



Indiana University

Honors Program in Foreign Languages

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Talking Points for IUHPFL Alumni

Thank you for your willingness to help promote IUHPFL to future participants! Your insights and stories will mean a great deal to your peers who are deciding whether or not IUHPFL is right for them.

We have provided for you here some general advice and questions to consider before you present. Please be sure to read this document thoroughly and to think about what you would like to talk about within the limited time provided, being sure to focus on the points that are most important to you.

SHARING YOUR IUHPFL EXPERIENCE

When talking about the details of your IUHPFL experience with future participants, it is helpful to touch on at least a few of the following topics, giving priority to the ones that resonate the most with you personally. You will not be expected or asked to address all of these topics.

- **Pre-Departure – Getting ready for your IUHPFL experience**
- **Your IUHPFL Teammates**
- **Your Host Family Experience**
- **The Academic Focus of IUHPFL**
- **The Language Commitment and Honor Code**
- **Your Goals and Achievements**
- **How IUHPFL Has Benefited and Changed You**

Here are some questions that your peers might ask, pertaining to each of the topics listed above. These questions are designed to help you think about your IUHPFL journey and to identify points that you would like to talk about. No one will ask you all of these questions or expect you to have answers for all of them; simply use them as a guide.

Pre-Departure – Getting ready for your IUHPFL experience

- What were your **expectations** of the program before departure?
- Were these expectations **realistic**? Why or why not?
- How did you fundraise for the program?
- What was Orientation like? What did you gain from that all-day event?

Your IUHPFL Teammates

- What did you enjoy most about your team?
- How did they help and support you through the experience?
- What did you admire most about your instructors? How did they help you?
- Who became your close friends?

- Are you keeping in contact with your teammates?
- What advice can you share about how to connect with one's teammates, especially when English cannot be used?
- What advice can you give to students who are worried that their skills in the target language might not be on par with those of their IUHPFL peers?

Your Host Family Experience

- What were a few challenges of living with a host family?
- What were the rewards of living with a host family?
- What expectations did you have of living with a host family and what were your family's expectations of you?
- What does it take to successfully live with a host family and how can one prepare for the experience?

The Academic Focus of IUHPFL

Courses

- What were the courses like?
- Which course and instructor were particularly interesting to you and why?
- How did the courses help your language development?
- What was the homework like and how did it help you to connect with your host family and community?
- What was a typical class day like?

Afternoon Activities

- What Afternoon Activities did you participate in?
- What were these activities like?
- Which activity was your favorite and why?
- How did these activities encourage you to stretch beyond your comfort zone?
- How did they benefit you linguistically and personally? What did you learn about yourself?
- How did they help to bring your team closer together?
- What is the Farewell Show and what was it like?

Excursions

- Where did your team go on excursion?
- Which excursion destination did you enjoy most and why?
- What did your instructors teach you about that excursion site beforehand?
- What sites in the host country would you like to return to or visit and why?

The Language Commitment and Honor Code

Language Commitment

- How important was the Language Commitment to your overall linguistic development and IUHPFL experience?
- What exactly does the Language Commitment entail?
- What were the first few days/weeks of the Language Commitment like?
- What techniques did you use to "survive" without relying on English, cell phones and the Internet?

- How did you hold yourself accountable to the Language Commitment? How did you hold each other accountable within your team?
- When were you able to interact easily in the target language? How did that feel?

The Honor Code

- Why is the Honor Code important to one's IUHPFL experience?
- What challenges did you experience in adhering to the Code and how did you overcome them?
- How did it feel at the end of the program to know that you had succeeded in meeting the requirements of the Language Commitment and the Honor Code?

Your Goals and Achievements

- What were your personal and academic goals for the program?
- What steps did you take to meet them?
- How did your instructors, host family and teammates help you to meet your goals?
- What goals do you now have for yourself as a result of your IUHPFL experience?

How IUHPFL Has Benefited You and Changed You

Benefits to Consider:

- Significant gain in language proficiency
- Cultural knowledge
- Clearer educational and career goals
- Greater sense of self
- Increase in self-confidence and independence
- Friendships with teammates and host family members
- Community Engagement experience (if applicable)
- What else?

Questions to Consider:

- What have you gained from your IUHPFL experience?
- In what ways are you different now?
- How has this experience influenced what you want to do and accomplish in the future?

Addressing Challenges of the IUHPFL Experience

You will certainly want to share with your peers aspects of the program that were fun and exciting, as well as challenging. We ask that you prioritize the positive points of the experience – friendships, what you learned, excursions, etc. – but sharing your challenges can also be very helpful to potential participants.

When talking about aspects of the program that were difficult for you, the key is to consider the following:

- Remember that your speaking time is limited
- Make sure to share information that is helpful and relevant to all or most students
- Be honest but also constructive and as objective as possible
- Focus on the positive outcomes – how you resolved the situation, what you learned
- Don't mention names of individuals out of respect for their privacy

- Always show respect for the Honor Code, your instructors, and IUHPFL in general

Questions to Consider:

- What aspects of the program were particularly challenging for you?
- How did you cope without being able to speak English?
- What was it like to go without your smart devices and Internet access?
- How did you resolve challenges and conflicts?
- How were you able to manage stress?
- What steps did you take to get to know your teammates, instructors, and host family members?
- How did you combat homesickness?
- What was jetlag like and what did you do to overcome it?
- Were there “insurmountable” challenges that actually turned out to be great opportunities? Please explain.
- How did the challenges you faced ultimately help you to learn and grow on a personal level?
- What advice can you give to new participants in order for them to have a great IUHPFL experience?

Thank you again for helping to promote IUHPFL! We are happy that you are and always will be a member of the IUHPFL family!