OIP Travel Grant: Faculty Report
Public Version
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Date: February 2, 2014
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Proposal title:
- Credit Problem Solving negotiation with Gunma University.
- Summer Program Creation discussion with Osaka University (prospective partner).
Country/ies visited: Japan
Institution(s) visited:
- 2 Campus Visits originally proposed in the Grant Application:
  - Gunma University
  - Osaka University
- 2 Additional Campus Visits not proposed in the Grant Application:
  - Hosei University
  - Ritsumeikan University
- 1 Off-Campus Meeting not proposed in the Grant Application:
  - Seisen University
Dates of travel: 11 days between December 29, 2013, and January 14, 2014
Number of student participants: None
Number of non-student participants: None
Proposal Abstract

I was officially appointed to be the Director of Japan International Programs by Dr. Alan R. Sweedler to take charge of the SDSU Japan Exchange Programs beginning in 2008, although I have been in charge of them since February 1997. My mission is to increase the number of students who will study in Japan. I have successfully developed 8 new exchange programs with universities in Japan since 2008.

I will visit Gunma University, which stopped issuing academic units for the Japanese language courses offered by their Center for International Education and Research, meet with their administrative dignitaries including President Kuniaki Takata, and urge them to solve the credit issuing problem. I will also visit Osaka University (a prospective partner), learn about their “Japanese Short-Study In-session Program (J-ShIP)”, and begin discussion on creation of a summer program for SDSU students who cannot afford to take time off during the regular academic year.

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Visit #1: Unit Negotiation with Gunma University (exchange partner since 1970s):
Gunma University is a small national institution established in 1949. Gunma currently consists of four Faculties (Colleges) with a student body of approximately 6,700 in total: Education, Social and Information Studies, Science and Technology, and Medicine.

SDSU has been enjoying a long-lasting exchange relationship with Gunma University over 30 years. The Agreement used to be with the Faculty of Education and limited to their students. However, the exchange opportunities were extended to all Gunma students two years ago.

The Center for International Education and Research (henceforth, the Center) offers Japanese language courses for international students. All international students are strongly encouraged to concentrate on the study of Japanese language by taking the courses at the Center during the first semester of the exchange period. The Center does not have a function of issuing academic units according to Gunma’s University Policy. Thus, the Faculty of Education used to acknowledge these courses and issue units.

However, when the exchange opportunities became available to all Gunma students, the Agreement stopped being the program of the Faculty of Education. It became the University’s exchange program. Thus, the Faculty of Education, not authorized to deal with the University-wide issue, stopped issuing units for the courses completed at the Center.

Fortunately, this internal problem was finally solved on December 20. However, I decided to visit Gunma as scheduled. They sent their representatives to SDSU three times as far as I can remember. However, I have never had a chance to visit Gunma. So I visited Gunma and met and thanked everyone involved in the exchange program with SDSU for taking excellent care of our students.
Actual Visits and Activities
Gunma gave me a two-full-day schedule.

January 9, 2014

Class Observation #1
Japanese painting
Instructor: Mr. Shigeyoshi Sakai

Meeting over lunch
- Professor Keiko Uehara
- Mr. Tatsunori Seto, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Kohei Oshima, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Ryo Kobayashi, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Shohei Hagiwara, Gunma student studied at SDSU

Meeting
- Professor Shoji Toyoizumi, Dean, College of Education (COE)
- Professor Takashi Itoh, Chair, International Exchange Committee, COE
- Professor Keiko Uehara, Member of International Exchange Committee, COE, in charge of SDSU

Meeting
- Professor Toshiaki Dobashi, Director, Center for International Education and Research (CIER)
- Professor Keiko Uehara

Class Observation #2
Japanese Composition
Instructor: Professor Tsutomu Makihara

Class Observation #3
Intensive Japanese “Level P-2”
Instructor: Professor Furukawa

Meeting
- Professor Tsutomu Makihara, CIER
- Professor Takehito Noda, CIER
- Professor Tomoko Sonoda, CIER

Meeting with:
- Professor Raymond Hoogenboom, COE
- Professor Akiko Yamato, CIER
- Ms. Ryoko Nagai, ISA International Education Agency
- 16 Gunma students who were scheduled to attend ALI from mid-February to mid-March
January 10, 2014

Meetings over breakfast at the hotel
- Professor Takako Watanabe, College of Education faculty who was in charge of SDSU

Meeting with:
- Professor Shoji Araki, College of Social and Information Studies (SIS)
- Professor Ryo Ido, Chair, International Exchange Committee, SIS
- Professor Motohiro Kawashima, SIS

Meeting over lunch:
- Ms. Marita Cannizzaro, SDSU student
- Mr. Robert Chau, SDSU student

Campus Tour & Library Tour

Visit to International House in Maebashi escorted by:
- Mr. Mitsuru Seki, Director, International Exchange Center
- Ms. Kyoko Miyoshi, International Exchange Center

Meeting with:
- Ms. Marita Cannizzaro, SDSU student
- Mr. Robert Chau, SDSU student
- Mr. Matthew Patrigan, SDSU student

Meeting over Dinner:
- Professor Keiko Uehara
- Professor Raymond Hoogenboom
- Mr. Toshiyuki Yamada, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Tatsunori Seto, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Kohei Oshima, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Ryo Kobayashi, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Mr. Shohei Hagiwara, Gunma student studied at SDSU
- Ms. Marita Cannizzaro, SDSU student
- Mr. Robert Chau, SDSU student
- Mr. Matthew Patrigan, SDSU student

**Discussions and Recommendations**

During the meeting with the Center faculty members, I learned with a great surprise that the Center is offering only one level of Japanese language instruction. We sent one student who completed three years of Japanese and two students who completed two years of Japanese. All three of them were placed in the same classes. One of the students is having difficulties following instructions, and the remaining two are not trouble free, either. After careful examinations on our students’ performances in class, I agreed to send only those students who complete three years of Japanese with a final course grade of A for the third year level Japanese courses.
Visit #2: Summer Program Creation with Osaka University (Prospective Exchange Partner)

There are not a few students who cannot afford to spend one academic year in Japan. Some of them have financial issues. Others find it extremely difficult to take time off, even a semester, from their tightly scheduled academic curriculum at SDSU. Therefore, it is imperative to create a summer program which does not interfere with our students’ academic curricula or work schedules. The short summer program should be easier to finance than a regular exchange program.

I am in touch with Professors Koichi Nishiguchi and Sachihiko Kondo at the Center for International Education and Exchange (henceforth, the Center) at Osaka University. Professor Nishiguchi is quite familiar with my teaching method and philosophy because my textbook was used at Harvard University when he taught there. He introduced me to Professor Kondo who is in charge of exchange programs at the Center.

Osaka University is one of the most prestigious national universities in Japan, like Kyushu University. Its history goes back 1724. It has a student population of approximately 25,000 and has 11 Schools: Letters, Human Sciences, Foreign Studies, Law, Economics, Sciences, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Engineering, and Engineering Sciences. It boldly announced its ambition to be one of the top 10 universities in the world in July. It is currently ranked 50th in the world.

Osaka University began offering a short-term program named “Japanese Short-Study In-Session Program” (J-ShIP) for international students in 2011. It offers a special curriculum for the summer, fall, and winter. During summer, they offer two 5-week sessions. In 2013 their program ran from June 19 to August 13. They issue 4 units for each 5-week session. The cost of tuition and accommodations for 10 weeks was approximately $2,400, very reasonable. There should be a way to create a short-term summer program for SDSU students based upon Osaka’s J-ShIP.

Actual Visits and Activities

January 6, 2014

Meeting with:
- Professor Koichi Nishiguchi, Head of Japanese Language Educational Research Team, the Center for International Education and Exchange (CIEE)

Class Observation #1
Japanese Language

Class Observation #2
Japanese Language

Meeting with:
- Dr. Schihiko Kondo, Head of Short-term Program Team, CIEE
- Dr. Eiji Isono, Faculty in charge of J-ShIP Program, Japanese Language Education Research Team, CIEE
Discussions and Recommendations
Osaka University offers two courses back to back from mid-June to mid-August. Each 5 week course offers 4 units. The tuition and accommodations package appears very reasonable. The campus looks beautiful and is situated on a hill.

The problem is that they do not offer anything beyond the first year level courses during the summer. Osaka wants us to send selected students with good study habits. If we want to send students who have taken one year of Japanese, which would enable us to screen good candidates for the program, there is no course for such students to take.

Osaka is in the process of creating the second year level courses. They will make a decision on the expansion of their curriculum for the summer of 2014 and let me know by mid-March so that we can advertise this opportunity before the Spring Break begins at SDSU. They would like to accept a couple of students first and gradually increase the number of students.

University Visit #3: Ritsumeikan University (Current Exchange Partner)
While I was in Japan, I learned from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) that our grant application was successful and that I should bring a group of selected participants of the Japan Studies Institute to Japan for 10 days in July.
When we were working on a grant proposal, I selected three universities as our host institutions for this grant and received letters of intent issued by them. One of them was Ritsumeikan University. Since I was in Osaka, not far from Kyoto, I decided to visit them and officially report the grant application results.

Actual Visits and Activities
January 7, 2014
Meeting with:
- Dr. Toshiko Sakamoto, Director, Division of International Exchange
- Ms. Junko Nishida, Head, International Planning
- Ms. Reina Yamamoto, International Planning
- Ms. Akiko Kawachi, Head, Study Abroad Section
- Ms. Ayako Otabe, Study Abroad Advisor (Outbound)
- Ms. Yoko Teramoto, Study Abroad Advisor (Outbound)
- Mr. Yoshiaki Sakai, Study Abroad Advisor (Inbound)
- Ms. Kay Jihyun Kim, Study Abroad Advisor (Inbound)

Discussions and Recommendations
It was good that I visited Ritsumeikan. Except Dr. Sakamoto, Ms. Nishida, and Ms. Yamamoto, everyone else was new in the International Division. The Japanese universities have a policy of rotating their staff every three years or so.

Ritsumeikan and SDSU will begin exchanging students in the Fall of 2014. It was helpful to meet with Mr. Sakai and Ms. Kim who will be accepting Florina Moreno and
Dominic Nepomuceno. I talked about each student and explained why they wish to study at Ritsumeikan. Ritsumeikan staff were extremely pleased to learn about our students. It was encouraging that Ritsumeikan confirmed their commitment to our “Japan Studies Institute in Japan” Project.

**University Visit #4: Hosei University (Current Exchange Parter)**

Hosei University is another institution which will host the JSI-Japan program in July. So, I visited in order to make an official report of the successful grant application.

**Actual Visits and Activities**

January 11, 2014

Meeting with:
- Mr. Kimiyoshi Hayashi, Director, International Exchange Center
- Mr. Jun Kojima, Deputy Director, International Exchange Center

**Discussions and Recommendations**

Hosei was excited that we got the grant. They confirmed their commitment toward the JSI-Japan Project. They also mentioned that they would make sure to give us an opportunity to meet with their new president, the very first female scholar to serve as president of a coed academic institution in Japan.

In addition, we discussed the calendar issue of our exchange students who wish to attend only one semester. Although Hosei expressed willingness to give a final exam earlier to our students who are there only for the Fall semester (early October – early February) and let our students come back earlier to be in time for the beginning of SDSU’s Spring semester, I reported our decision: We will send one semester students only for the spring semester (early April – early August). Once our students find out that they can leave in the middle of January, they try to negotiate with the host institution for earlier departure, in early January, or even mid-December so that they can come home for Christmas. Our students are taking classes much shorter than the required 15 weeks. The host institution’s faculty are forced to create different versions of final examinations covering much less content. This is not acceptable.

**1 Off-Campus Meeting: Seisen University (Tokyo)**

Seisen University was originally interested in developing an exchange program with SDSU. Dr. Chizuyo Kojima of Seisen has been instrumental in introducing me to Seisen’s Office of International Exchange last summer. When I met with Dr. Fumihiko Takeda, its Director, I explained what we expected of a prospective exchange partner. He realized that Seisen’s curriculum was too small to be SDSU’s exchange partner.

Seisen is now interested in developing an arrangement so that they can send a group of students to ALI on a regular basis: a four-week program during their summer break or spring break. They are also interested in sending a small number of students to ALI for a “Semester at SDSU” Program as well. Professor Kojima still has many questions about ALI.
January 11, 2014

Meeting with:
- Dr. Chizuyo Kojima, English and Linguistics

I met with Dr. Kojima and answered her questions as much as I could. I encouraged her to make a visit if she has time during Seisen’s spring break (early February – late March). I am glad that she is making a full-day visit to ALI on February 14.

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In sum, I had a very productive visit. I made campus visits to four current/prospective exchange partners. I also met with a representative of one university off-campus. I am relieved that Gunma University was able to solve their internal problem. I am glad that Osaka University is eager to have our students for their summer program. I am proud that AASCU was successful in getting a grant for the “Japan Studies Institute in Japan” Project. This is Part 2 of AASCU’s National Faculty Development Institute “Japan Studies Institute” which is hosted and co-sponsored by SDSU. This will help bring even more national attention to SDSU. Finally, I am pleased that Seisen University is in the process of developing relationships with ALI. I really hope that this will eventually help Seisen expand its curriculum so that SDSU can consider an exchange possibility with them.