



**INSTRUCTIONALLY
RELATED
ACTIVITIES**

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Proposal # _____

Instructionally Related Activities Report Form

SPONSOR: DR. CHRISTY TERANISHI MARTINEZ

PROGRAM: PSYCHOLOGY

ACTIVITY TITLE: CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN JAPAN

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: JANUARY 8-17, 2014

E-mail to the IRA Coordinator with supporting documentation at lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu within 30 days after the activity.

Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!!

A. ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;

This international study abroad experience in Japan was part of an intensive experiential learning course focused the complexity and dynamics of identity development and cultural diversity in Japan. We juxtaposed the traditional cultures and religions of Japan with the modern youth cultures, such as anime, J-pop, and Goth-Lolita through our excursions to Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Nara. Through their cultural immersion projects, students examined ways of dispelling preconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices to be more open to learn about cultures other than our own and enhance their intercultural competence.

(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?

This study abroad course was related to the following Psychology Learning Objectives:

- Students develop an understanding of the applications of psychology to personal, social and organizations;
- Use and respect skeptical inquiry, critical thinking, and the scientific approach to understanding behavior;
- Understand the complexity of cultural diversity; and
- Understand themselves and others in a cultural context and develop interpersonal skills for diverse settings across the lifespan.



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This study abroad program supported several university mission goals by emphasizing experiential learning, multicultural and international perspectives. After completing this course students demonstrated knowledge and understanding of theory and research of identity development, cultural psychology, and the psychological and physiological bases of extreme behaviors. Through a final project, presentation and paper, students demonstrated that they were able to integrate community and academic learning to develop a real-world application of their learning, in addition to developing a greater worldview and understanding of diversity of people and cultures of Japan.

(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?

There were many strengths of this activity; however, the highlights of the Japan study abroad program were that it helped students:

- develop a broader worldview and cross-cultural experience;
- learn about cultural perspectives and experiences different from their own to help dispel preconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices;
- enhance their critical thinking skills to understand the complexity and dynamics of identity development and cultural diversity in Japan;
- develop interpersonal skills and strong bonds with their classmates and professors; and
- gain an incredible real world experience to apply their knowledge and understanding of cross-cultural psychology and diverse human behaviors.

(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?

The challenge of this course was how to manage and keep track of such a large number of students on the trip. We had 25 undergraduate students and two alumni participate in the study abroad course. Although we had two faculty supporting the excursion, it was time consuming and challenging to manage students who perpetually late or not conscientious of others.

(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?

To improve the study abroad experience, it would be beneficial to take a smaller group of students to increase the educational experience and reduce the challenges of managing such a large group. On the other hand, it was more cost effective to have a larger group since it was affordable for more students to participate in this study abroad experience. We had excellent interpreters and Japanese student assistants along on the excursions, so CI students did not have difficulty learning about the culture despite the language barrier. I would like to go when it is a little warmer in the spring or early summer to really enjoy the outdoor activities more; however, we adapted quickly to the weather in the short time we were there, and the students found the experience enjoyable despite the extremely cold weather.



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(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

I have taken many students on various study abroad trips; however, this study abroad trip to Japan was very different, and I learned a tremendous amount from the excursion.

I learned that:

- Learning just doesn't occur in a vacuum through material presented in books or in the classroom---Learning through hands-on real world experience has a greater impact on students' knowledge, understanding, and application of the material;
- The initial pre-trip interviews are key to creating a collaborative classroom environment and a positive study abroad experience;
- Coordinating a larger group takes more patience, time and effort, but that students will take more responsibility to look out for each other and develop group cohesion;
- Going to 3-4 different areas of a country helps students see and experience more diverse cultural perspectives and lifestyles---Students got a taste of the city life in Tokyo, but really enjoyed the peaceful countryside of Osaka, Kyoto and Nara;
- And despite all of my hard work preparing and planning the trip, our support coordinators did an amazing job behind the scenes to make sure all of our documents are in and that we were on top of everything that needed to get done--Thank you so much Motoko Kitayama and Manami Gutierrez!

(7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)

Please see the attached student evaluations.



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8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.

Airfare: \$37,800

Hotel Accommodations in Tokyo and Osaka: \$22,935

Ground Transportation/J-Rail passes: \$12,830

Translator/Tour Guides: \$5,350

Cultural Activities Entrance Fees/Tickets: \$7,722

Meals: \$3,240

Luggage Transfers/Taxes: \$1,720

Roadrunner Shuttle RT (CSUCI to/from LAX): \$1,270

B. ATTENDEE LIST- SEPARATE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT:

See attached list of students.

C.IMAGES FROM ACTIVITY:

See attached images.



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