

My exchange program experiences at Arkansas Tech University

Preparation, before going to America

I, Chisato Isozaki went to America, Arkansas last August (2010) and stayed there until this year's May (2011). I studied Journalism at Arkansas Tech University which has an exchange program with our Komazawa University.

I started to prepare and aimed to go to Arkansas when I was in a freshman year and knew that Komazawa University have exchange programs with other Universities in other countries. I chose Arkansas Tech University because I loved the nature Arkansas have and they had many interesting classes which I would strongly want to study. I prepared for TOEFL and try my best to keep the class grade in good standard and sent my application to the international office and took an interview in January (2010). Fortunately I was chosen as an exchange student to Arkansas Tech and I spent most of my time preparing for visa and passports, things I needed to do before going to America.

In Tech University, I wanted to study about Journalism. I wanted to study about American mass communication sociality and compare with Japan. I was also interested in the TV station that Tech had inside the University and how classes was done practical and not only by lectures. I also wanted to know how American students communicate with other people and the words, slangs they use in daily life.

Experiences in America

I arrived to Arkansas on 20th August. On my way to Arkansas, I was nervous and had uneasy feeling all the time and could not relax. I was anxious about the place I would stay during my study in America. Tech University has dorms for students but because of increase in numbers of students, there was no space for all the university students. Therefore I was worried if I was able to get a room because I did not get a reply after I

applied to the university dorm. However I was lucky and was able to get a room in Turner hall. Turner hall is a dorm for females and males and always have an event in the dorm. It was a place where other dorm students come and hang out. For this, I did not have difficulty making friends and enjoyed my time hanging out with my new friends. I also made many international friends. I spent most of my time with Gudness who is from Nigeria. I was also fortunate to have some Japanese friends to help me. Most of them graduated last fall semester but helped me a lot with many things and was I appreciated very much.

On 25th August, classes begun and in Fall2010 semester, I took Two-Dimension Design, Web Publishing I, English as Second Language, Basic Photography and Broadcast Practicum. In next Spring2011 semester, I took Introduction to Ceramics, Web Publishing II, Television news production, Broadcast Practicum, Intermediate Japanese II and PHYS Wellness/Fitness. I was able to get 38 credits in two semesters. From now, I will explain about the classes I took.

Fall2010

Two-Dimension Design: In this class I studied how to use Adobe software. We used Photoshop and Illustrator to design posters and learnt some basics of graphic designs.

Web Publishing I: Studied how to design a website using CSS style sheet. From this I found that I am interested in making websites and decided to take the upper class after this web publishing class next semester.

English as Second Language: This class is for international students who have finished the ELI classes and starting to learn harder level English. In this class we learnt different

types of essays and had to write 3 different types of essays.

Basic Photography: Used film camera and learnt how camera works. We also learnt how to develop film and how to use black rooms.

Broadcast Practicum: Practicum classes which makes TV shows in the TV studio that university had and put it on air on the channel which Tech has. People who live in Russellville (where Tech locates) is able to watch this channel. We made some news shows mainly about university news and some local news.



The TV studio that tech has.

From the classes I took in Fall semester, I strongly felt the difficulty to communicate in different language and the differences in cultures in how we think and how we react. These differences were interesting and also gave me different ideas in how to think and different points of views.

Spring2011

Introduction to Ceramics: Leant how to make potteries using the wheels or hands and how to glaze potteries. We had to make more than 20 works of pots. I made about 40 works of ceramics.



Web Publishing II: The upper class after web publishing II. Learnt how to make web contents using Adobe software such as Dreamweaver, Firework, and Flash. For the final project, we had to make one website. From the Two-dimension design class I took in Fall2010, I knew how to use 5 adobe software so I was able to make a website that satisfied me and succeeded to get grade A for this site.

Television news production: In this class we make contents for the shows we put on air in Broadcast Practicum class. We had to make more than 4 contents. My Cheam was able to make 8 contents. The main things we had to do were, take interviews with cameras and take some movie clips related to the interview and edit with Adobe premium software.



Broadcast Practicum: This class is same class that I took last semester. This class is special and is allowed to take 8times (8 semesters). Tech has 10 TV shows and during 8 semesters, you are able to take same show or experience different show. This semester I chose Monday noon show. Last semester was Tuesday noon show and both shows are NEWS about Tech or about Russellville.



Intermediate Japanese II: In this class we study Japanese. The reason why I took this class was because I was interested in how Japanese was taught in America. Since I done a presentation about Japan in an event school had in International week, last November, I was often ask to do a presentation about Japan in elementary schools or middle schools. I enjoyed talking and sharing information about Japan and started to be interested in teaching about Japanese things. In this Intermediate Japanese II class, I had chance to teach and share about Japan. From this, I felt it was hard to explain things in English and

strongly regretted that I did not know much about Japanese cultures. From these experiences, I thought it is important to know about my own country.



PHYS Wellness/Fitness: In this class we learn about how to stay healthy and how to put exercises in daily life. We go through text book and study how body muscles work. This class is mostly taught by power points and the teacher always explained fast. So from this class I think I was able to improve hearing and writing English fast.

The classes I took in America were classes that I cannot experience in Komazawa University and all the classes were what I was interested in. Many classes were practical and were able to learn stuff that I am interested in professionally. Moreover, from taking Japanese class and doing presentation about Japan made me interested in sharing about Japan and teaching Japanese.

Therefore, I started to teach Japanese to 4th grade boy as a volunteer. There was a lot of difficulty in teaching 9 year boy. Sometime the boy would not pay attention and would

start playing and sometime there is difficulty in explaining in words even I understanding it in my mind. Although I continued teaching 5mounth and was a good experience for me.

Other experiences

During my stay in America, there was a huge disaster in Japan. Earthquake and Tsunami in the north of Japan. I could not believe what happened in Japan and wanted to do something for Japan. I could not stand not doing anything for Japan. Therefore, with the Japanese students in Tech, we raised funds to aid victims of the Tsunami and earthquake disaster in Japan. We sold 2 different kinds of wristbands for \$2 each and the final donation ran up to \$5,939.29. We sent all the proceeds from the sale to the American Red Cross.

I was in part of PR activity. I used many media to advertise about the project. I used Tech TV, local news paper, face book and I also made a website for the project. In the website I decided to put up smile pictures of the people who donated for Japan. I used all the knowledge I learnt in the classes that I took.

URL: <http://atujisa.web.fc2.com/index2.html>

From going to America, I strongly felt that I am Japanese and started to notice that I really love my country and am interested in sharing about Japan. I also found interest in finding how cultures mix together. For example, Japanese food was popular in America but it was funny to find that American sushi was much more colorful than Japanese sushi. The food they used in sushi was different too. They used avocados and cheese in it. To find out these differences was fun and would want to find out more.

My exchange program to America was very exciting and valuable experience for me to find out about myself and study more in the part I am interested in.

