[Back to Previous Page\]](#)

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