

Feedback USA

A wider student mix characterised this year's Feedback survey of students studying in US language schools, although some students still found that a few nationalities dominated in the classrooms.

US feedback at a glance

Total number of students: (male 41, female 58, unknown 2),	101
Average age in years:	24.9
Average length of programme in weeks:	17.3
Average number of students in class:	9
Average number of hours language tuition per week:	20.8
% of students who found their course through an agent:	40
% of students who booked through an agent or adviser:	41
% of students who had been on another lang. programme:	24
% of students who would recommend their school:	86

Student nationality

Asia remained the largest student world region of origin at US language schools this year, although its dominance decreased slightly, from 73 per cent last year (see *Language Travel Magazine*, September 2004, pages 14-15) to 60 per cent of the total student body this year. The top two nationalities of Japanese and Korean remained in the same position as last year, although there were significant increases in students from Western Europe and Latin America – making up 15 per cent and 13 per cent of students respectively compared with six per cent and eight per

cent last year. Overall, 26 nationalities were noted – an increase of six on the previous year – including students from Senegal, Jordan and the Ivory Coast.

Student motivation

Overall, 68 per cent of our respondents were aged 25 or under and the majority, 53 per cent, gave their profession as student. It is not surprising, therefore, that the primary study motivation for 54 per cent of respondents was further studies, either in the USA, at home or in another English-speaking country. The academic ambitions of many students, as well as the fact that many

students were at an English language centre attached to a university, may explain the long average length of stay of 17.3 weeks. The largest number of students, 49 per cent, were staying in the USA for between seven and 19 weeks.

Student enrolment

Agent usage among students was relatively high, with 40 per cent of students finding out about their course through an agency and 41 per cent booking through this method. The advice of friends and family was also a common answer given by students when asked how they chose their particular school. Other

reasons for choosing a particular programme included the school's reputation, the fact that there were fewer students of their own nationality and the school's location. Unlike Feedback surveys on other destinations, price was not such an important consideration for the majority of students in the USA.

Standard of the schools

With 48 per cent of students coming from just two countries, it is not surprising that 24 per cent felt that there were too many students of their own nationality in the classroom and a further 18 per cent thought there were too many of one other nationality. Class sizes overall varied from three to 22 students and of the six per cent of students who thought that there were too many students in their class, class sizes numbered between eight and 15 students. When asked to rate aspects of their experience, the social programme and accommodation scored the lowest, with 13 per cent of students finding their social programme poor or unsatisfactory and nine per cent saying the same of their accommodation. Of this nine per cent, all but one were in residences.

Living in the USA

The average cost per week of tuition and accommodation was US\$379 and 52 per cent of respondents found the cost of living to be higher than in their own country. This included 82 per cent of the Korean students and 100 per cent of the Taiwanese. Nine per cent of students found it very hard to talk to the local people, all of whom were either Japanese, Korean or Taiwanese.



Top nationalities

31%

1. Japanese

17%

2. Korean

- 3. Swiss (8%)
- 4. Taiwanese (7%)
- 5. Italian (4%)
- 5. Colombian (4%)
- 7. Costa Rican (3%)
- 7. Chinese (3%)
- 7. Brazilian (3%)
- 7. Spanish (3%)

How did you find your programme?

40%

1. Recommended by an agent

35%

2. Recommended by a friend/relative

- 3. I found it on the Internet (22%)
- 4. I saw it advertised (3%)

Respondents by world region of origin

- W Europe (15%)
- Asia (60%)
- C & E Europe (2%)
- Middle East (6%)
- North America (1%)
- C & L America (13%)
- Africa (2%)
- Unknown (1%)

What is your accommodation while in the USA?

- Host family (29%)
- Residential/single room (21%)
- Residential/dormitory (21%)
- Other (26%)
- No reply (3%)

Thank you to the following schools for participating in our survey: Duquesne University ESL Program, Pittsburgh, PA; English Language Center, Los Angeles, CA; Fulton-Montgomery Community College, Johnstown, NY; Kaplan, Irvine, CA; Kaplan, Sacramento, CA; Language Studies International, San Diego, CA; Manhattan Language, New York, NY; TALK International – The Language Institute, Davie, FL; New England School of English, Cambridge, MA; University of California Extension, Santa Cruz, CA; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Intensive English Institute, Urbana, IL; University of Nevada Intensive English Language Center, Reno, NV; University of Pennsylvania English Language Programs, Philadelphia, PA; University of Pittsburgh English Language Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Virginia Tech English Language Institute, Blacksburg, VA; Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

How will you use your English in the future?

- For college study in the USA (35%)
- For college study in another English-speaking country (6%)
- For college studies at home (13%)
- For current/future work (43%)
- For pleasure only (2%)
- No reply (1%)

In my class there are...

- Too many students (6%)
- Too many students who speak my language (24%)
- Too many students from one other country (18%)
- None of these (50%)
- Unknown (2%)

Standard of the teaching

- Excellent (61%)
- Good (30%)
- Satisfactory (5%)
- Unsatisfactory (1%)
- Unknown (3%)

Standard of your academic programme

- Excellent (32%)
- Good (51%)
- Satisfactory (13%)
- Unsatisfactory (1%)
- Unknown (3%)

Standard of your social programme

- Excellent (16%)
- Good (40%)
- Satisfactory (31%)
- Poor (4%)
- Unsatisfactory (9%)

Standard of your accommodation

- Excellent (24%)
- Good (32%)
- Satisfactory (24%)
- Poor (7%)
- Unsatisfactory (2%)
- Unknown (11%)

Before looking for your course, did you know where you wanted to study?

- Country**
- Yes (89%)
 - No (8%)
 - Unknown (3%)

- City/town**
- Yes (63%)
 - No (31%)
 - Unknown (6%)

- School**
- Yes (49%)
 - No (45%)
 - Unknown (6%)