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Simply Read: An Experience with Perusall   Christian Collet, Department of Politics and International Studies

Since the 1970s, studies have found that up to 8 in every 10 university students don't do assigned readings, are prone to lie when asked if they did, and are motivated only when readings are mandatory (Burchfield and Sappington 2000; Sappington et al 2002; Hatteberg and Steffy 2013). Among those that read, half may demonstrate basic comprehension (Hoeft 2012). Explanations vary (Kerr and Freese 2017), but reading deficits can be particularly felt in ICU classrooms where significant numbers of students learn in a non-native language (heretofore, "L2" — second language learners). In the end, the university's ambition to provide a genuine liberal arts experience rests on the cultivation of student-readers who are not only exposed to, but engaged in, a range of textual material.

Below, I discuss my experience with Perusall (perusall.com) — a platform built to address the challenge of student reading compliance. After outlining three problems that I have encountered when assigning readings in the ICU classroom, I describe how I incorporated Perusall in IRL231 (America and the World) to address them. I conclude by summarizing the benefits and limitations of Perusall's main feature — social annotation — and suggest three ways in which faculty may be able to use the platform in their own courses.

Three Problems

ICU pedagogy rests on the ability to inspire students to confront the world's ideas and craft solutions to its problems — in more than one language. What I've come to realize over the course of teaching here is that better ideas and more solutions are needed to confront a persistent classroom challenge: engagement with text materials. There are three attendant problems:

1. **Students vary in reading strength.** While we may assume basic first language (L1) reading abilities based on university entrance requirements, most of us walk into the classroom knowing next to nothing about the competencies attained by early year students during the second language (L2) acquisition process in ELA and JLP. Since classes are open, irrespective of major, I have found that what we choose to put on our syllabi may be determinative of who enrolls and may be effectively (if unconsciously) discriminatory. I am thinking here of students who may be asked to engage specialized texts in 100— level and above courses that rely on disciplinary jargon or in need of contextual knowledge.

2. **Students vary in reading motivation.** The challenge here relates less to the content of text and more to its volume. The lengthy reading lists I encountered as a monolingual undergraduate in the late 1980s, and the stack of assigned volumes I struggled to carry to the checkout line at the campus bookstore jaundiced my view as a professor of what a university class "should look like" for an end-user. ICU students are different. This is not only because they are growing up

multilingual or multicultural, but because they live in a *post-print* world of YouTube, LINE and Twitter. The graduating class of 2022 may be half as likely as the class of 2000 to see a newspaper (Japan Publishers Association n.d.) in their home. According to an annual survey by the Nippon Foundation (2020), they are less likely to read it than their peers of a few years prior. If students do read printed material at all, it may be more likely to be manga than a magazine, a blog or SNS post than an extended work of contemporary non-fiction or classic literature.

3. **Faculty face constraints.** Even if faculty anticipate these issues going into class, we may face limitations as we attempt to deal with them. The term is formally ten weeks, of course, and learning opportunities can be effectively shorter due to examination periods and campus wide activities. When combined with the L1/L2 differentiations above, this can significantly curtail the content and volume of reading that can be assigned. In my case, what results is a pedagogical tension between what I, as a scholar, think students *should* read (or at least be exposed to) in a particular field of study and what I can realistically *expect* them to digest. There are also practical constraints. The ICU library and its staff do remarkable work in acquisitions and support — unheralded efforts for which we should all be grateful. At the same time, hangups can occur outside of their control when ordering from international academic publishers or booksellers. There may be extended delays; examination copies may be limited or never arrive; supplementary materials associated with textbooks require full classroom adoption (that is, booksellers must stock a certain number of copies of the book and students are required to buy it). The costs can be extraordinary. As a result, faculty often face realistic limits in assigning newer foreign books, at least *in toto*, because the burden of ordering and purchasing them may be well in excess of what most faculty are willing to take on — and what students are willing to pay.

Taken together, these limitations can impact the quality of a liberal arts education. If faculty can not assign what they feel is timely or appropriate for a university course, curricula may be watered-down, outdated and unsatisfying. If students struggle with, are disinterested in, or otherwise put off by, the demands-costs of reading, they may be inclined to avoid class or attend it passively — arriving ill prepared for discussions and dependent on instructor initiation. Facing perpetually non-responsive classrooms, faculty are forced to take on the added responsibility of redundantly lecturing on material assumed to have been independently digested. The result is this. Reading, already a solitary and selective exercise, can become an awkward and hierarchical exercise that may actually undermine the ambition of active learning and student initiative.

Enter Perusall

As we know, the pandemic brought ICU into the world of online teaching for the first time. Forced back to the drawing board, I began to realize that, in this emerging environment, engagement would be more important than ever. Students, I assumed, would be spending considerable time in front of screens at considerable physical distance from their peers. And yet, due to the lack of long commutes and cancelled events, they would have extra time on their hands. At least in theory, this would offer a fantastic opportunity to address the reading challenge, as students would not only have more space to explore

written materials in greater depth but, at the same time, would be yearning for chances to interact with their peers. The great benefit of online meetings is that everyone is equal and visible in the same two-dimensional space, names present on screen. Absent of physical social pressures, and armed with facilitative online tools, instructors and students can easily interact.

Enter Perusall. Perusall is a free-to-use educational platform designed to manage a range of course materials (PDFs, webpages, videos and podcasts) and to facilitate student interaction with them by way of social annotation — the act of highlighting and commenting on passages/segments and engaging with others doing the same. The site is monetized on the back end by partnerships with book publishers. Faculty can adopt a textbook within Perusall, it will be added to the course library and students will be prompted to purchase it directly. No advertising appears on the site. Its expressed marketing strategy is through word-of-mouth in higher education.

The onboarding process is simple. After creating an account, a "get started" page appears that lists the steps for setting up your course (**Fig 1**). You are given a Library and, once your materials have been uploaded (this can take some time), you can create assignments. An access code is provided to invite students (and colleagues, if you wish) to the site. Numerous options are available to parameterize assignments, giving the instructor refined control. Assignments can be differentiated by groups and individuals. Perusall documentation is extensive, easy to find and easy to read. The company offers additional support options, including a webinar series and YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP5kY8mlP4wTpeeSoaa4Vcg).
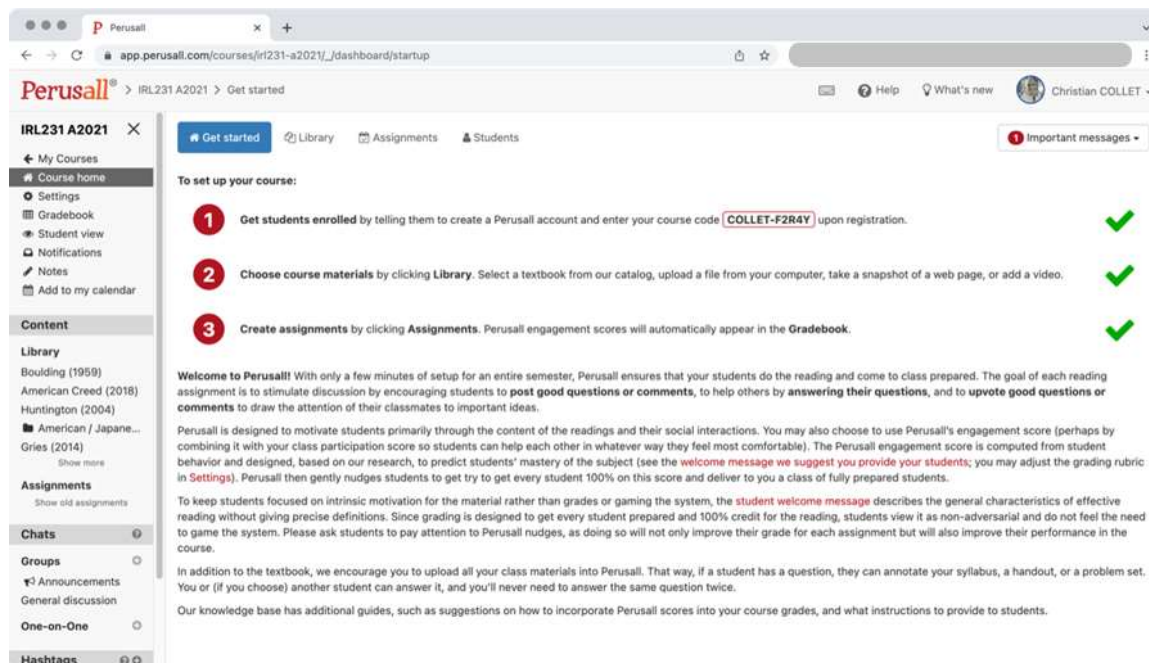
Caption: Fig 1: Get Started Page in Perusall

A Strategy

I decided to test drive Perusall in America and the World (IRL231) , a course that typically enrolls about 25 to 30, most of whom are majors in international relations. IRL231 seemed ideal given that it attracts

more expressive students who possess comfortable levels of conversational English and cross-cultural sociability. The theme is the image of the United States — how Americans and international publics perceive it — which takes students into literatures that cross social science disciplines: cognitive and political psychology, public opinion, media and communications, foreign policy and international relations theory. Because of assumed language competency, all of the course materials are in English and at a comprehension level similar to a comparable course at an upper-tier American university.

That said, the volume of reading in IRL231 is significantly curtailed. My original motivation for doing so was motivated by a sympathy for L2 student workloads, but there is a pedagogical rationale behind shorter readings. The concept of "chunking", as explained by cognitive scientist Stephen Kosslyn (2021), rests on research that demonstrates how humans learn best when information is presented as smaller pieces of a related whole — and in such a way that makes the association between those pieces clear. Kosslyn uses the example of long alphabetic sequences (e.g., XXCIAIBMXX) that can only be remembered when they are broken up and connected to shorter sequences (XX+CIA+IBM+XX) we already know. In a similar vein, shorter readings can be positioned strategically within course units or modules so that they reinforce the main concepts conveyed in lecture material and stimulate ideas for future written or research assignments. There is a *less is more* principle at play: brief readings are not only more likely to be *read*, but if assigned at timely junctures between lectures and discussions, are more likely to be *remembered*. In this way, the concept becomes the focal point; the reading(s) are then assigned in support and in conjunction with other coursework (discussions, writings, research and the like) so as to encourage longer, and deeper, engagement.

IRL231 is organized accordingly. Over the ten weeks, students take up a series of questions (e.g., *What is an image?*) and then are given about two weeks to consider an answer to it. Each question is built on a concept (e.g, images) and is introduced by way of a lecture. Along with other work, a reading of between 15 and 30 pages is assigned to build understanding of the concept and to promote discussion. A total of five such deep readings are assigned during the term, as described in **Table 1**; in addition, students will read additional articles as background for writing assignments and are given access to a "Supplemental Readings" folder that allows the so-motivated to read the sources used in lecture. The first assignment on Perusall was an article from Boulding (1959) — a classic that serves pedagogical needs by being a foundational work in the literature on images but also serves student needs by being shorter and easier to understand. The assignment was parameterized so that students had a long weekend (Thursday->Tuesday) to interact with the article and were required to provide three "thoughtful" annotations to receive full credit. "Thoughtful" was defined as an annotation that reflects "the significance to the relevant theme…and connects to and engages the ideas of others, authors, lectures and class peer comments." Specific examples of model annotations (provided by Perusall support) were given so that students would have a clear understanding of what they were expected to do. The assignment was scored on a 0-5 point basis. Specific scores and performance feedback were provided to the students privately via Google Classroom.

Question	Concept	Assigned Author (Year)	Reading Length (in pages)	Week Assigned
What is an image?	Image	Boulding (1959)	12	2nd
What is (national) identity?	Identity	Huntington (2004)	36	4th
How do Americans see the world?	Ideology	Gries (2014)	16	6th
Can images change?	Signaling	Jervis (2017)	19	8th
"Why do they hate us?"	Anti-Americanism	Brooks (2005)	28	10th

Table 1: Questions, Concepts and Deep Readings Assigned on Perusall in IRL231, Autumn 2021

Student Response

Perusall provides the instructor with several ways to assess student engagement. Among them are indicators of the amount of viewing and active reading time (1), the number of comments and questions and upvotes given to others. These metrics are aggregated and individualized so faculty can get a sense of how the class as a whole, and how particular students, are performing. Perusall attempts to detect when a question is asked, which then triggers a "?" icon that invites the instructor or other students to directly answer. When multiple questions around a single passage are asked, Perusall's Confusion Report tool organizes them and identifies the keywords used by the students to give the instructor a sense of what may be misunderstood. There are, in addition, heat maps that indicate when, during the assignment period, students comment and graphs indicating the number of views per page of the reading. The idea here is to understand when students are working on their assignments and how deeply they are getting into the readings themselves.

The students in IRL231 appeared to dive into their first Perusall reading (**Fig 2**). To stimulate and model dialogue, I posted a single question early in the article, which prompted several to respond directly and at length. The metrics suggest that students spent most of their energies on the first half of the article, but dropped off as the author turned to a more formal theoretical explanation of his ideas in the latter few pages. Taken together, the 14 students provided a total of 74 comments on the reading, resulting in an average of about 5 per student (**Table 2**). Thirteen received the maximum score on the assignment. The style of engagement varied (2). One student posted 22 pithy annotations of about 2-3 sentences in length and frequently responded to the posts of others. Another posted 5 that were cumulatively the length of a two or three page paper. Several were brief and met the minimum requirements. Most of the annotations were posted on the Sunday evening before the Tuesday morning due date.
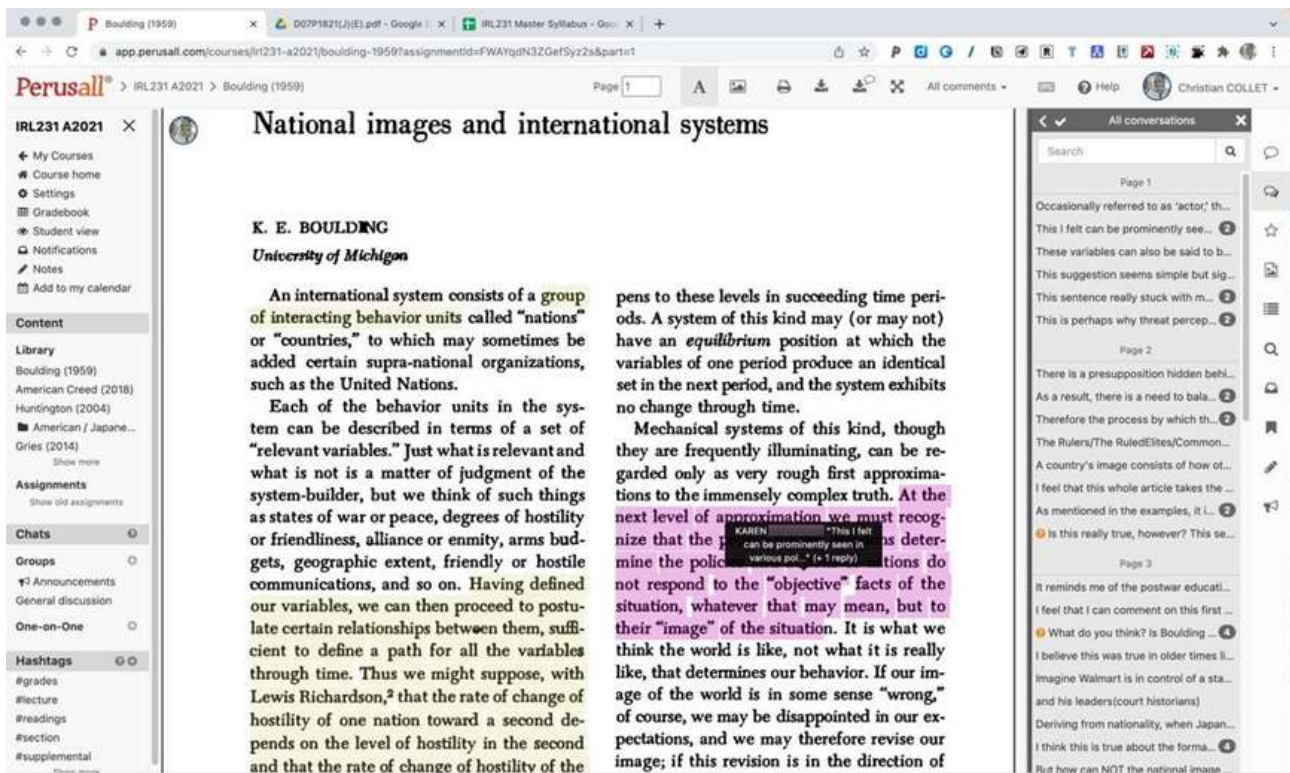
Caption: Figure 2. Screenshot of Student Annotations of Boulding (1959) in Perusall

As the term progressed, patterns emerged. As seen in Table 1, by the 4th week, active reading time began to drop; by the 6th week, most were providing the minimum number of annotations to fulfill the guidelines. By the end of the term, the students in IRL231 were spending less than half of the amount of time with the reading than they had at the beginning. This could, on one hand, reflect a growing ease with the readings (the Boulding article is the most abstract and theoretically challenging of the five) and familiarity with the platform and process. On the other, it could reflect a natural regression as the term soldiers on: energy declines and increasing assignment loads that impinge on a student's motivation or schedule to invest more in their work. Some evidence of this appears in the last column of the table, which is a calculation of the time in which students were most actively annotating the assignment subtracted from the assignment due date. In two of the first three assignments, the most active period was at least two days before the work was due. By contrast, in the last two, the most active period was typically the night before.

Author (Year)	Annotations per student (mean)	Active Reading Time (adjusted mean)*	Most Active Annotation Period (Time Prior to Due Date)	Mean Score
Boulding (1959)	5.2	3:33:14	39:30:00	4.5
Huntington (2004)	5.7	2:17:05	1:30	5
Gries (2014)	3.3	2:07:28	37:30:00	4.9
Jervis (2017)	3.4	1:30:42	14:30	4.9
Brooks (2005)	3.7	1:30:05	13:30	4.3

Table 2 : Descriptive Statistics on Student Reading in IRL231 (*) One extreme outlier was removed from the analysis.

The data may also be a reflection of student interest. Of the five, the excerpt from Samuel Huntington's *Who Are We?* (2004) is among the easiest to read and is easily the most controversial. (3) The concept of identity, moreover, is of intrinsic interest to students. A number of Huntington's assertions about the sociological and psychological basis of identity generated deep reflections and exchanges, such as the following between three students (A, B and C):

> *Huntington: Writing to Sigmund Freud in 1933, Albert Einstein argued that every attempt to eliminate war had "ended in a lamentable breakdown…man has within him a lust for hatred and destruction." Freud agreed: people are like animals, he wrote back, they solve problems through the use of force, and only an all-powerful world state could prevent this from happening.*

> A: To unite is also to coerce, to kill, to destroy the ones who seek to divide.

> B: This reminds me of the relation between China and Japan. I heard that until the 1980s, Japan had fewer problems and conflicts than now, but because the Chinese Communist Party started to use Japan as a national enemy to unite the country. I'm not sure Chinese people have less anti-Japanese sentiment before the 1980s, but if it's true, the CCP create an enemy to protect their country to unite the citizens and not to be divided.

> C: I think it is harmful to think like "there are two types of humans...". Any person who is considered peaceful and wise has a possibility of committing violence in a certain situation. Just otherizing the people who have committed violence and avoid self-reflection is not only arrogant but can lead people to unconscious violence.

The other reading that generated significant student exchange was the chapter on Anti-Americanism (Brooks 2005). In contrast to Huntington, Brooks approaches his subject with more distance and strives for a type of evidence-based analytical neutrality. But it seems as if the concept of Anti-Americanism itself tapped into the students' conflicting, and critical, images of the United States and its foreign policy since the 1990s. Consider the following exchange, among four students (D, E, F and G):

> *Brooks: Perhaps more importantly, Americans and their leaders are far more likely to believe that their nation has a special role to play and destiny in the world.*

> D: I have definitely seen various narratives being pushed especially by politicians and American fanatics who believe that the United States is at the center of the world and that everything must revolve around them. Such an example would be the way there are individuals in public places feeling entitled enough to approach families or individuals speaking in a different language to force them to speak English (or "American" as these people say) because they are in the *United States, and the United States is an English-speaking country* apparently. This is incorrect as the United States does not officially declare English to be its language and either way it does not matter even if they did because the US is a melting pot of different cultures, so these individuals need to understand that not everyone **needs** to be speaking English only.

> E: I found this particular wording to be echoing what would be one of the first signs of American feelings of superiority above others and a right as well as a task for being the greatest and the best--the Manifest Destiny. This was a cultural belief during the time of American western expansion, where they believed that they had a god given right to spread westward, tossing aside whatever may be in the way (namely Native Americans). Such ideas justified tragic events like the Trail of Tears where Native Americans were

forced out of their territories, with many dying in the process due to harsh weather and diseases.

F: One of the examples of American Imperialism.

G: If they only have an identity like this, they won't be hated much. The problem was the US wanted every country to share American values. They think democracy is the best ideology, but for some countries like Africa and the Middle East, it was not the best. They often overlook the culture and customs each country has and don't respect them. In addition, once America failed to fit democracy to the country, they won't take responsibility and just leave. Rather than what they think, what they did influence Anti-Americanism.

Social Annotation: Benefits and Limitations

Examples like these exemplify the potential of social annotation as a means for promoting dialogue, enforcing student reading compliance and fostering deeper conceptual engagement. By directing the class to a dedicated and organized platform for commenting on text materials, the adoption of Perusall sent students a clear message: reading assignments are a fundamental, not incidental, part of the course. The limited evidence suggests that the message was embraced. Students, almost universally, completed the assignments at the required minimum parameters. The accountability measures built into Perusall — deadlines, scoring and transparency — pushed students to complete the work at acceptable, and sometimes exceptional, levels. The ideas, reflections and connections made by the students in their annotations also carried over to other aspects of the course, such as referencing comments made online in later class discussions and effectively deploying assigned authors to illustrate ideas in final essays.

Although the benefits of social annotation were clear, it is worth remembering that social annotation is not necessarily a panacea for the three problems associated with reading assignments at ICU. Nor does it appear to perform magic in transforming the passive student into the active one. Those who were active and strong as social annotators were active and strong in open class discussions and generally performed better overall in the course. The distance offered by Perusall gives students time and space to consider their reactions, express them more thoughtfully, and provides a degree of security in expressing them. And yet it has limits. Students continue to exercise social desirability online with respect to their peers much as they do in a face-to-face discussion group in a virtual or physical classroom. Some seemed liberated by the opportunity to express themselves in detail. Others exercised caution and reserve. Anecdotally, it was clear that the amount of direct student-to-student dialogue was higher on Perusall than it would have been in a physical setting. And yet, that dialogue rarely rose to a level that one would consider to be either vigorous or impassioned. When it did, it was context specific, driven by subjects like identity and conflict, or an author's rhetorical triggers.

In the end, what this tells us is that a platform like Perusall can play a fantastic role in helping faculty to organize, emphasize and facilitate reading and discussion around texts. It can not, in and of itself, do the primary job of the faculty member, which is to inspire. The experience of this iteration of IRL231 suggests that the reading selection — the concept of interest, as well as the author — may play as important of a role in driving student reading engagement as the formal parameters, accountability mechanisms and opportunities for peer interaction built into the platform. To reach the full potential of Perusall, pre- and post- live discussion remains necessary.

Three Ways in Which ICU Faculty and Staff Can Use Perusall

The successful introduction and implementation of any online tool requires careful consideration and preparation. In the end, it is ideally linked to the learning goals of the course and the instructor's approach to pedagogy. Social annotation is the prime motivator behind Perusall: the desire to transform reading from a solitary to a social exercise, where students and faculty explore and exchange their thoughts around specific passages in academic literature. As such, it fosters practices that are not only consonant with the goals of liberal arts, but with ICU's ambition to foster dialogue across cultures and disciplines.

More concretely, the experience of IRL231 can suggest at least three potential uses for Perusall in ICU classrooms:

1. *As a dedicated portal for organizing course readings and text-based assignment***s.** In contrast to Moodle and Google Classroom, two general platforms for the distribution of course materials, Perusall is reading focused. As such, it directs instructors and students toward reading as a primary course exercise. This not only underscores the importance of scholarly literature, but aids the faculty member by giving greater emphasis to the ideas of assigned authors and fostering a closer reading of original texts. Given its specific purpose, it seems best suited as a complement to Moodle or Classroom, rather than a replacement.

2. *As an analytical tool to understand the reading habits of our L2 students in terms of motivation and comprehension.* Perusall's detailed metrics offer valuable insights into whether, when and how deeply, classes and individual students approach text materials. These statistics can inform faculty of students who may be struggling as well as those who are excelling. In this regard, the data gleaned from Perusall could potentially be shared with CTL staff, across language departments and with academic advisors to make determinations about whether support or interventions are needed. Special needs students could particularly benefit. Moreover, faculty can learn from these data, as well as the students' annotations, to better understand if a reading (or certain passages) may be either difficult or demotivating. This can help to guide potential syllabus and course-related decisions.

3. *As a supplement to, or focused replacement for, standard class work.* Depending on how reading and annotation assignments are parameterized, Perusall work could serve as a more focused type of reflection paper or report. Cumulatively, annotations can meet or exceed the length of a typical paper (albeit without a more formal essay structure) and offer the benefit of prompting students to respond to specific phrases or passages in text. Perusall allows the instructor to download student annotations as text or CSV files, which eases the process of evaluation. Teaching Assistants could be instrumental in an effective Perusall deployment, as they could not only interact with student comments online, but could assist faculty by compiling and organizing comments for faculty grading.

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Notes

(1) Viewing time is defined by Perusall as time spent with the browser open, while active reading time is that which is spent interacting with the reading in the browser) (Perusall n.d.).
(2) Perusall does not offer statistics on the word count of student comments.
(3) Huntington argues for a reaffirmation of Anglo-Protestant culture and the English language as the basis of American identity, an assertion derided by critics as essentialist and exclusivist of the country's complex multicultural and multilingual heritage.

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Facilitating Debates in a Hybrid or Mixed-Mode Classroom Katsuhiko Mori, Department of Politics and International Studies

Following ICU's transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Professor Motohide Yoshikawa and I faced significant challenges facilitating classroom debates in our GE course "Debates in International Relations." This course is an essential part of students' learning, as the Toulmin model of argumentation fosters logical and critical thinking, and the interdisciplinary topics embody the advantages of ICU's liberal arts education. While several good asynchronous online debate platforms have been developed, we found that synchronous debates call for some additional adjustments in the classroom.

In AY2020, the first year of the pandemic, all the students attended the course via Zoom. Facilitate debates entirely online was not so difficult, as I drew on my experience dealing with similar challenges in organizing a debating tournament for the ICU Global Challenge Forum, a high school-university partnership program, with students from ICU High School, as well as high schools in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Yokohama. The face-to-face event had been scheduled to take place at ICU's Open Campus in March 2020, but we were suddenly forced to move online. We managed this with the assistance of ICU students who had previously attended our GE course.

In our online GE course, each team wrote their speeches in Google Docs, shared their evidence in Google Drive, and rehearsed using breakout rooms on Zoom. Judging sheets were collated with Mentimeter or Moodle's Feedback function, and the results were distributed using Moodle forums. Unlike the classroom layout, however, the audience that was judging each debate found it difficult to immediately distinguish a speaker's team when both the affirmative and negative teams appeared at random on the Zoom screen. We resolved this problem by having the affirmative team wear white T-shirts and the negative team wear black T-shirts.

In AY2021, the second year of the pandemic, we moved to mixed-mode learning. We decided against a conventional hybrid mode with student debaters and judges on Zoom and in the classroom, as it would cause unnecessary confusion. Instead, we asked all the debaters to come to the classroom for their designated debate sessions, while other students (the judges) could choose to participate online or in person. The remaining problem was how to livestream a debate in the classroom on Zoom. Although we considered using the Type 3 Advanced Version classroom with the support of CTL and the Help Desk, we realized this would not enable us to successfully deliver the spontaneous and dynamic interactions during the cross-examination parts of the debate to the online participants. Our solution was to use Meeting Owl Pro, an AI device for small-group meetings, which is also being used effectively for Senior Thesis seminars in hybrid classrooms. Its 360°camera and microphone with AI autofocus can instantly capture both the speaker and the entire classroom and deliver the scenes on Zoom, which enables participants to watch the debate online as if they were in the classroom.

Supporting University Students with Disabilities   Hiroya Banzono, Special Needs Support Services, Center for Teaching and Learning

1. Social Barriers to Education

It is a given that every human being has an equal right to an education, regardless of (dis)ability [1]. However, even if a student with a disability is able to gain admission to a university, they may be unable to participate in college life or face many challenges in doing so because of what we refer to as "social barriers" in university education.

Social barriers refer to the factors that make it challenging or impossible for individuals to use various things, including not only physical objects but also institutions, systems, customs, and language. They arise because many things in our world are designed to suit the physical characteristics of certain people who use them. "Books," for example, are laid out in an easy-to-read format with text, photographs, and diagrams printed on paper. This is often taken for granted. However, such paper books presuppose human bodies that can visually perceive and understand the written word, open the book, and turn the pages—the readability of a book tends to be determined on these terms. For people who are blind or visually impaired, printed texts may be difficult or impossible to read. People with impaired motor functions may find it difficult to handle paper books to read. In this way, readability and legibility can differ depending on the discrepancy between the body assumed by the object and the physicality of the individual who uses it.

Social barriers also arise from differences that are difficult to see from the outside ("invisible disabilities"), such as differences in cognition, mood, and physical condition that are associated with developmental disabilities, mental disorders, and chronic illnesses (internal disabilities). Such barriers in particular tend not to be recognized—by society and the individuals in question.

Moreover, social barriers are cumulative, as one barrier connects to many others. Continuing the example above, an individual who cannot read a paper book will find it difficult to participate in a class that is based on that book. This in turn makes it difficult to earn course credits, accumulate credits, and graduate. Thus, one barrier can make it difficult to take the next step and participate in the entire system. Unfortunately, many such barriers still persist in university education.

2. Universal Design and Reasonable Accommodation

How can we eliminate social barriers to university education and fully ensure each individual's right to an education? There are two main approaches [2].

The first is universal design or barrier-free education. Universal design aims to design products, services, and environments that are equally easy to access, use, and understand for everyone. Here, "everyone" means regardless of (dis)ability, gender, age, or cultural background. An example in architecture is to integrate gradual slopes or ramps rather than steps into the design of a building from the start.

Nevertheless, it is not always possible to design everything to be easily accessible for everyone, regardless of their abilities and needs. This is where the concept of reasonable accommodation is helpful: "necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments … to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms [3]." In other words, the idea is not to treat everyone in the same way, but to ensure equity by making appropriate changes and adjustments to meet an individual's specific needs. Examples of reasonable accommodations currently implemented in university education in Japan include the provision of course materials in

Braille or digital formats [4], notetaking services [5], and the provision of a separate room or time extensions for examinations.

What is vital here is that the university does not singlehandedly decide in advance how to respond to a particular disability, but rather allows each individual with a disability to request the necessary accommodation through consultation with university offices regarding the barriers they face. While this process does not necessary guarantee that the individual will receive the accommodations they desire, it is essential for ensuring the individual's right to a forum in which they can express their needs [6].

3. Reasonable Accommodation in the Assessment Process

University students not only need to attend class, but also undergo an assessment process through examinations and reports. In Japan, this begins at the application stage: in order to gain admission to a university, students must sit an entrance examination in which they are required to meet certain standards to pass. However, this type of evaluation is also designed with a specific body in mind. For example, the use of a written examination to assess whether students have acquired the course content assumes that students will be able to read the questions and write the answers on paper. An individual who has a body that does not fit the assumptions of such a written test format will receive a low grade, regardless of whether or not they have acquired the knowledge being tested. The provision of reasonable accommodations is therefore essential for ensuring that students with disabilities will be on an equal footing with other students in the assessment process.

Finally, note that reasonable accommodation does not equate to special treatment. Our society is designed on the premise of a particular body, and in this sense those with such a body have already been taken into consideration. Reasonable accommodation does not "add" anything, but rather "removes" the negative barriers in society, enabling an individual with a disability to stand on the same starting line as others.

What is the ability to be measured in an assessment? It is not always clear. Discussions of reasonable accommodation compel universities to continue questioning the very nature of education and the kinds of knowledge and ability to be acquired. Thus, guaranteeing the right to education for students with disabilities through reasonable accommodation is also an opportunity for us all to reexamine education and to expand the potential and capacity of learning.

(This article has been adapted from Hiroya Banzono, "Kōtōkyōiku ni okeru shōgai gakusei shien" [Supporting students with disabilities in higher education], in *Yokuwakaru herusu komyunikēshon* [Understanding Health Communication], edited by Richiko Ikeda and Noriko Igarashi (Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2016), pp. 150–1.)

[1] The right to education is enshrined as a fundamental human right in Article 26 of the Constitution of Japan (1948) and Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

[2] Although the focus of this article is on university education, the following refers to basic concepts for guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities in society.

[3] United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, A/RES/61/106, art. 2 (Dec. 13, 2006), https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities

[4] If texts are provided in a digital format, for example, an individual can read them using a Braille device or speech-to-text software.

[5] This refers to live transcriptions of what the instructor or other students are saying, mainly for students with hearing impairments.

[6] Takeo Kondō, "'Omoiyari' kara 'jōshiki' e: DO-IT Japan no chōsen" [From 'compassion' to 'common sense': The challenge of DO-IT Japan] in *Chi no bariafurī: "Shōgai" de manabi o hirogeru* [Barrier-free knowledge: Expanding learning with insights from disability], edited by Shin Mineshige and <u>Kōjirō</u> Hirose (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2014).

The Role of Universities in Building an Inclusive Society: Professor Yasuko Futaba's Guest Lecture and ICU's Student Supporters for Students with Disabilities

Hiroya Banzono, Special Needs Support Services, Center for Teaching and Learning

Introduction

In this article, I will present a brief overview of ICU's student supporter system, followed by a summary of Professor Yasuko Futaba's guest lecture on the role that universities can play in building an inclusive society for students. I will then draw on insights from this lecture to suggest ways for ICU to further support students with disabilities.

Background: Student Supporters at ICU

ICU's Special Needs Support Services (SNSS) office works with faculty and staff to create a more inclusive, accessible and equitable learning environment and provide reasonable accommodation/support for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. In addition, we have student supporters, who are part of ICU's part-time student work program—about 20% of Japanese universities have such a support system for students with disabilities, though the names and conditions (i.e., paid/volunteer) may differ[1].

At ICU, the work of student supporters includes:

- converting printed textbooks and materials into digital or alternative formats
- notetaking in class for students with hearing impairments— Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) service
- assisting students with visual impairments or physical disabilities in class or on excursions
- providing mobility support on campus.

This is different to the support that faculty and staff can offer because student supporters can relate easily to fellow students in the classroom. Having a similar academic background can also be helpful for providing accurate CART services or assisting in laboratory experiments, for example. Moreover, their work is paid, which makes it psychologically easier for those students seeking necessary support, rather than having to rely on the goodwill or kindness of individual students. This is a crucial point in line with recent international trends in our understanding of how to ensure the social participation of persons with disabilities. As reflected in the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), reasonable accommodation and support is now considered a "right," not a "privilege."

The SNSS office recruits student supporters and holds workshops once or twice a year on the essential concepts of support, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. We also recently invited a guest speaker, Professor Yasuko Futaba (Specially Appointed Assistant Professor at the Center for Barrier-Free Education, University of Tokyo), whose specialization is inclusion and exclusion in the sociology of education and minorities. The following is a summary of her lecture, entitled "'A Society Where No One Will Be Left Behind' and the University: What We Can Do at ICU," on November 26, 2021.

Professor Yasuko Futaba's Guest Lecture on Universities and Inclusion

Professor Futaba began by sharing her lived experience as a student with a visual impairment. Having studied abroad at a senior high school in the US, she entered ICU after applying to several universities in Japan. Upon graduating from ICU in 2003, she worked for the Japan International Cooperation Agency

(JICA) and as a senior high school teacher before embarking on a career as a researcher and educator.

As an international student in the US, she had found it difficult to obtain the necessary accommodations because of the language barrier, the individualism of US society, and the biased perception that her disability prevented her from learning. It was only after negotiating with the school that she was able to take an exam in braille two weeks later than her classmates. She achieved a reasonable grade, which finally changed how her teachers and the school treated her. Yet she also observed teachers discriminating against a financially disadvantaged student with an intellectual disability who had been forced to repeat the same grade for several years.

Such stories illustrate the low expectations in society of individuals with disabilities and the implicit assumption that reasonable accommodation is not a right of all people, but is conditional on their ability to achieve "results." From her study abroad experience, Professor Futaba realized that people all over the world are being subjected to these attitudes and challenges, and this inspired her to work toward building an inclusive society, "a society where no one will be left behind."

Between "Friendship" and "Support

As an undergraduate at ICU, Professor Futaba had trouble having textbooks converted to braille. Finding it difficult to keep up, she decided to drop out about two months into the term. When her section mates heard about this, however, they decided to study together and started meeting on Bakayama to read their assigned texts aloud. This enabled her to hear and understand the reading assignments and to continue her studies. Nevertheless, she only asked for help a couple of times because she was worried about losing her friends, who seemed busy and did not have time to support her.

When she talked to some of her friends after graduation, they said they had never thought of the support as excessive work. One friend saw it as studying together and felt they had learned from her instead. The friend who had helped with the text conversion also said that they had never read a textbook so carefully before. In fact, neither friend thought of it as "support" work.

Looking back, Professor Futaba thinks of the time she had spent with her friends as the most important part of her experience at ICU, where individuals with/without disabilities could relate to each other not in the form of "support" but simply as fellow human beings. Even when she was initially rejected for an internship in Thailand because there was no precedent for people with visual impairments, it was one of her friends who encouraged her. Owing to similar rejections in the past, Professor Futaba had accepted the situation, but her friend was furious for her and pointed out that it was not fair. Such experiences taught her that it was okay to say she wanted to do something. She had always felt that she needed to try hard on her own and felt bad about asking for support, but at ICU she was able to build relationships with classmates and friendly staff members who were not supporting her as a person with a disability, but just as a friend or as a student who was trying to learn. They were also not expecting her to prove anything. She sees her college years as a time of mutual discovery for herself and those she met, expanding each other's horizons and potential through their encounters.

The Diversity of People Being Left Behind

Later, while studying abroad as an undergraduate in the Philippines, Professor Futaba had friends who worried that they might not be able to continue their studies because they did not have the money to buy textbooks. She at least had access to textbooks, she could learn by having someone read to her, and she could write essays on her own computer. She realized that economic disparity has a great impact on access to education, as those students with disabilities who are able to graduate from college are wealthy.

In the Philippines, she also learned that some of her friends were exposed to sexual abuse just to earn money, the roads were full of exhaust fumes from cars that no longer met environmental standards in Japan, and temp workers were being laid off and rehired seasonally because companies do not pay social insurance premiums. Meanwhile, the 9/11 attacks happened and her Muslim friend was rejected from boarding a flight. Professor Futaba realized that many different individuals are being left behind in society, not only due to disability, but also due to poverty, gender, the gap between the Global North and South, and environmental factors.

Professor Futaba's Advice to Students: Cherish Your Encounters and Interactions at University

あなたらしさを発見する新たな出会いを

今のあなたにとって、障害者なんて違う世界に生きる人の話かもしれない。
自分には関係ない他人のことだと思っているかもしれない。

でも、見えていないだけで、世界中にたくさんの「障害者」と言われる人たちがいる
ICUのキャンパスにだっている
そういう人たちと出会い、その周りにいる多くの人たちと出会うことで、これから見えてくる世界が変わるかもしれない
先生や上の人から言われて仕方なくではなく、自分なりのやり方で、SDGsの「誰も取り残さない」世界を模索できるかもしれない

After graduating from university, Professor Futaba contributed to a social participation project for people with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan as part of her work with JICA. The project planned to spend a great deal of money on barrier-free access for the city hall, but the locals she spoke to said it meant nothing to them because those with disabilities could not even get to the city hall. Buses would not stop for people with disabilities because the drivers did not think they would be riding the bus. Professor Futaba realized the importance of listening to the voices of people on the street rather than simply relying on research reports. She felt she was able to make best use of her experience of talking to people from diverse backgrounds and thinking critically during her ICU years.

It might seem like people with disabilities are far away and have nothing to do with you, but they are actually everywhere, including many at ICU. You will find that meeting a diverse range of people, including those with disabilities, during your time at university will be an invaluable experience even after graduation. The central promise of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to "leave no one behind." Professor Futaba emphasized that this can be achieved on the ICU campus as well. She concluded her lecture by encouraging students to become involved as a student supporter, as it is such a simple thing to do, and to think of it as an opportunity to broaden your social network.

The Future of ICU's Support for Students with Disabilities

Back in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, when Professor Futaba was a student, Japanese universities did not have systems in place to provide the necessary support, reasonable accommodation or learning environment for students with disabilities to enter higher education. She even mentioned that one university refused to allow her to sit their entrance exam. Even at ICU, she arranged for her own volunteer transcribers to convert textbooks into braille or managed to get by with the help of friends. Such a social environment limits the choices of students with disabilities, and having to rely on friends can sometimes have a negative impact on friendships.

There is now considerable progress being made in creating systems that provide institutional support, which can reduce the emotional burden on students with disabilities and the negative impact on their relationships. The experience of providing support can also be meaningful as a means of "experiencing together" the daily barriers that students with disabilities face in our society. This aspect of friendships is what Professor Futaba described in her lecture. Being a student supporter can be an opportunity to experience social barriers together and be a gateway to the transformation of individual students, as well

as of the community and society. Institutional support is obviously essential for guaranteeing rights, but another important goal is to create opportunities for experiencing and overcoming barriers together in order to create a more inclusive campus. The SNSS office will continue to encourage ICU students to get involved with our activities. We always welcome expressions of interest for student supporter positions. Please help to spread the word about our office at the library to students who are interested in support or social equality related with disabilities.

[1] Japan Student Services Organization, National Survey of Supports for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education Settings in Japan [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Japan Student Services Organization, 2021), 51.

Creating a More Inclusive Learning Environment: Insights and Initiatives from CTL's FD Seminar in 2021   Hiroya Banzono, Special Needs Support Services, Center for Teaching and Learning

1. Introduction

How can we all help to create a more inclusive learning environment at ICU? This article begins with a brief overview of the faculty development (FD) initiatives—in particular, the annual FD seminars—of the Special Needs Support Services (SNSS) office at the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Next, it summarizes the most recent FD seminar in February 2022. Finally, insights from the seminar are used to offer concrete suggestions for how ICU can continue to improve its support for students with disabilities.

2. FD Initiatives by the SNSS Office

The SNSS office strives to create a more inclusive learning environment at ICU by understanding and addressing the needs of students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. We bring together our research and experience in the annual FD seminar, which aims to provide guidance and resources to faculty on how to best support every student, regardless of ability. Being in direct contact with students, individual faculty members are often the ones who shoulder much of the responsibility for providing reasonable accommodations, which can be a daunting challenge at first. The themes of the FD seminars have been carefully selected to provide useful resources on inclusive learning and practical advice to help faculty make reasonable accommodations in ways that can be maintained. The topics and guest speakers for the past eight seminars are listed below.

<Note: All of the following links are valid for ICU Net ID users only.>

AY2014 "Leaning from Disabled Student Services (DSS) programs in the United States: Providing reasonable accommodation at Japanese institutions of higher education"
Prof. Mayumi Shirasawa, Research and Support Center on Higher Education for the Hearing and Visual impaired, Tsukuba University of Technology

AY2015 "The impact of reasonable accommodation on higher education: Receiving reasonable accommodation is not a privilege but a right"
Dr. Ryouji Hoshika and Dr. Yuriko Iino, Center for Barrier-Free Education, Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo

AY2016 "Optimizing the Support of Students with Disabilities from the perspective of Universal Design: Using as an example reasonable accommodations for students with visual impairments that utilize ICT"
Prof. Yasushi Nakano, Keio University

AY2017 "From an approach that focuses on the person with a communication disorder to an approach that focuses on the environment and ensures access to information: Supporting students with developmental disabilities in higher education"
Prof. Shinichiro Kumagaya, Associate Professor, Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology, The University of Tokyo; Office Director, The University of Tokyo Disability Services Office

AY2018 "Support for University Students with Developmental Disorders"
Prof. Yukimi Nishimura, Toyama University

AY2019 "What Is Diversity Really? Society as Seen from Inclusive Places" (No recording)
Dr. Laila CASSIM, Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology, the University of Tokyo

AY2020 "Supporting students who have difficulty participating in active learning style classes"
Prof. Tatsuo Nunoshiba, International Christian University

AY2021 "Building Inclusive and Empowering Relationships with Students with Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses as Academic Advisors, Course Instructors, and Thesis Supervisors"
Prof. Aiko Moriwaki, Aoyama Gakuin University

As suggested by this list of topics, the SNSS office has developed a framework of support for students with disabilities, starting by understanding essential concepts such as reasonable accommodations and then moving onto specific case studies and appropriate measures. Thus, we have continued to improve the quality and effectiveness of support over the years. Videos of each seminar are available on the campus intranet (see links listed above), so please take a look at any topics that are of interest to you.

In the most recent seminar (AY2021), we invited Professor Aiko Moriwaki of Aoyama Gakuin University to speak about how academic advisors, course instructors, and thesis supervisors can support, include, and empower students with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Her one-hour talk was packed with helpful information and tips, attracting a flurry of questions in the ten-minute Q&A that followed, as well as positive feedback in the post-seminar questionnaire.

As the number of students who request reasonable accommodations increases, so does the number of faculty members who are being called upon to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities in the course of their advising, teaching, or thesis supervision work. The SNSS office has received many enquiries from faculty members on common challenges, such as how to determine the type and degree of consideration to ensure equity; what to do when the student in question is difficult or impossible to contact; and how to work with students who appear to need some kind of support but do not explicitly ask for it. Professor Moriwaki briefly explained essential concepts in disability support before providing detailed examples of how to deal with these questions.

As the seminar was held in Japanese, English subtitles are currently being prepared for the video. The following is a summary of the lecture, but we encourage you to watch the full video, which will soon be available on ICU-TV.

3. The 2021 FD Seminar

Professor. Moriwaki's seminar introduced three examples of challenging situations for faculty: 1: How to respond to requests for reasonable accommodations when you are busy; 2: What to do when several students in your course need reasonable accommodations; and 3: What to do if the student(s) in question cannot be contacted.

Example 1: Responding to a Request for Reasonable Accommodation When You Are Busy
The time when students volunteer support and when SNSS provides guidance to faculty regarding reasonable accommodations tends to be concentrated at the beginning of a term, as well as the middle to end of the term. The beginning and end of a term are particularly busy and demanding times for both students and faculty. When you receive a request for reasonable accommodation, it is important to check each item in the request with the student and reach a consensus on what kind of

accommodations can be provided and whether it is sufficient for addressing the student's needs. In reality, however, it is often difficult for faculty to find the time to confer so carefully with each student.

Professor Moriwaki advised faculty of two important issues to discuss with the student in question even when they are pressed for time. First, find out how the student usually studies, as students with visual impairments, hearing impairments, or dyslexia often use assistive or customized devices in their studies. Checking such equipment will give you an idea of the difference between accessible and non-accessible teaching materials and information. Second, inform the student of how your course may differ from a typical course at ICU. This could include group work, discussions, presentations, lab work, and off-campus activities. Requests for reasonable accommodation generally assume typical course features (e.g., lectures and tests), but other potential learning barriers may be difficult for both students and faculty to foresee. Providing specific details about your course will help to anticipate the barriers that may arise and to consider the most appropriate forms of support needed.

Example 2: When Several Students in Your Course Need Reasonable Accommodations
It is not unusual for several students to request reasonable accommodations in a single course, even at ICU. Given the large number of students in general education and foundation courses, it can be difficult to ensure that students needing support receive sufficient attention. The problem is compounded when there are several students with different needs, as considerable resources must be allocated to address these needs. In addition, paying individual attention to students with disabilities might lead them to feel guilty or singled out. How can we avoid such psychological pressures and potential miscommunication between the support provider and receiver?

Professor Moriwaki emphasized the importance of adjusting an entire course to make it more accessible rather than allocating resources to individuals. She encouraged the "bring your own device" (BYOD) policy, which enables students to work with accessible devices that they are familiar with. The course materials should be distributed to all students in advance, preferably in an electronic format that can be read aloud, rather than in printed form. Informing students of the content to be covered in the next class, as well as the methods to be used, will enable those who feel they might need reasonable accommodation to consult you in advance. Guidelines should be provided for improving accessibility in presentations and discussions (e.g., announce your name first, and keep your mouth visible when speaking) [1]. These are just some examples, but by adjusting your teaching style in different contexts, rather than making individual adjustments for students with disabilities, you will be able to concentrate on teaching the class. Experiencing a more inclusive learning environment might help some struggling students who have not yet applied for reasonable accommodation, as they may find it easier to identify the social barriers they face and the support they need. An inclusive course design can also serve to foster awareness among the entire student body, making everyone more sensitive to accessibility issues and the needs of students with disabilities.

As many of you have already been implementing the BYOD policy and providing digitized course materials, especially over the past two years of remote and hybrid teaching, we believe it has become even easier now to design courses that are more accessible for all.

Example 3: When You Lose Contact with a Student
There are many situations, not limited to those involving reasonable accommodations, in which students drop out in the middle of a term or become difficult to contact. The question of whether or not faculty should contact such students, and if so, in what form and how often, is a vexing one. There are various considerations, such as whether it would place additional pressure on the student and whether it would be fair to other students. There is no one-size-fits-all answer as to what should be done.

Professor Moriwaki suggested that if a student has submitted a request for reasonable accommodation and is known to have difficulty attending classes, it is best to confirm with the student in advance whether or not they would like to be contacted in the case of continued absence and what form of contact they would be comfortable with. If a student whose circumstances you are unaware of has been absent or unreachable, she suggested that you consult relevant departments or staff (e.g., the SNSS office or their academic adviser), rather than the student themselves. If a student has been absent from several classes in succession, their safety needs to be confirmed. As the university has a duty to protect students' privacy, try to frame your questions to relevant departments or staff in more general terms, omitting any personal details about the student and asking, for example, "Do you think it would be appropriate to contact such a student with a message like this?"[2] In addition, she reminded us that there is little point in probing too deeply into the reasons for a student's prolonged absences. It is important to foster an atmosphere in which it is easy for the student to contact you or come back, and to keep lines of communication open, rather than chasing them down. She also emphasized that information on course assignments, exams, and credits should be disseminated to the entire student body, not just those in the classroom.

Consider the Hidden Curriculum

If there are courses in which students with disabilities (or students who might have a disability) often fail or drop out, Professor Moriwaki noted that the problem may be due to the existence of a "hidden curriculum" rather than a lack of accommodation. This hidden curriculum may be excluding students with disabilities by, for example, focusing on factors unrelated to the course content or by overemphasizing "independence," that is, the need to do everything on one's own. Professor Moriwaki urged faculty to consider these issues and check for such a hidden curriculum if students with disabilities seem to be finding certain courses challenging.

Advice for Academic Advisors, Course Instructors, and Thesis Supervisors

Professor Moriwaki concluded the seminar by listing three essential points to bear in mind for creating an inclusive and empowering learning environment:

（1）Understand that conflicts will arise over reasonable accommodations.

Professor Moriwaki said that the more conscientious you are, the more difficulties you may encounter in determining reasonable accommodations. In order to prepare yourself for challenging situations, she suggested the following: (1) be aware that discussions of reasonable accommodations can lead to conflicts (as not all needs can necessarily be met), and (2) in such cases, it is important to base your decisions on what you regard to be essential in education and what you value most in your teaching.

（2）Liaise and coordinate with relevant staff:

While faculty members have a certain amount of discretion and responsibility regarding class management and reasonable accommodations, other offices may have information that you will need to communicate effectively with students. Professor Moriwaki advised that coordinating and sharing policies with relevant offices can help to protect students' rights and reduce faculty workloads.

（3）Change the focus of our efforts:

As mentioned in Example 2, Professor Moriwaki recommends revising the overall structure of courses to make them more inclusive, rather than simply devising ways to provide accommodations on an individual basis. She also mentioned that if you are concerned about a particular student, it is better to

encourage them to explore different ways to overcome challenges when they are feeling up to it rather than pressuring them when they are feeling overwhelmed.

4. Future Directions for ICU

Key advice from Professor Moriwaki's seminar can be summarized as follows: (1) discuss requests for reasonable accommodation in detail, rather than simply communicating or implementing such requests without careful consideration; (2) focus on making an entire course inclusive, rather than simply responding to individual requests; and (3) promote collaboration across the university to support both students and faculty. While staff at the SNSS office have been providing information and support with these points in mind, the systems and processes are still in development.

Regarding the first point, requests for reasonable accommodations are currently displayed on icuMap, which means students don't submit their requests in person. This does not help to encourage communications between students, the SNSS office, and faculty members. Therefore, we encourage each students to get in touch with their instructor separately when they submit their request for reasonable accommodation. We are considering mechanisms to promote further dialogue, such as by providing tips and guidelines to facilitate communication between students and faculty.

In relation to the second point, we have built the "ICU Student Support Case Database" to file case studies and make them available on the intranet for faculty. Although individual cases are unique, we hope that faculty members will find this resource useful. We are also creating a system to upload and disseminate theory, practical guidelines, and other resources for assisting faculty to design more inclusive courses.

Finally, with regard to coordination, the SNSS office was established to provide support not only to students but also to faculty and staff who support students. We gather data and resources on reasonable accommodation and universal design for learning from within and outside the university, and regularly disseminate this information to faculty. Please feel free to contact us if you should require any information or support to make your classes or seminars more inclusive.

5. Concluding Remarks

This article has discussed how the SNSS office at CTL works to provide guidance and resources to ICU faculty members, who play a key role in helping to enable students with disabilities or chronic illnesses to access learning on a more equal footing with other students. The AY2021 FD seminar summarized here will soon be available on video with English subtitles—please take a look and feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We at the SNSS office will continue our efforts to build a more inclusive learning environment at ICU. We hope to see you at our next FD seminar in February 2023 (date and topic TBC).

[1] Announcing names is necessary for clearly identifying the speaker for the purposes of notetaking, UDTalk, and other apps. Both examples given here are reasonable accommodations in the classroom for students with hearing impairments. Other guidelines can be devised, such as accommodations to help students with learning disabilities participate in active learning.
[2] Note that for reasons of confidentiality, the SNSS office may not be able to provide detailed answers to faculty enquiries concerning students, especially if they have not submitted a request for reasonable accommodation.

Teaching Argumentation in the ELA   Susan Edwards, English for Liberal Arts Program

Our primary goal in the ELA is to lay solid foundations so that students can have successful academic careers. One of the cornerstones of those foundations is to initiate students into habits of critical thinking and, in particular, argumentation. And to do so successfully, we must address not only what our students, or `academics in training`, need to know about argumentation but also how best to teach it.

In Stream 3, the largest in the ELA, we begin this work in the Academic Reading and Writing course by helping students recognise the central parts of an argument: a claim supported by reasons and evidence. Next, so that students can evaluate arguments, we explore what is meant by good reasons and evidence; the reasons must be rational and the evidence reliable and relevant. Furthermore, we identify assumptions and decide whether they are reasonable. Moreover, to create persuasive arguments of their own, students practise finding and evaluating sources. Finally, students learn about the importance of addressing counterarguments to strengthen the credibility of a central claim.

Of course, along with the ability to identify the strengths of arguments, students also need to spot weaknesses. To this end, we study some common flaws in argumentation, such as overgeneralisations, appeals to emotion or authority, and false assumptions. Indeed, these examples of logical fallacies are the very traps that students frequently fall into in their own thinking and writing. Additionally, we teach that tentative language, also called 'hedging', can be a way to avoid fallacies and create more accurate and objective writing.

So that leads to the next question of how to teach argumentation. In the ELA we teach integrated academic skills, meaning for example that reading tasks are related to writing tasks. Likewise, since we view argumentation more as a skill to be practised than a topic to be studied, we have come to appreciate that it should be integrated into our reading and writing assignments across the curriculum throughout the first year.

Recently, my colleague Simon Evans and I developed a [Critical Questions Framework.](#) It comprises 12 core questions ranging from those which establish the reliability of a source to others that assess the quality of ideas and ask students to respond to them. Throughout the Spring Term, we guide students to answer particular questions as they read and develop their understanding of argumentation. Moreover, we ask them to refer to the questions when they check their own drafts and those of their classmates. In this way, students can use the framework to critique their writing, that of their peers and that of established academics. We are still developing the framework but our first impressions is that is an effective tool. Similarly, the Stream 3 grading rubrics in the Spring Term are presented as a series of questions to help students check the quality of their work before submission. Of course, the rubrics focus on academic writing conventions, but they also include questions about key aspects of argumentation, such as clear claims and relevant evidence.

By giving students multiple opportunities to analyse arguments using the questions in both the framework and the rubrics, we aim to instil a critical mindset. That is to say, we would like students to internalise the questions so that they come to ask them automatically whenever they encounter an argument. As students progress through their academic careers in the CLA, the questions they must ask will become more sophisticated, but we believe our initial approach helps them to develop the habits of effective critical thinkers.

Enhancing Student Participation in Large Online Courses   Sawa Omori, Department of Politics and International Studies

Since ICU's switch to remote learning, some online courses have significantly increased student enrolments. One online foundation course I now teach has more than 170 students, which causes my growing concerns about how to encourage student engagement. I will share my efforts to promote student participation via online student group presentations

I let students perform group presentations simultaneously by dividing students into panels like an academic conference. Namely, in the case of AY2022, 30 groups (5-6 students in each group) are divided into five panels. Each of the five panels has its separate zoom; at each panel, six groups conduct group presentations. The students watch and conduct peer evaluations in each panel. Based on these evaluation scores, the top team of each panel gives an online presentation in front of the entire class the following week. The process is outlined in detail below.

1. Students select three topics that they would like to present from about 15 listed general topics. Each student is assigned a presentation group and a belonging panel based on their preferred selections. In the case of AY 2022, there are five panels; each panel has six presentation groups (30 groups in total with 5-6 students per group).
2. Each presentation group meets using a breakout session during class to meet presentation members and discuss a detailed topic for their presentations. Then, each group is asked to submit a presentation title on Moodle using a bulletin board set up for each panel.
3. Senior undergraduate and graduate students become moderators and time-keepers for five panels (prior consultation with moderators is necessary). They provide zoom information for each panel in advance, and I let students know each panel's zoom information on Moodle. Also, I upload "group presentation evaluation sheets" for each panel on Moodle (Excel file). I explain the score criteria for peer evaluation in a class so that students can prepare their presentations accordingly. In 2019, I required each presentation group to record their presentation and upload it to Moodle in advance. However, in AY2022—with the resumption of face-to-face classes—students have presented in real time on Zoom with no requirement for uploading their prerecorded presentations.
4. On the day of their presentation, students directly go to the assigned panel to give their presentations via Zoom. Students conduct peer groups' evaluations while listening using the "group presentation evaluation sheets" uploaded for each panel on Moodle
5. The evaluation criteria include both the contents of the presentation and the presentation style. Students need to submit their evaluation sheets via Moodle by midnight of the presentation day. I need to review the "group presentation evaluation sheets" quickly to determine which group presentation has received the highest score in each panel. I announce the result in the next class, and the highest-scoring presentation groups in each panel conduct group presentations again in front of the entire class on behalf of each panel the following week.

In a conventional large face-to-face class, the group size was ten or more for conducting a group presentation to avoid spending too many periods. However, by using separately set up zoom sessions for each panel makes, it becomes possible to conduct group-presentation with small group sizes (5-6 students in each group), avoiding the use of many class periods. For example, I use two periods for the first round of presentations and two for the final round.

I struggled with technical issues such as using Moodle and creating evaluation forms in Excel for the first year. However, after the initial challenge, subsequent years become much more manageable. In this

regard, I am grateful to the CTL staff for their technical assistance with Moodle since I had a few technical consultation sessions with them. Without their help, my attempts to conduct an online student group presentation in a large class could not have been possible.

In my view, the use of panel formats for small group presentations is an effective means to encourage student participation in a large class which may inevitably be lecture-centered classes. Also, by choosing a winner group based on peer evaluations, I hope that students can feel their power via voting in a bottom-up democratically organized class rather than professors always giving grades and students being evaluated and given grades. I hope that I will be able to continuously improve and refine how to organize students' online group presentations in a large size class.

分科会No	グループNo	発表タイトル	合計得票点	分科会優勝G
1	A	「南アフリカとドイツの比較から見える『Covid-19と格差』」	826	
1	B	「難民キャンプの現状と諸機関の活動」	824	
1	C	「FGM -UNICEFの取り組み-」	835	★
1	D	「環境と開発:プラスチックゴミ問題」	822	
1	E	「都市化と環境問題」	803	
2	F	「日本の子供の教育面における貧困」	753	
2	G	「日本におけるこどもの相対的貧困 -他の先進国と比較して-」	786	
2	H	「日本のシングルマザーの貧困」	825	★
2	I	「日本の貧困と雇用形態:非正規雇用者と外国人労働者を通して」	821	
2	J	「日本のODAの現状と課題」	808	
3	K	「緊急食糧支援」	744	
3	L	「南スーダンからの避難民、難民に対する緊急支援をケーススタディーとして、国際機関やNGOの実際の活動や今後の課題などを考察する」	778	
3	M	「東南アジアへの日本の支援ーセーフティネットとしてのNGOー」	820	
3	N	「NGOの活動変遷と今後ー第五世代に注目してー」	853	★
3	O	「途上国から世界に通用するブランドを作るーソーシャルビジネスを考える」	827	
4	P	「ルワンダ大虐殺と女性の社会進出の関係」	783	
4	Q	「コミュニティー支援と制度の動からみる日本の母子家庭の子育て環境」	764	
4	R1	「児童婚の現状と削減に向けた課題」	792	
4	S1	「日本の性教育の再開発について」	883	★
4	R2	「ソーシャル・ビジネスが途上国に与える影響」	782	
5	S2	「多国籍企業の租税回避問題」	767	
5	T	「After the True Const―多国籍企業の変容」	824	
5	U	「大企業がSDGsのためにCSR活動として行っていること」	827	★
5	V	「途上国の労働問題に関して企業が行っていること」	761	
5	W	「スターバックスのサプライチェーンにおけるCSRとしての取り組み」	760	

Figures: From AY2019, A screenshot of prerecorded group presentations on Moodle (Left), and Group Presentation Titles and Score Results of Each Group Presentation in Each Panel (Right)

Assessments, Feedback, and Grading at ICU — Shaun K. Malarney, Department of Society, Culture and Media

As a liberal arts institution, ICU has a number of unique expectations regarding the assessment of student work. In this short essay, my goal is to share several of the most important expectations and also some of my own experiences and practices in evaluating student work. As an anthropology professor, some of my practices will not be applicable for every discipline, but my hope is that the broader principles will be relevant to all of our courses.

Perhaps the most important point regarding ICU's approach toward evaluation is that courses should have multiple assignments or assessments. At some universities, it is acceptable to have only one assessment, often a final examination, but that is not the practice at ICU. Every course should instead have multiple evaluations of student work. This is done in part to avoid situations in which a student attends an entire course, but then fails the exam and receives no course credit, and also to allow continued learning during term. It can also be helpful in some instances to accommodate different learning styles among students. The assessments in my courses vary depending upon the course level, but usually include essay writing, participation, group presentations, and an examination. For those new to ICU, it is worth noting that group work is popular among our students and presentations are an effective tool for peer learning. I often joke to my students that they remember student group presentations more than my lectures.

A second important expectation is for students to receive their evaluated work, especially during term. For example, when students write essays in my courses, I inform them that I will try to return them as soon as possible, but I guarantee them that they will have their evaluated work back prior to their next essay. I have found this greatly helps students improve their writing skills. I will also devote some class time to share with the class some of the most common problems or issues I found in the essays so everyone has an awareness of what I found, which can help everyone avoid such problems in future work.

This latter point leads to a third expectation, which is clear communication to the students regarding how their work will be evaluated. This can be done on the syllabus, for example, with the delineation of assignment length or other requirements, but I would like to share how I approach the evaluation of student essays. As a professor who teaches in English, one issue that I face is variation in the amount of essay writing instruction students have received prior to my course. In my early years at ICU, I discovered that this led to wide disparities in essay quality, especially in the first essay. In order to remedy this, I have for many years dedicated one class period to explaining what I regard as good essay writing. To this end, I provide the students with a document that lays out both the positive (e.g., proper citations, clarity, a clear argument, etc.) as well as the negative (e.g., lack of citations, repetitiveness, unclear argument, etc.) features of an essay. I go over these in class and to reinforce them, I show them a set of paired sentences that are written slightly differently and they must decide which is the better sentence. I also have a sample essay that I post on Moodle that we go over so they can see a concrete example of what I regard as a good essay that they can return to on Moodle. Given that this involves a full course period, it is time intensive, but it provides me the opportunity to clearly communicate my expectations to my students and I feel that it has helped my students become more effective writers.

There are many ways to successfully teach and facilitate student learning for our ICU students, but I hope that these examples help to provide some useful practices and some of the broader institutional expectations of liberal arts education at ICU.

From English Medium Instruction (EMI) to Japanese Medium Instruction (JMI): Applying EMI Pedagogy to Higher Education in Japan   Ikumi Ozawa, Japanese Language Programs

1. EMI training is not about learning English

English Medium Instruction (EMI) training is not about how to teach fluently in English, as explained in several back issues of the FD Newsletter. Rather, it will help you teach more effectively. You will learn, for example, how to teach with an awareness of how teachers and students use language; how to design and implement lessons to increase students' comprehension, knowledge, and skills; and how to motivate students and support their interactions with each other.

2. EMI training offers an opportunity to improve your teaching skills

EMI training is an invaluable form of teacher training, regardless of the language of instruction. Many aspects of the course overlap with other pedagogical frameworks and approaches, including Instructional Design (Kumamoto University 2022) and Universal Design for Learning (CAST 2018). EMI training is unique, however, as it calls attention to how teachers and students use language.

Faculty members from fields other than pedagogy may have had little opportunity to explore and study different teaching methods. In particular, the impacts of the language of instruction and learning have generally been studied only by those specializing in language education. Therefore, the growing popularity of EMI training programs can help to improve teaching quality and to motivate student learning.

3. EMI training is even useful for those who do not teach in English: From EMI to JMI

EMI training can benefit the entire faculty, not just those teaching in English, to experience this training. Implementing EMI pedagogy in each classroom, regardless of the language of instruction, would enhance the overall quality of teaching at the university.

This is especially important at a university like ours, where students are from multilingual and multicultural backgrounds with a range of linguistic abilities. [1] We are seeing even more diversity in language skills than before. For example, we have international students from non-Japanese-speaking backgrounds who are learning English in ELA but also taking JLP courses. They do so because they need to improve their Japanese language skills. Conversely, some ELA students have grown up using Japanese at home and in school but feel uncomfortable using Japanese in their university studies. They wish to study in the JLP. Other students want to learn academic writing in both languages, regardless of the language of their education before university.

By becoming more aware of the diverse linguistic abilities of the students in "non-language classes," we can improve their understanding and performance. [2] In other words, we can foster a better teaching and learning environment at ICU by promoting the concept of not only EMI but also "Japanese Medium Instruction," or JMI.

4. "Every teacher is a language teacher," even at universities

"Every teacher is a language teacher" is a well-known philosophy of the International Baccalaureate program (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014). As the foundation of an individual's development, language is essential for personal growth and identity. It forms the basis of our awareness

and understanding of others, our appreciation of cultural diversity, and the intellectual framework for meaning creation and concept formation. Viewing that academic language is inextricably entwined with academic thinking, the International Baccalaureate considers "every teacher is a language teacher," regardless of the subject they teach (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014, p. 13).

Universities usually offer courses to improve language skills, such as academic writing, for first-year students. However, language skills such as those described above cannot possibly be acquired in the first year. Given the students' personal growth as they study specialized subjects, we could argue that every teacher is language teacher, even in higher education.

Moreover, specific language skills such as written expression and reading comprehension are not simply developed in the first year. This is supported by the fact that "written communication" and "reading" are described with reference to different fields of specialization in the Association of American Colleges and Universities' VALUE rubrics (Rhodes 2010), which provide discipline-specific information on the skills and abilities developed throughout college education.

5. How can we implement JMI?

Some suggestions for implementing JMI are listed below. They draw on ideas and inspiration from Instructional Design, Universal Design for Learning, and Yukawa's (2022) book on EMI. Since the most effective implementation will differ for each classroom, please customize the ideas to suit your needs, based on your teaching objectives and your students.

However, the more conscientious you are, the more likely you are to burn out trying to do everything perfectly. In the long run, it is better to continue making gradual improvements in practice rather than burning out and losing your motivation altogether. Therefore, please don't put too much pressure on yourself. Instead, start by trying one or two things that seem manageable. Build networks of support, as it is important to have friends and colleagues with whom you can share your resources and discuss both your challenges and your successes.

You may need help to implement some of these new ideas. For example, you may want to reduce the number of learning outcomes in a subject and adjust the in-class activities to improve students' understanding and proficiency. However, you may not be able to do so without disrupting the broader curriculum in your department. You will more likely be able to resolve such issues by carefully discussing the balance between the learning outcomes and the course content with fellow faculty. So, try to work on these ideas with other teachers rather than on your own.

1. Linguistic scaffolding

A student's poor comprehension may not be due to language problems. You may not notice specific challenges owing to your own fluency in the language. For example, consider the words seibutsu (biology) and nōshuku (concentration, enrichment). They are common Japanese words, and we do not need their definitions in our daily lives. The compound seibutsu nōshuku [3], however, refers to a concept learned in third-grade science in Japanese primary schools. Even if students learn that seibutsu nōshuku means "bioconcentration" in English, they will not immediately understand the concept unless they have encountered it in earlier studies.

Moreover, discussing such academic concepts in depth is difficult if you constantly have to use simple vocabulary. Using translations and allowing students to write reports and other texts in their preferred language are scaffolds to support learning. However, students need to learn gradually without such support and instead build specialized vocabulary in their field.

To communicate more effectively, adjust your support by offering various options rather than just translations. The idea is to understand a range of scaffolding methods to remove the scaffolds gradually. For example:

- Add expressions in the students' stronger language
- Rephrase in simple language
- Use images and other non-verbal information
- Present information in different formats, such as slides
- Provide examples to help students to understand the course content and language
- Ask questions to check students' understanding of content and concepts
- Highlight errors (individually or collectively) to encourage awareness.

2. Cognitive scaffolding

- Provide materials that help students to keep up with the course content (e.g., use LMS)
- Begin each lesson with a review of the previous lesson
  - Field questions from students (e.g., ask other students to answer each question first to encourage participation)
  - Ask students to list or summarize key points from the previous lesson
- Provide clarification if other students find it difficult to hear or understand what another student is saying
  - Repeat what was said more loudly and clearly
  - Rephrase or add examples to clarify what was said
- Engage students in activities to consolidate and use what they are learning, check their level of understanding, and provide feedback as appropriate.
- Be aware of the level of difficulty of each question you ask
  - Do students understand the meaning of the question itself?
  - Do students have the knowledge necessary to answer the question?
  - Is the question format appropriate for the student or the flow of the class (e.g., Yes/No or open-ended questions, concrete or abstract questions)? [4])

3. Mental health

- Create a psychologically safe space by ensuring a face-to-face relationship between students and teachers
- Explain the level of difficulty of each assignment and what you hope the students will accomplish
- Give students options
- Boost the students' self-esteem
  - Praise students for what they did well
  - Praise their efforts
  - Praise their improvements and growth
  - Praise their contributions to the class
  - With their permission, highlight the student's progress or work as a good example to the class.

[1] These skills are essential not only for faculty but also for staff. Staff are also expected to be able to

engage students and equip them with knowledge and skills when hosting information sessions and other events for students. While the EMI training may not immediately be helpful for staff, it will provide some useful insights.

[2] The diversification of students' language skills can now be seen at other universities as well, although to different degrees. The promotion of the internationalization of universities has led to an increase in the number of international students and the introduction of EMI at Japanese universities. This has also led to an increase in the number of children with connections to other countries who are entering Japanese universities. This trend is expected to continue as measures such as the acceptance of foreign workers have been implemented following the enactment of the Basic Policy for the Comprehensive and Effective Implementation of Measures to Promote Japanese Language Education.

[3] https://kotobank.jp/word/-86437

[4] This includes considering whether questions can be answered safely, without fear of error, which relates to the students' mental health.

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Report on the AY2022 Faculty Retreat: The Future of Online Teaching at ICU   Natsumi Nakajima, Administrative Affairs Group, General Affairs Division

ICU's annual faculty retreat brings together all faculty and staff as part of the faculty development (FD) program. First held in 1954, the faculty retreat has continued over the decades, albeit in different forms. The theme for 2022 was "The Future of Online Teaching at ICU," featuring presentations and discussion sessions on Zoom.

> **Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022
> **Time:** 10:00–12:30
> **Languages:** Japanese and English
> **Format:** Online (Zoom)
> **No. of participants:** Approximately 120 faculty and staff members

Opening Remarks by ICU President Shoichiro Iwakiri

ICU President Shoichiro Iwakiri opened the event by emphasizing the importance of the faculty retreat as a long-standing ICU tradition that facilitates communication among faculty and staff, and he wished everyone a fruitful discussion.

Self-introduction by Othmer Distinguished Professor Hiroaki Kitano

In his self-introduction, Professor Hiroaki Kitano noted the ever-increasing importance of the liberal arts in view of the numerous challenges we face in the world today. He also expressed his appreciation for ICU's focus on expanding perspectives and collaborating across disciplines, which helps to broaden our horizons and foster deeper understanding for problem solving.

Brief Report on Exploratory Preparations for the New Class Timetable by Professor Yoshito Ishio (Dean, College of Liberal Arts)

In recent years, ICU has had very busy term schedules, with an increasing number of classes being held on public holidays or weekends. Professor Yoshito Ishio reported on plans for a new class timetable, based on a review led by him and Professor Natsumi Ikoma (CLA Associate Dean). The new timetable is expected to reduce the number of class days and classes held on holidays, while maintaining class hours, and will allow both faculty and students to have more time for research and personal pursuits.

Report on Campus Facilities by Mr. Takashi Nakajima (Managing Trustee for Financial Affairs)

Mr. Takashi Nakajima reported on current and future plans for the construction and maintenance of educational facilities and faculty housing on campus. He also mentioned plans to encourage faculty to make more use of the ample forested areas on campus for educational purposes.

## Presentations from Faculty Members: The Future of Online Teaching at ICU

Faculty members from different departments then presented on the main theme of this faculty retreat: "The Future of Online Teaching at ICU."

(1) CTL Surveys: The Good and the Bad about Online Teaching by Professor Heather

Montgomery (Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning)

Professor Heather Montgomery provided an overview of CTL's survey of attitudes toward online learning for AY2021–AY2022. The survey targeted faculty and new students and found that both groups perceived certain benefits in online learning—in particular, many respondents noted that the online format facilitated interactions with people overseas and that the materials and recordings were useful. Conversely, about 70 percent of the faculty and students responded that face-to-face classes are important for more personal communication and interactions. The faculty also found it challenging to keep their students motivated and engaged in online classes.
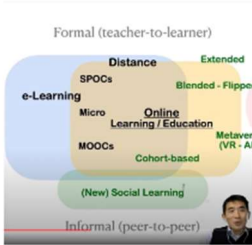
(2) Overview of Online Education by Assistant Professor Hiroyuki Aoki (Department of Education and Language Education)

Professor Hiroyuki Aoki provided an overview of the various types of online education and their respective advantages. Blended learning, for example, combines two or more modalities to enable students to enjoy the convenience and flexibility of online learning while also benefiting from some face-to-face interaction. Cohort-based learning enables students to form groups with their classmates online so that they feel less isolated. Through online education, students are able to learn at their own pace, and faculty members are able to record their lectures, provide a variety of content, and offer supplementary learning material. In addition, Professor Aoki highlighted the new possibilities that have opened up for us, such as addressing the needs of students who have difficulty commuting or have work commitments, as well as facilitating exchanges with academics and students overseas.

(3) Report on the Use of ICT in Science and Math Classes by Professor Hiroyuki Kose (Department of Natural Sciences)

Professor Kose of the Natural Science Department offered examples of how ICT is used in science and math classes at ICU. As students can have different levels of proficiency in science and math, and their high school education may also vary, tools for self-study are helpful. In chemistry classes, photos and videos are often used to help facilitate explanations for experiments. In another ICU course, a live broadcast from an archaeological excavation demonstrated the benefits of online tools, but also highlighted their limitations. The students were unable to perceive the scale and colors of the physical site, which means there is still a need to find ways to encourage students to explore and make their own discoveries. In addition, math classes use a large blackboard to interact with students, which is difficult to replicate on the small screen of a computer, laptop or smartphone. For these reasons, many of the science and math faculty still focus on face-to-face teaching, though they also endeavor to make use of helpful online tools.

Group Discussions

The participants were then divided into groups—English-/Japanese-only or bilingual—to discuss the presentations and consider the following questions:
   (1) What is the value or positive effect of face-to-face teaching?
   (2) What is the value or positive effect of online teaching?
   (3) How can online teaching be useful to faculty or students?

A spokesperson from each group reported back to the main group at the end of the discussion.
   (1) The value of face-to-face teaching

- Face-to-face classes are very important for making connections and fostering friendships among students. They provide opportunities for students and faculty members to interact before and after class, which facilitates communication and understanding.
- In language classes, it is particularly important to be motivated to actually talk to the person next to you. Face-to-face classes also give you a sense of your surroundings, which helps you to ascertain your own level of understanding compared to others. In addition to verbal communication, students are also able to observe others and read the room through nonverbal cues.
- It is also easier to make eye contact with others and control the pace of your speech in face-to-face classes rather than online.

(2) The value of online education (mainly from educational perspectives)

- Students can easily review the course content and further their understanding if they have access to a recording of the class. They can also look up questions on the spot and share the newfound information with their classmates.
- For faculty, online tools make it easier to share large amounts of data and to receive feedback via comment sheets.
- Online classes facilitate group work, especially in large classes. In face-to-face classes, students tend to form groups with their friends, whereas in online classes the instructor is able to assign students to groups quickly and easily themselves.
- Overseas academics can be invited for guest lectures online, and it has become easier to collaborate with other universities.

(3) The usefulness of online education (including non-educational perspectives.)

- An added benefit of online education is that it enables faculty, especially those who have parenting or caring responsibilities, to use their time more effectively and reduce their workload. It also makes it possible for faculty to teach when they travel abroad for research or to attend a conference, for example. In addition, university can still provide online classes in case of bad weather, such as heavy snowstorms or typhoons, for the safety of both faculty and students. Moreover, online classes enable students with disabilities to participate fully in activities that may not be accessible to them in a physical classroom.

(4) Others

- As face-to-face and online education have their respective advantages, it is essential to strike a balance between the two and use them both effectively. It is important for the university to foster a teaching and learning environment where all faculty members are able to choose and use either or both formats easily and effectively.

This faculty retreat provided a valuable opportunity for faculty and staff to consider the future of education at ICU and beyond. Although the rapid proliferation of online education was driven by the unavoidable circumstances that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic, the presentations and discussions generated a great deal of positive feedback about the benefits and possibilities that have opened up as a result. While reiterating the crucial role that face-to-face communication continues to play in education, the participants generally agreed that a combination of face-to-face and online teaching can be an effective means to enhance the teaching and learning environment.

Addressing the Challenge of Cognitive Bias for College Critical Thinking
Guy Smith, English for Liberal Arts Program

Auditory Looming reveals one fascinating way in which the brain works. Auditory Looming refers to when we hear a loud noise approaching us, we perceive it as approaching faster than it really is. We do not have this same perception when the noise is moving away. From a survival point of view this makes sense. A loud noise approaching us could represent something dangerous (e.g., stampeding elephants!). To have a cognitive bias that interprets this sound as moving faster than it really is represents a smart survival strategy on the part of the brain. The distorted perception gives more time to take action and decide whether "fight" or "flight" is the best action. These kinds of cognitive biases (more than a hundred have been identified) have been the target of rapidly growing interest and bodies of research. Perhaps the most famous recent contribution to this field is the work done by Nobel Economics Prize Winner Daniel Khaneman and is the main topic of his bestselling book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*.

While Auditory Looming can be considered a smart move in terms of increasing survival chances, if we wanted to know the objective measurement of the speed of the sound, this bias now represents an unwanted obstacle. In fact, various academic and scientific fields in the search for better objective measurement and understanding have been enthusiastically pursuing ways in which to identify this kind of distorted thinking and debias thinking (remove the negative influences of these cognitive biases). For example, the body of work in this area being done in medicine and business studies is already substantial. On the other hand, education and critical thinking are just beginning to wake up to the challenge.

In education, critical thinking has generally advocated the individual analyzing, evaluating, and improving, of thinking. However, these cognitive biases raise a serious challenge for this process. Our own biases are for the most part invisible to us; thus it is impossible for an individual to follow the traditional critical thinking approach and "analyze" and "evaluate" a thinking process that happens unconsciously. To be more fully effective, critical thinking needs to include awareness raising strategies that promote a realization that thinking can be biased and interventional strategies that allow us to target and reduce the negative outcomes of cognitive bias on our thinking. Serious attention is now being given to how to address this problem, and critical thinking is entering a new period of development that will see innovative frameworks and approaches that combine the best of traditional approaches with a more comprehensive understanding of how the mind works.

Report on the NACADA 2022 Annual Conference   Ayaka Murakami, Academic Planning Support (APS), Center for Teaching and Learning

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) is an international professional association for academic advising, based in the US. Since the establishment of ICU's Academic Planning Center (now Academic Planning Support), our staff has regularly participated in NACADA conferences and trainings to gain more expertise and learn about the latest developments in the field to implement in our practice.

The NACADA annual conference, which we attended this year, is the largest of its kind, held every fall. After holding its conference online for the past two years due to the outbreak of COVID-19, NACADA's 46th Annual Conference was held in person, in Portland, Oregon, from October 23 to 26, 2022, attracting more than 3,700 academic advisors and other university staff/faculty from around the world (Figure 1). Its theme was "Building Bridges: Honoring our Past, Celebrating the Present, and Preparing for the Future."

1. Overview

The conference placed particular emphasis on participants sharing information and experience with each other. "Advising Communities" were organized by university size and advising specialization, and ample opportunities were provided for networking during poster sessions or in a casual environment over breakfast or coffee.

Day 1 of the conference featured pre-conference workshops and a plenary session, as well as a keynote speech by Megan Red Shirt-Shaw (University of South Dakota), who started with an acknowledgment that the conference was being held on the unceded and traditional lands of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Kalapuya, Molalla, and many other tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River. Reflecting on her own lived experience in education as a member of the Oglala Lakota Nation, she emphasized the importance of Indigenous education and support for Indigenous students.

A university is a space where students of diverse backgrounds and identities study together. The conference made me keenly aware of the need for support to be inclusive, for each and every student to feel that they are seen and understood. This was a recurring theme over the next three days of concurrent 60-minute sessions, as there were many sessions that focused on advising LGBTQ, Black, First Generation (students whose parents do not have college degrees), and Transfer students (Figure 2). Among these was a particularly impressive presentation by Elizabeth Smith of Auburn University on advising students with disabilities, which I will summarize below.

2. Support for Students with Disabilities

Elizabeth Smith noted that for students with disabilities, the transition from a supportive high school to a less supportive university is "as stressful as being asked to fly a plane out of nowhere." For a long time, their enrolment rates at US universities were low, but the number has increased significantly over the past decade, thanks in part to the improvement of support systems. However, the results of one survey revealed a major challenge: about 90% of students with disabilities who entered university had received reasonable accommodations and other support in high school, but fewer than 19% of them continued to apply for disability support and reasonable accommodations in college. The major reason for this was fear, including:

  Fear of negative interactions

◻ Fear of being labeled

◻ Fear that others will think less of them

What we can learn from this survey is that it is important for each of us to recognize that receiving support is not a "special" kind of consideration but something "natural."

Smith also offered useful advice for advisors. She recommended the "Appreciative Advising" method, which is based on open-ended questions and dialogue. This is because disabilities vary widely and cannot always be understood with yes/no questions. Moreover, under US law, individuals are not required to disclose a disability if they do not wish to do so. Therefore, she recommended asking students what kind of support they had received from their teachers in junior and senior high school. In some cases, it may be easier to use other words such as "strengths" and "weakness," for example, rather than "disabilities."

Some disabilities are visible, while others are not, and a disability may or may not be perceived by the person in question. A particularly insightful point for me as an academic advisor was that approaching conversations with the understanding that "anyone could have a hidden disability" will help us to provide appropriate support.

Smith also discussed a study titled, "Can a disability become an 'ability to navigate transitions successfully'?" This study involved two groups of participants: students with a (sensory or motor) disability (SWDs) and students without disabilities (SWODs). Each student was asked the following three questions:

1. What do you think of your current Bachelor's program?
2. How did you experience the transition from secondary education to university?
3. How would you describe this journey?

Both groups shared the same tendency to experience stress from struggling to adjust to a new environment and to balance their academic and personal lives. However, the study also found three significant differences between the groups:

1. SWDs tended to focus on their studies earlier than SWODs. SWODs tended to prioritize their social life initially and only began to think about how to balance it with their studies after receiving their first exam results, whereas SWDs prioritized their studies from the outset because they doubted their ability to do well in the first place.
2. SWDs seemed to be more prepared for university than SWODs. SWODs reported that they had not been prepared for university-level classes and the amount of schoolwork required. They had to learn how to deal with problems from scratch, and failure to do so impacted their self-confidence more than it did for SWDs. Conversely, SWDs reported that they had already learned how to work hard, persevere, and get things done in high school. They also viewed problems and barriers as "personal challenges" and were proud of having succeeded in entering university.
3. SWDs viewed their university more favorably than SWODs did. SWODs were more critical of their university and reported that they felt they were left to deal with problems on their own. Some even perceived the university as hostile. SWDs, in contrast, felt more supported by their university, and many noted that their disability was better recognized by the university than it had been by their high school.[1]

Therefore, Smith argued persuasively that in some ways, students with disabilities have an advantage over students without disabilities because their lived experience has helped them to develop the skills needed to transition to higher education more smoothly. I found this fascinating, as it also highlights more generally how the experience of overcoming difficulties, challenges, and failures can help foster perseverance and self-esteem in young people.

3. The Growth of NACADA

Founded in the US in 1977, NACADA continued to expand its network to other countries, and in 2012 it officially became a global community of academic advising. Today, the association has members in more than 30 countries worldwide.

Day 2 of the conference featured networking meetings for different member regions: one "Overseas" region and 10 different regions for the 51 states of the US. The "Overseas" meeting was attended by nine participants from Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Kazakhstan, and Japan, who shared information on advising in their respective countries and universities and exchanged opinions on what is needed for NACADA to further extend its reach internationally in the future. I appreciated that the conference took considerable care for members by providing a multilingual glossary of terms to help avoid any misunderstandings between international members due to differences in language and systems.

4. Strengths of a Liberal Arts Education

Specific sessions were held for each Advising Community. I attended the session for liberal arts college advisors, where we discussed the increasing number of students changing to business majors or transferring to other schools due to growing pandemic-related concerns about employment opportunities. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) majors are particularly popular, as they are seen to have a direct connection to jobs. It seems that many students are consulting advisors with concerns about their future, wondering if it makes sense to continue their liberal arts studies. What kind of advice can we offer to such students? In our discussion, one advisor shared the following insightful message: "There is no job for liberal arts YET. You are to make the job."

The same advisor also shared a survey that found that few people actually work in jobs that align with their university major and cited a questionnaire on the type of people that companies are looking to employ: "Companies are not looking for names of majors or departments, but the skills developed in a liberal arts curriculum, such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills." She emphasized that these skills are not only useful across industries but also essential life skills. As an academic advisor at a liberal arts university, I realized the importance of reiterating these points to students to help foster their dreams and self-esteem.

5. Conclusion

Academic advisors are employed as professionals at many US universities. The NACADA conference participants ranged from advisors with more than 20 years of experience to those just starting out. It was a meaningful opportunity to not only receive advice from more experienced colleagues but also to share our concerns across the boundaries of age, experience, and country. The conference program included early morning yoga, kickboxing, and sightseeing/walking activities around the venue to improve the health of the advisors themselves. All the participants were enthusiastic and full of life, and I felt that only when advisors must also look after their own physical and mental health if they are to give strength to the students.

I look forward to continue participating in events with NACADA and other groups and implementing what I have learned in my work as an advisor. Through these reports, I also hope to contribute to the mission statement of the Center for Teaching and Learning "to support the academic learning of all students" and "to share with faculty new initiatives, concepts, and methods related to educational activities and advising." Thank you for your continued support of Academic Planning Support activities.

[1] Elizabeth Smith, "Where do I go & what do I do? Understanding Postsecondary Transition for Students with Disabilities"
(PowerPoint presentation, NACADA 2022 Annual Conference, Oregon Convention Center, Portland, OR, October 25, 2022).