

Teach English in Korea with EPIK



한국



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"EPIK is a great opportunity to teach English, work in Korea, and learn Korean culture and society in a global setting."

Director Geunhye Kim
Houston Korean Education Center

On Wednesday, October 14, 2015, the East Asia Institute (EAI) hosted an information session on EPIK (English Program in Korea) with guest speaker Geunhye Kim, director of the Houston Korean Education Center.

"On a peninsula between Japan and China, Korea has a high demand for competent English speakers and EPIK is a great opportunity to teach English overseas," said Kim. The EPIK program accepts applicants from various English-speaking countries, including the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and South Africa.

Kim also showed the audience a short video about the Peace Corps that went to Korea after the Korean War to improve the country. Through that time period, Korea was able to realize just how valuable education could be and was to them. She compared the work that the Peace Corps did to what the current mission of EPIK is: both involved exposing Korea to western culture as well as exposing the participants to the Korean culture and providing education .

There are many requirements for EPIK Program. The most important is that the applicants must have at least a bachelor's degree to be eligible for EPIK. Those with a degree in English or Education or those with a teacher's certificate or with teaching background or highly sought after.

EPIK teachers will be teaching in primary and secondary schools during school hours. They work Monday through Friday, eight hours a day, and will be asked to either assist a Korean teacher with their English class, or to conduct the class together. The scholar will also have to prepare materials for class and assist with activities related to the English language.

Applicants can apply through the Korean Consulate General in Houston or by emailing the EPIK office in Seoul, Korea at <http://www.epik.go.kr>. However, since UTSA has an academic agreement with EPIK, UTSA students are encouraged to apply through the East Asia Institute office. The applicant will be interviewed and mandatory documents such as the application and required essay, two signed recommendation letters, an FBI criminal background check, a diploma, a transcript, and a copy of the photo page of the passport will need to be submitted.

After the information session, Director Kim took questions the audience had about the program. At the same time, the audience were given kimchi (spicy cabbage), japchae (sweet potato noodles), and rice to try out some food from Korea. While the audience were enjoying their dishes, two former TaLK (Teach and Learn in Korea) scholars spoke briefly about their time in Korea, the province they were sent to, the places they visited, and their experience with the Korean students and schools.

Chris Roden reminded the potential applicants that while there are many benefits to being in the EPIK program, it is still a job to be taken seriously. "Trying to learn the Korean language is really big because Korean people consider it a sign of respect and honor," said another TaLK scholar Robert Reyes, "Therefore, I would like to encourage those that would like to participate in EPIK learn Korean before their departure."

The former TaLK scholars' testimonials were exceptionally appealing to the audience members, who are very interested in the program. "The EPIK program offers amazing opportunities for those that would like to teach and learn abroad in Asia, particularly in Korea, said Director Geunhye Kim, "This program is a great way to expand knowledge of the world."



From top: Prospective applicants watching the presentation; Students eating Korean food; Mimi Yu, associate director of the East Asia Institute presents a gift to Director Geunhye Kim

UTSA students can apply to the EPIK Program through UTSA's East Asia Institute located in Main Bldg. 1.209; 210.458.8550; eai@utsa.edu; <http://www.utsa.edu/eai>