Disney International Programs

- Enhancing Cross-Cultural Communication Skills
- Improving Language
- Impacting Graduate Employment Outcomes

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Why UCR started the program

• 2008 Financial Crisis in the USA
• Need to position students in global marketplace
• UCR certificate and diploma programs
  • Gain intercultural communication competence
  • Improve language
  • Practice based, real work experience
  • Help position and differentiate students for future employment
• **Who?**
  • Partnership between US University and global partners
  • UCR - Japan, Canada, UK, Spain, France, Singapore

• **What?**
  • Unique global internship experience
  • Integrated academic study with practice based training

• **Where?**
  • UCR
  • Disney World Florida

• **When?**
  • 6 months (Jan-July and July to Jan)

• **How?**
  • Courses at Home University to prepare students
  • Face to Face at UCR and Disney
  • Online

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The EARNING environment

• Students work an average of 30 hours a week
• Students are paid $10 per hour
• Positions give students opportunities to have high contact with guests and understand exceptional guest services

The LEARNING environment

• 15 credits from UCR, which are transferable to the student’s home institution, comprised of:
  • 3 credits at UCR – Global Hospitality Management
  • 3 credits at Disney through the Disney College Program
  • 3 credits through UCR online
  • 6 credits for supervised training, digital portfolio
• Additional opportunities at Disney including
  • Harvard Certificate
  • Disney University
  • Leadership series
Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS)
The transferable skills NUFS students learned

Communication skills

• Approach guests and engage them in conversation: eye contact, smile, greet and small talk
• Confirmation
The transferable skills NUFS students learned

Customer service skills
• Critical thinking/Problem solving: Never say “I don’t know”
• Make everybody happy: magical moments

Self-confidence
• “Four key cards”

Self-knowledge
• Learn what I am good at

Re-entry Challenges
• Inability to apply new skills due to cultural differences: Friendly vs. Formal
The transferable skills NUFS graduates found useful for their jobs (hotel & airline)

• Communication skills

• Interpersonal communication skills for creating magical moments
Josai International University (JIU)

The transferable skills JIU students learned

• Language Development

• Japan is making a drive towards globalization (incl. employment).

• Students with English ability standout – current average graduating score in Japan is high A2 / low B1 (i.e. limited basic user). Companies seek B2 plus. Japan currently ranks 35/72 countries (English First, 2017).

• In Japan foreign language ability (i.e. English) is highly valued and is key to broadened employment opportunity - it is seen as a means to gain membership of the global society, and to improve self esteem and social status.

• In the context of Japanese (and other E. Asian) Ss, the value of the English language learning component during the DIP cannot be underestimated.
The transferable skills JIU students learned

• More than just English for employment
• Life experiences
• International internship with credits - limited opportunity in Japan
• Aspiration to join global society - students with English language ability stand out
• Make impractical language skills practical – DIP offers 2000 hours of English exposure. Paradox of classroom/homestay SA approach (Tanaka, 2007; DeKeyser, 2007)
• Opportunity provider - Japan inbound tourism (+400% growth since 2011).
Scores indicate gains made in:

- Use of syntax and inference (L & R)
- Need for paraphrasing (L)
- Use, and understanding of vernacular speech
- Ability to negotiate in discussion (not just, “I don’t know…”; “I agree…”)
- Reaction speed (L & R)
- Ability to consider question independent of the text (R)
- Desire to write longer texts

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“Language Advancer” and “Language Advancer delay” students

![Diagram with lines showing language comprehension over time for matriculation and graduation]

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“Gain and Maintain” and “Boost and Burnout” students
Conclusions and challenges (Josai)

- DIP fast tracks students’ English language abilities providing a platform for opportunities other students in Japan are unable to access.
- Students make different but clearly measurable language gains. DIP students are at least one (often two) CEFR rank(s) ahead of their year peers. Having had real world experience they have a stronger foundation for using English effectively in real situations.
- Some instances of burnout present practitioners with the challenge of maintaining students’ post-return motivation. There is also a need to act against language ability complacency amongst returnees.
Global Brands - ANA, Bristol Myers, Nissan, Mandarin Oriental, Uniqlo
* Small-Mid Size Companies (employs fewer than 250 and financial assets >50 million Euros) – OECD
Graduate Outcomes (Meiji Gakuin)

What do the Graduates say? (class of 2013 with 5 years work experience)

- I am no longer a sensitive worry-wort. I can think on my feet. Mostly, I had a change to learn about diversity with my five senses (Assistant to the President Uniqlo)

- Because I communicated with a lot of people who came from all over the world, I became much more open-minded. Also, I learned the importance of thinking critically—these experiences inform how I communicate with others at my workplace (Sales manager AXA Group)

What does research show?

- Academic work at UCR
  - Better academic preparation
  - First chance to acculturate into US social milieu

- Homestay with families
  - Opportunity to understand the complexity of American society
  - Explore core family values

- Work experience at WDW
  - Acquire skills valued in the job market e.g. experience in multi-cultural, multilingual work environment
  - Acquire attitude that helps overcome difficulties

The relationship between who they are and the UCR-Disney Experience may not be causal but to the participants, the experience was a life-changer