OIP Travel Grant: Faculty Report

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Proposal title: Imbalance problem solving negotiations with (1) Osaka International University (44 semester students), (2) Oita University (26 semester students), and Gifu University (22 semester students). Internship creation negotiations with (4) Rikkyo University and (5) Meiji University.
Country visited: Japan
Institution(s) visited:
- Oita University
- Gifu University
- Osaka International University
- Rikkyo University
- Meiji University
- Hosei University
- Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
- Seisen University
- Nanzan University
- Chuo University

Dates of travel: 07/07/13 - 07/25/13
Number of student participants: N/A
Number of non-student participants: N/A
Proposal Abstract
SDSU is currently faced with serious imbalance problems with Osaka International University, Oita University, and Gifu University. Unless I visit them, listen to them attentively, let them vent their anger and frustration, and come up with solutions, SDSU will lose these exchange partners: Each institution has been providing 4-6 of our semester students per year with excellent rigorous programs. I will also visit Rikkyo University and Meiji University regarding collaborative arrangements including creation of internships.

Travel Report
I had a very productive visit. I visited Oita University, Osaka International University, and Gifu University and met with all key administrators and discussed the issues of imbalance as I proposed in this travel grant. I also visited Rikkyo University and Meiji University and discussed the possible ways of creating internships.

- I visited Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Beppu and met with 5 administrators. We discussed the way to send Japanese nationals from APU.
- I visited **Hosei University** in Tokyo and met with their key administrators. We discussed the creation of an additional level of Japanese language courses.
- I visited **Seisen University** in Tokyo and discussed possible ways to exchange students. Dr. Fumihiko Takeda, the Director of the International Center, is now requesting a meeting with me, as a result of the initial meeting with Professor Chizuyo Kojima last year.
- I met with Professor Osamu Kamada of **Nanzan University** in Nagoya. We discussed possible ways for them to send a graduate student majoring in teaching Japanese as a second language. 2014-2015 will be the first year to exchange our students.
- I met representatives with **Hosei University** and **Chuo University**, our current exchange partners: There are issues to be discussed in order to continue our agreements.

**Visit #1: Oita University (exchange partner since 2006):**

Friday, July 12, 2013

Meeting with the Faculty of Economics representatives (1 hour):

- Dr. Koichi Ichihara, Dean, Faculty of Economics
- Dr. Makoto Abe, Faculty of Economics
- Professor Kazuko Kumo, Associate Prof. of English, Faculty of Economics
- Dr. Junko Kumamoto, Deputy Director, Center for International and Education and Research (CIER)

Meeting with the Center for International Education and Research (CIER) representatives (1.5 hours):

- Dr. Masayoshi Yasuoka, Director, CIER
- Dr. Junko Kumamoto, Deputy Director, CIER
- Dr. Kazumi Nagaike, Associate Professor of Japan Studies, CIER
- Dr. Katsuhiko Suganuma, Assistant Professor of Japanese, CIER

Meeting with SDSU students currently studying at Oita University (30 minutes):

- Brian Garjeho
- Charles Lenon

Dinner meeting with (2.5 hours):

- Dr. Junko Kumamoto, Deputy Director, CIER
- Dr. Kazumi Nagaike, Associate Professor of Japan Studies, CIER
- Dr. Katsuhiko Suganuma, Assistant Professor of Japanese, CIER
- Professor Kazuko Kumo, Associate Prof. of English, Faculty of Economics

**Discussions and Recommendations**

Oita has not been able to find any students who can clear SDSU’s TOEFL requirement and thus has not sent anyone.

Most of their students score under 500. They asked me if SDSU could accept students with 507. Looking at my surprised face, they asked me if “520 with a short-term study experience in English” could be acceptable.
Professor Masayoshi Yasuoka, the Director of the Center for International Education and Research (CIER), thinks that Oita should be able to keep accepting up to two students. He thinks it good to have one or two SDSU students on campus so that Oita students will have a chance to mingle with international students.

**Recommendation #1**
Although I believe it unrealistic to expect that someone whose TOEFL score is 520 even after participating in a short-term study abroad program in an English speaking country could perform satisfactorily at SDSU, we should at least give consideration to Oita’s request.

**Visit #2 Osaka International University (exchange partner since 1993)**

**Wednesday, July 17, 2013**
Meeting with the top administrators (2 hours):
- Dr. Toshimitsu Kitagawa, President
- Mr. Ikuo Miyamoto, Vice President; Director, International Exchange Center
- Mr. Shoji Ito, Special Assistant to Director of International Exchange Center
- Ms. Sayuri Tanaka, Manager, International Office
- Mr. Taiji Matsuoka, Acting Manager, International Office

Meeting with SDSU students currently studying at OIU (30 minutes):
- Gabriel Maranón
- Bakari Weaver

**Discussions and Recommendations**
I was very much impressed with the fact that both President and Vice President of Osaka International University (OIU) met with me along with the key members of their international programs. It was also impressive that they already have a plan to solve the imbalance problem.

They have created a new College named the **Faculty of Global Business**. This College opens in April 2014 with 300 Freshmen. They plan to recruit 30 students who score TOEFL score of 500 or above and offer full scholarships for four years. Then, they will give a special English-language training program and make sure that this cream of crop will raise their score to 550 before they apply for exchange programs.

I mentioned that internship opportunities would make OIU even more attractive to our students. I also mentioned that internships are not limited to businesses off campus. For instance, our students could help OIU by working as teaching assistants to the faculty in English classes or as counselors for the English-speaking clubs. Some of our students are native speakers of Spanish as well. OIU could keep records of these students’ contact hours and issue internship credit.

**Recommendation**
We do not have to worry about anything regarding the imbalance issue with Osaka International University (OIU). SDSU can continue to send four semester students on an annual basis. OIU will probably start sending 10 semester students or so annually beginning in the Fall of 2015. The imbalance problem will be solved in the foreseeable future.
Visit #3: Gifu University (exchange partner since 1985):

Friday, July 19, 2013

Meeting with the following representatives (2 hours):
- Dr. Dr. Chise Kasai, Professor, Faculty of Regional Studies
- Mr. Minoru Takeshita, Head, International Exchange – Planning
- Mr. Chihiro Sako, International Exchange – Planning (Inbound)

Meeting with an SDSU student currently studying at Gifu University
(30 minutes): Cheyanne Fairchild

Dorm Tour (30 minutes) escorted by:
- Mr. Johten Matsuoka, Manager, International House
- Cheyanne Fairchild

Discussions and Recommendations

While waiting for Professor Chise Kasai to show up and greet me at a convenience store located at the entrance of the Gifu University campus, I reviewed the promotional materials placed at the store. They were promoting various programs and Colleges. I noticed that their Nursing Program in the School of Medicine emphasizes English language training for the entire four years of their curriculum.

First of all, they do have Ms. Rika Kanetake who cleared SDSU’s TOEFL requirement and will be attending SDSU this coming year. This helped to make our meeting more relaxed and cordial. In addition, they were grateful that their last exchange student, Mr. Naoto Shiozawa, had an invaluable experience at SDSU during the academic year of 2010–2011.

The meeting with the Gifu representatives revealed that they were not familiar with SDSU. This is not because they have too many exchange partners to work with but because it is a Japanese custom to rotate staff members every 2–3 years.

I talked about the nursing program’s flyer I saw and mentioned that they could recruit students in the nursing program and the medical program because SDSU has the College of Health and Human Services. They might be able to take courses related to their fields of study or courses which can be accepted as upper-division General Education courses.

Both Professor Kasai and Mr. Sako looked pleasantly surprised. They were also surprised that SDSU is categorized as a small research institution with a student body of 36,000. Once they were informed that SDSU offers Bachelor’s degrees in 89 fields, Master’s degrees in 78 fields, and Doctorate degrees in 22 fields, they became impressed and more interested in sending students to SDSU.

We discussed the timing issue of notification of acceptance by Gifu. It has been the case that Gifu does not inform our students of their decision until early August and that they do not send the paperwork required to apply for a student visa until late August. While it is true that our students do not have to arrive until the beginning of October, this timing does not give our students enough time to apply for a visa to the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles. In addition, any inexpensive plane ticket must be purchased months in advance. It is nerve-racking.
that no definite plan can be made until almost the beginning of the next academic year at SDSU. It would be ideal if they could at least issue an e-mail of acceptance notification before SDSU’s academic year is over in mid May. I raised this issue last year.

I learned that Gifu took my concerns seriously this year and set the application deadline earlier than usual. Although they received complaints from Korean exchange partners, they were able to notify all incoming exchange students in late June this year. They were proud that they were able to send notification one month earlier than usual this year. This effort is commendable.

Regarding the paperwork necessary for visa application, I learned that the Immigrations Office in Japan will not speed up and issue an approval. They have a set schedule for those students arriving in October. I understood that this is not something Gifu has control over.

I asked Gifu representatives if there is anything SDSU can do to help increase the number of students they would send to SDSU. I already explained that we would consider a TOEFL score of 535 if they could not find anyone who could clear the required 550. They asked if SDSU could consider TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) by ETS (Educational Testing Service). TOEIC is currently administered in 150 countries.

Gifu students can take TOEIC free of charge on campus once a year. In addition, if Gifu students wish to take TOEIC more than once, the test fee is less than one third of TOEFL. For TOEFL, Gifu students must go to Nagoya, the nearest large city, and pay more than three times as much as TOEIC. They begged us to consider TOEIC as an option.

**Recommendation #1**
SDSU should consider accepting TOEIC as an option. It is created by ETS, the same non-profit organization which created TOEFL.

**Recommendation #2**
When staff members in charge of exchange students rotate, we should send information files on SDSU so that they stay familiar with SDSU. We should not expect that the information on SDSU is sent from past staff to new staff.

**Visit #4: Rikkyo University (new exchange partner effective Fall 2013):**

**Tuesday, July 16, 2013**

Meeting with the following representatives (1.5 hours):
- Dr. Nobuko Ikeda, Dean, College of Intercultural Communications
- Dr. Chika Maruyama, Director, Japanese Language Program.

Meeting over lunch (1 hour)
- Dr. Nobuko Ikeda, Dean, College of Intercultural Communications
- Dr. Chika Maruyama, Director, Japanese Language Program.

Meeting with the following representatives: (1.5 hours)
- Dr. Nobuko Ikeda, Dean, College of Intercultural Communications
- Dr. Ronald Martin, Chair, International Exchange Committee
- Ms. Koko Hayama, Center for International Exchange
- Mr. Toshiya Oishi, Center for International Exchange
Discussions and Recommendations
We discussed various possibilities to create short-term internships during their long spring break (6-8 weeks). They agreed to create possibly a few one-week internships which would include up to 150 contact hours in the Tokyo area.

Visit #5:
Meiji University (prospective exchange partner):

Monday, July 22, 2013
Meeting with the following representatives: (1.5 hours)
- Dr. Takeshi Suzuki, Deputy Director, Organization for International Collaboration (OIC)
- Yuki Amaki, Assistant Professor solely hired for OIC
- Dr. Noriko Kuroki, Director, Japanese Language Program
- Mr. Taro Naotsuka, Office of International Education (Outgoing)
- Ms. Eri Sugiura, Office of International Education (Inbound)

Campus Tour escorted by: (30 minutes)
- Dr. Takeshi Suzuki, Deputy Director, Organization for International Collaboration (OIC)
- Yuki Amaki, Assistant Professor solely hired for OIC

Additional meeting with: (30 minutes)
- Dr. Takeshi Suzuki, Deputy Director, Organization for International Collaboration (OIC)
- Yuki Amaki, Assistant Professor solely hired for OIC

Discussions and Recommendations
Everything went well until we began talking about the homestay opportunity and the internship opportunities which Professors Suzuki and Amaki promised that they would offer to SDSU students, in the event that we become exchange partners.

I learned that homestay is not offered by Meiji University. They ask an off-campus commercial agency, which is not part of Meiji University, to find homestay arrangements for their international students. Meiji is not in a position to guarantee homestay at all.

Regarding internship opportunities, they would like to see if opportunities could be created during February and March when Meiji has a long spring break. Later, they informed me that they worked with the United Nations Academic Impact housed on Meiji campus and secured an unofficial approval of offering internship opportunities to SDSU students.

On August 8 they informed me that they decided not to pursue an agreement with SDSU because they realized that they would not be able to provide SDSU students with what they intended to offer. Homestay cannot be offered through Meiji. In addition, Meji cannot commit to creating internship opportunities on a permanent basis.

I am glad that their ideas about what they could offer our students have become more realistic.
Visit #6: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (exchange partner since 2006):

I decided to visit Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Beppu City since I was going to visit Oita University in Oita City nearby.

Thursday, July 11, 2013

Meeting with the following representatives (2 hours):
\- Dr. Ken Arai, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs
\- Mr. Takeshi Murakami, Deputy Director, International Center
\- Mr. Takeshi Ota, Deputy Director, International Center
\- Ms. Maki Miyoshi, Head, Academic Office

Discussions and Recommendations

There were two issues in my mind. The first is how to ask them to send Japanese students as exchange students. They sent only non-Japanese students from Asia. Their students did not respond to e-mails in English or in Japanese. It appeared that the students from APU were not proficient enough to have smooth communication with any of us. In addition, we wanted to see Japanese students coming from an exchange partner in Japan.

During our discussion, I learned the following: It is extremely difficult to find Japanese students who can clear SDSU’s TOEFL score requirement but it is not that difficult to find Asian students (especially from China and Korea) who have sufficient English proficiency. It appeared that it would be a good idea to create one spot each for a Japanese national and a non-Japanese.

Another issue was AASCU Japan Studies Institute’s “Program in Japan.” If we are successful in getting a grant from the U.S.-Japan Friendship Commission, we are going to have a pilot study program in which I will bring a group of 10 past participants to Tokyo, Kyoto, and Beppu for 3 nights in each city. For the city of Beppu, I selected APU. They graciously agreed to be a host institution. I wanted to meet with the people I will be working with in the event we are successful in our grant application. Staff members rotate every three years or so in Japan. Those people whom I met when I visited in 2009 were no longer in the offices I work with.

We had a productive and pleasant meeting.

Visit #7: Hosei University (exchange partner since 2009):

Tuesday, July 23, 2013

Meeting with the following representatives (2 hours):
\- Mr. Kimiyoshi Hayashi, Director, International Exchange Center
\- Mr. Jun Kojima, Deputy Director, International Exchange Center
\- Ms. Mochida Michiko, Advisor (Inbound), International Exchange Center

Discussions and Recommendations

There are four levels of Japanese language instruction. There is a big gap between the second and third levels. Our students fall into this gap: The second level is too easy but the third level is too challenging. Our students chose the second level courses and focused on the
development of oral communication skills. As a result, they became confident in speaking
Japanese and acquired strategies to hold conversation with native speakers. However, their
reading and writing abilities remain the same in spite of the fact that they spend one full
academic year in Japan.

I was wondering if Hosei was planning to do something about this problem. I conveyed the
unhappy comments made by the instructors of Japanese who were teaching those who came
back from Hosei.

I was delighted to learn that Hosei just hired a Ph.D. in linguistics as the director of its Japanese
Language Program and there would be one additional level created beginning in the Fall of
2013. The problem is solved.

The second issue is related to the AASCU Japan Studies Institute’s “Program in Japan.” I selected
Hosei as the host institution in Tokyo. Since both Mr. Kojima and Ms. Mochida are new to the
International Exchange Center, I wanted to meet with them in person and exchanged ideas
about how to accommodate the requests from AASCU.

I had a productive visit.

**Visit #8: Seisen University (prospective exchange partner):**

**Tuesday, July 23, 2013**

Meeting with the following representatives (2 hours):
- Dr. Fumihiko Takeda, Director of International Exchange Center
- Ms. Yuri Ono, International Exchange Center
- Dr. Chizuyo Kojima, Professor of English

**Discussions and Recommendations**

I expressed my appreciation for their interest in SDSU. When I showed the list of evaluation
criteria for a prospective exchange partner, Professor Takeda was convinced that Seisen’s
curriculum is not large enough to accommodate the needs of SDSU students. He still would like
to send a student to SDSU for a full academic year if he can find a student who can clear SDSU’s
TOEFL requirement. I sent him information on the programs ALI is offering when I came back to
the U.S. I recommended the “Semester at SDSU” Program for those who can clear the TOEFL
requirement and “Business for Global Practices” for those who cannot.

**Off-Campus Meeting #1, Hosei University (current exchange partner)**

A meeting with Dr. Rebecca Erwine Fukuzasa

Dr. Rebecca Erwine Fukuzawa is the past Director of the Exchange Students from Overseas
Program (ESPO). I met with her on July 15.

I wanted to know how the transition from her directorship to the current directorship went on
April 1, 2013 and what kinds of new things the ESPO Office is trying to launch under the new
directorship.
She informed me that the Global 30 grants from the Ministry of Education enabled Hosei to establish a director’s position of the Japanese Language Program last year. Hosei conducted a national search and hired a Ph.D. in linguistics with teaching experience at the U.S. institutions. This person will start working this Fall. The Global 30 grants also made it possible for Hosei to create a new level between the second and the third levels so that there will be five levels of Japanese where our students can be placed.

I also wanted to have any input she and her husband, Dr. Kazuyoshi Fukuzawa of Waseda University (CSU-IP exchange partner), could provide regarding AASCU’s “Program in Japan.” I selected Hosei as the host institution in Tokyo and Hosei already issued a letter of commitment.

**Off-Campus Meeting #2 Nanzan University (new exchange partner effective Fall 2013) A meeting with Dr. Osamu Kamada**

I met with Professor Osamu Kamada of Nanzan University at a restaurant located in Nagoya Station on July 17. I did not have time to visit him on campus.

He was instrumental in initiating the Exchange Agreement. Thanks to his extra push, we were able to reach the final stage.

Professor Kamada is in charge of the graduate program in teaching Japanese as a Second Language. He is interested in sending his student as one of the two students to be exchanged. SDSU would love to have such a student as a candidate for a GTA. I wanted to know what kind of arrangements he made with their International Office and how I could help him set up their new policy.

I also wanted to know his contacts/friends at Osaka University. Osaka University is one of the seven Imperial National Universities like Kyushu University. Osaka University is striving to be included in the top 10 universities worldwide and announced their intention by buying an entire page in the major newspapers with national circulation. Osaka University fulfills all evaluation criteria I set up for prospective exchange partners. In addition, we currently have agreements with Osaka University of Art (art and performance majors only) and Osaka International University, so Osaka University will be a welcome addition.

**Off-Campus Meeting #3 Chuo University (current exchange partner) A meeting with Dr. Wakako Murakami**

The academic year of 2012-2013 was the first year to exchange students. I wanted to have her view on our first year since the agreement was made possible thanks to her support. I met with her on July 22. I did not have time to visit her on Chuo campus in Hachioji.

Dr. Murakami thinks that everything went smoothly, in spite of the fact that one Chuo student was assaulted on campus at the beginning in the Fall of 2012. I did not sense any legal action or bad consequences stemming from this incident. It is history.

The fact that Chuo was awarded Global 30 Plus Grant helped them think about various ways to realize students’ mobility. Chuo considers SDSU an excellent partner. We will probably see many more Chuo students coming via our regular exchange program and new programs.
There is one additional point of interest to SDSU. During our meeting, I learned that her husband, Mr. Kiyoshi Murakami, is interested in sending a group of 20~30 English teachers to ALI during the summer of 2014. Kiyoshi is an executive business professional in Tokyo but he wears another hat: President of the Association of Relief, Reconstruction, and Development of Rikuzentakata. Rikuzentakada, his hometown, was devastated by the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. This Association is also called “Aid TAKATA.”

Kiyoshi is also thinking about sending young students (7th graders) to ALI in the future. Doing homestay while studying English at ALI is very attractive to him. I think that this will be a tremendous opportunity for SDSU to get involved in and help the recovery process of Earthquake and Tsunami Victims.

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In sum, I had a very productive visit. I made campus visits to eight new/current/prospective exchange partners. I also met with representatives of three institutions (two current + one new) off-campus. I can foresee that our imbalance issues will be solved except with Oita University. Internships will be created for our students at Rikkyo and Osaka International University. A graduate student in the field of Teaching Japanese as a Second Language will be sent from Nanzan on a regular basis so that we will have a constant supply for graduate teaching positions.

I was also able to stimulate all institution’s interest in the English programs at SDSU’s ALI for their short-term study-abroad programs.

I wish to thank the Office of International Programs for giving me the opportunity to help SDSU internationalize its academic curriculum. It has been fulfilling and rewarding.