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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for
Middle Eastern Studies



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Teachers Collaborating Across Borders (TCAB): Virtual Program for U.S. and Middle East/North African Teachers

The TCAB program is a unique opportunity for teachers from the United States and teachers from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to engage in international dialogue and virtual exchange. Throughout the program, teachers will discuss topics related to education and culture in their respective countries and to find ways to share this information in their classrooms.

Organized by the University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies, TCAB will bring together a selected cohort of 30 teachers (15 from MENA countries, 15 from the US) through an online platform. Participants will meet every other week in synchronous and asynchronous meetings to discuss different topics. Teachers will also conduct a collaborative global project with other participants in TCAB and report on their exchange experience at the end of the program.

Participating educators will receive a certificate of completion for the program and 30 professional development hours of continuing education credit.

Program Structure

Each week, a group of 6 teachers (3 teachers from the US, 3 from the MENA region) will be responsible for organizing a presentation and leading a discussion on the weekly topic. Participating teachers will be placed into groups based on grade level and interest.

Weekly meetings will either be synchronous (scheduled live sessions) or asynchronous (forum discussions that teachers can access at any time):

- Synchronous meetings will take place using Zoom. Zoom is a reliable video conferencing platform that TCAB teachers will be able to access for free. These live conversations will take place on **Sundays, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EDT**. Following synchronous meetings, the leading group will be asked to write a summary of the presentation and discussion and post it in the online forum for additional conversation.
- Asynchronous meetings will occur on a Google Classroom discussion forum. The leading group will post a PowerPoint presentation and other resources for the group to explore. Throughout the week, teachers will then be asked to post their thoughts on the topic in the discussion thread. The leading group will be responsible for guiding and responding to forum posts.

In addition to the scheduled meetings, teachers will have access to the online discussion forum to continue conversations about other topics of interest.

Participant Expectations

Participants are expected to engage fully in all facets of the program: participating verbally and/or in writing in all meetings, sharing in group work, and creating, implementing, and reporting on a classroom project.

Participants are expected to attend all synchronous meetings and post online for asynchronous ones. (In case of emergency, accommodations can be arranged.)

Participants are expected to treat each other with respect and open-mindedness.

Program Calendar

Date	Theme	Meeting
	Summer Preparation: Forum Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating teachers will be asked to write a post in the online forum introducing themselves and their school. 	Asynchronous
September 13	Session 1: Program Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure for the program • Introductory slide from each participating teacher • Division of presentation groups 	Synchronous
September 27	Session 2: School Structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are elementary and secondary schools organized? (What grade levels are the different schools in your system?) • What does a typical week in your school look like? • What courses do you teach and how is that decided? • What classes do students take and how is that decided? • What is the role of school administration? 	Synchronous
October 11	Session 3: Student Demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the student population of your school? • How do you address the different learning needs of your students? • What is the role of parental involvement in your students' education? • What are important cultural customs of your student population? 	Asynchronous
October 25	Session 4: Immigration and Migration in School and Society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is your school impacted by contemporary issues of migration and immigration? • What new populations are enrolling in your school? • When and how are foreign languages taught? • What resources are available to newcomers? 	Synchronous
November 8	Session 5: Teaching Tough Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What conversations are difficult to have with your students? • How do you teach about sensitive issues in the classroom? • What tools do you use for classroom management? • How do you prepare for disasters and other unexpected events? 	Asynchronous
November 22	Session 6: Cultural Awareness and Global Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you work to be culturally responsive to your students of different backgrounds? • What misconceptions do your students have about others and how do you work to address them? • How do you help your students investigate the world? 	Synchronous
TBD	Spring Session: Global Collaboration Project Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group will provide a summary of their project and learning outcomes 	

Collaborative Project Guidelines

In groups of 2-4, teachers will work together to develop and conduct a collaborative global project. Teachers should work with another TCAB teacher in another country to implement a learning exchange between their students.

During the first half of the program, teachers will use the online forum to share ideas for global exchange. Half-way through the program, each group will submit a one paragraph proposal of the exchange project they would like to conduct. Teachers are encouraged to let their interests, curriculum, and creativity guide them in the creation of the collaborative project.

[Tips on developing global collaboration](#). Groups should consider:

- What technology is needed to implement this project?
- What will be the length of the exchange?
- How will students engage with one another?

After the exchange, each teacher will write a paragraph addressing the scope of the project, how and why it was developed, student experiences, and teacher reflection. Groups will present their experiences to one another in the final meeting of the program.

Examples of collaborative projects:

- a) Students simultaneously investigate an issue in their local communities (i.e. sustainability efforts, inclusivity of new populations, etc.) and compare findings
- b) Classrooms develop a “virtual museum” of cultural objects from daily life in their country and give guided “tours” to students in other countries
- c) Students analyze media from each other’s countries about a current event and report their findings to one another
- d) Classroom to classroom conversations on issues in the curriculum
- e) Students engage in a guided (on-line) conversation comparing their schools and lived experiences (elementary teachers could help students express their ideas through writing, artwork, and photographs)