
STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM A CASE STUDY

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Introduction

The Purpose and Content of the Research

The purpose of this research is to evaluate a three-week intensive English program at an American College. The contents of the research are as follows:

- 1) A summary of the study abroad programs previously administered by Aomori Public College (hereinafter referred to as APC)
- 2) A description of the summer program at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario, Oregon (hereinafter referred to as TVCC)
- 3) An evaluation of students' English skills based upon results from speaking, TOEIC, and TOEFL tests
- 4) An evaluation of the program by the students
- 5) An analysis of students' comments
- 6) Summary and conclusion

When reading this paper, it must be noted that the sample size of students attending the program is very small. As with any small sample there is a risk that the results may not be indicative of general trends. With this in mind, it is the contention of the author that the analysis remains meaningful for the following reasons.

- 1) This analysis may serve as a reference for short-term overseas programs.
- 2) The process of evaluation may be useful as an example for subsequent studies.
- 3) The results should reveal, to a degree, whether a short-term program is worthwhile for APC.

Study Abroad Programs Administered by APC

There have been several overseas programs administered by APC. One is a program sending students to study regular university courses at an institution in the United States (hereafter referred to as U.S.). Another is an English as a Second Language (hereinafter referred to as ESL) program whose primary purpose is to improve English ability. APC has sent one student to the regular university course route. The TOEFL score requirement for entering a regular university course in an American college is 500 (University of Oregon, 1998/99, Southern Illinois University, 1998/99). Since the aforementioned

student attained over 500 on the TOEFL and had the desire to attend, he is currently enrolled at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. From conversations with this student, he is doing quite satisfactory work at the college. APC has sent seven students to an ESL program in the U.S. One student has gone to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois and two students have gone to Portland State University in Portland, Oregon in 1999. In 2000, there were four students enrolled at Marshall University in West Virginia. The students who went to Southern Illinois University and Portland State University increased their TOEFL scores an average of 22.3 points based upon a comparison of November, December, 1998 and February, March 2000 scores. The students who attended Marshall University increased their scores an average of 23.5 points based upon a comparison between April, 1999 and March, 2000 scores. The average gains are stated because one of the characteristic results of a TOEFL test is that most students increase their scores over time, but individual's test scores may go down on certain tests. Thus, realistically, not all seven students could be expected to increase substantially.

As a footnote to the ESL program, another option was investigated prior to sending students to this program. There was a program investigated by the author at the Misawa Military base in Misawa, Japan. This was one that Central Texas College located on the military base offered, and students could enter with a 450 TOEFL score (Central Texas College, 1998/2000). This program was basically a bridge program to assist students to reach 500 TOEFL score in order to enter a regular university course. However, it was discovered that there were no dormitory facilities so the students' exposure to English speaking environment would be minimal. Thus, this program was abandoned and the previously mentioned ESL programs were administered. In order to somehow send more students abroad to study, the summer intensive English program was created.

Summer Intensive English Program at TVCC in Ontario, Oregon

The activation and responsibility for administering the program was undertaken by two of the permanent staff members of the English Department at APC, Ms Katusko Matsubara and the author. Students were enrolled in a three-week intensive English course at TVCC in Ontario, Oregon from August 14 through September 1, 2000. Also, included in the course were two company tours to Micron. Com and Heinz Inc. to allow students to obtain some knowledge of American business activities. The total cost of the program was approximately \$3,000, which was incurred equally by the college and the students. The objectives of the program were to increase English competence as measured by several tests and exposure to other educational programs which would motivate students after they returned to APC as measured by end of fall semester test scores.

Treasure Valley Community College

The institution that the students attended was Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario, Oregon. It is located on a 90-acre campus near the center of Ontario, Oregon, a city of approximately 10,000 people. Campus buildings include residence halls, a professional-technical complex, a multi-purpose activities center, and a modern gymnasium. The library strives to maintain a current collection of reading materials, compact disks, videotaped and satellite courses. It also maintains a computer laboratory with access to word processing, the Internet, full-text periodical databases, and the campus network. It is a two-year college affiliated with the Oregon University system governed by the Oregon State Board of Education and accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Credits obtained from lower division courses are transferable to other state colleges and universities in Oregon. The college serves over 12,000 students annually. The faculty is comprised of fifty full-time instructors and numerous part-time instructors (TVCC, 1999/2000).

The English Department consists of three permanent instructors and several part-time instructors. One full- and several part-time instructors staff the ESL Department. The ESL program at TVCC has been in existence since the creation of the college in 1960. The primary functions of the program are to increase English comprehension and knowledge for students enrolled in the program. Many Hispanic American students live in the area and need to improve their English ability. TVCC's ESL program was one avenue that these students could proceed in order to improve. Also, people of different nationalities were attempting to become naturalized citizens and the citizenship test was in English so they utilized the program. Furthermore, in the 1980s and 1990s, Japanese students attended the college to study undergraduate courses but because their English ability was low, they were also enrolled. The college's ESL program has served various students' needs, foreign as well as those in the local area.

Number, Selection Process, and Gender of Students

At the outset, the selection committee agreed to select five first-year and five second-year students for the program. The rationale was that the students returning from the program could further their English studies and possibly apply for the regular university course route. Also, these students would have at least two years to communicate with other APC students to encourage them to study harder at APC and also to apply for overseas study.

Twenty-nine students applied for the program and from these applicants, ten were selected. The selection committee consisted of four instructors from the English Department and two from the International Program and Services Committee (Director and Assistant Director). Students were interviewed individually over a one-day period. The criterion for selection were 1) English speaking, listening, reading, writing ability, 2)

motivation to learn, 3) social interaction abilities, 4) academic awareness, 5) adjustment to intercultural environment, and 6) self-discipline characteristics. The previous criteria were used because academic learning was the primary focus of the program, but interaction with a foreign environment was imperative. If the students were not motivated to learn, introverted, rigid in assimilating intercultural information, and irresponsible in discipline matters, the intent and benefit received from the program would be nullified. The items for selection were weighted on a scale of one to ten and applicants with the highest total scores were selected.

Of the ten students selected nine were females and one was male. In the original group of twenty-nine that applied, twenty-two were females and seven were males. The importance of the gender information was that safety considerations for the female students would most certainly have to be emphasized. Since Japan is a relatively safe environment, the students were given information concerning the precautions that they would have to be aware of during their stay in the U.S.

After selection, students were given several orientation meetings where more specific information about the program was disseminated. The course outline, company tours, extra-curricular activities, safety factors, money matters, weather information, and environmental conditions were related to the students. Lastly, they were encouraged to improve their English ability before departure. One of the points emphatically emphasized was that they must become active and not passive learners.

Facilities and Non-Academic Activities

The students were housed at Owyhee Dormitory and when they first arrived they were quite reserved and self-conscious. After several days, the students became more expressive and sociable. The students occupied two different floors of the dorm. The females resided on the second floor and the male student lived on the first floor. Sarah Cummings, a R.A. (Resident Assistant), was responsible for assisting and overseeing the students. Moreover, for safety purposes there was a campus security guard on duty close to the dorm twenty-four hours a day. Also, the dorm was occupied by a few full-time students who were staying there before fall session began. APC students were able to interact with them and some of the students developed close friendships. Furthermore, there were computers located on the first floor of the dorm so that the students could e-mail their friends and relatives in Japan.

The cafeteria staff at TVCC provided students' meals. Three meals a day were provided except for those days that the students went off-campus for activities. The meals were almost entirely western style and some of the students stated that they missed Japanese food. The students related that the food was quite satisfactory.

The students were able to enjoy several social activities. On Monday, August 14, after

the English class, TVCC provided an official welcome reception for the students. During their stay, they were invited to eat at two residences in Ontario. Also, they enjoyed eating at several restaurants, which served Mexican, Chinese, and American food. Other activities enjoyed by the group were watching a professional baseball game, horseback riding, watching American movies at a local theater, shopping at several malls, swimming at the local pool, and attending the Western Idaho State Fair in Boise, Idaho. Before returning to Aomori, Japan, the students spent one day and a half in San Francisco, California visiting Fisherman's Wharf, Giradelli Square, and Union Square.

Intensive English Program

The students were enrolled in an intensive English course for three weeks beginning August 14, 2000 and ending September 1, 2000. The following was a daily schedule of classes.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
9:00-10:30	Speaking	Speaking	Speaking
10:30-10:40	Break	Break	Break
10:40-12:00	Reading	Reading	Reading
12:00- 1:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00- 2:00	Listening, Speaking	Listening,Speaking	Listening,Speaking
2:00- 2:30	Break	Free Time	Break
2:30- 3:30	Introduction to Bus.		Introduction to Bus.
3:30-11:00	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time

TIME	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-10:30	Speaking	Speaking
10:30-10:40	Break	Break
10:40-12:00	Reading	Reading
12:00- 1:00	Lunch	Lunch
1:00- 2:00	Listening, Speaking	Listening, Speaking
2:00- 2:30	Free Time	Break
2:30- 3:30		Introduction to Bus.
3:30-11:00	Free Time	Free Time

As can be seen from the previous chart, the students attended classes for five hours Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On Tuesday and Thursdays, they were in class for four hours. Two instructors, Mr. Bill McCurdy and Ms Nadine Goldfoot, taught the English classes. Ms Goldfoot taught the first week and a half and Mr. McCurdy taught the remainder of the time. Mr. McCurdy was familiar with teaching Japanese students for he had taught in Japan for about eight years.

The textbook that the instructors used was "Expressway" by Bill Bliss and Steven J. Molinsky (Bliss & Molinsky, 1997). This textbook provided students with important

vocabulary, grammar, and functional expressions required to communicate at a basic level in a full range of situations and contexts. “Expressways” has an open-ended exercise at the end of each lesson that offers students the opportunity to create and present original conversations based on the theme of the lessons. Students contribute content based on their experiences, ideas, and imaginations. The aforementioned exercises are beneficial and motivational, but require time to activate in class. Therefore, class time and class size are extremely important factors when teaching conversation. This is one of the differences between the classes the students participated in at TVCC and at APC. The class size at TVCC was ten and students received four hours of English instruction each day. At APC, the number of students in class has generally been about twenty-one and the students received four hours of instruction per week. Also, the instructors at TVCC were able to teach one on one for pronunciation exercises. At APC this is almost impossible because of the two factors previously mentioned. Another feature of the course was the treatment of discourse strategies - initiating conversations and topics, hesitating, asking for clarification, and other conversational skills. The reading passages in every chapter were designed to provide interesting and stimulating content for class discussion. Since the students were taught four hours per day, five days per week, they had sufficient time to cover clarification of conversational concepts and discussion of topics. To elucidate the emphasis of not having similar instruction time, at APC, students are taught four hours per week for approximately thirteen weeks. Therefore, the students receive about fifty-two hours of instruction per semester. Whereas at TVCC, they received four hours per day over fifteen days, totaling sixty hours over this time period. The immersion, intensity, and time allotted to teach ten students are probably the most significant differences between the intensive English course at TVCC and one taught at APC.

As a result of the classroom activities, the students became more responsive and would voluntarily ask questions concerning aspects of the conversation they did not understand. The students became more outgoing and would try to converse with other students and acquaintances.

As can be seen from the schedule of classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays the author, covering an introductory course in business, taught the fifth hour. The rationale for this was so that the students would have some background before visiting American companies. Instruction included a summary of principles of organizational structure, planning, marketing, advertising, and types of market conditions. This background information appeared to have helped the students when they visited the two companies. The companies visited were Micron.Com and Heinz Inc. Micron, located in Boise, Idaho, is a personal computer company, which produces computers according to customers' specifications. Its main competitors are Dell and Gateway. The company tour introduced students to computers being assembled from the basic components to the finished products.

Two things that amazed the students were the tight security procedures and that there were no pre-requisites for employment. Assembling the computers was accomplished by viewing an overhead computer, which mapped out the assembly process. The fact that prior experience was not necessary impressed the students because they felt that if one really has the desire to work hard, anything is possible. The second business entity students toured was Heinz Company Inc., a potato-processing firm located in Ontario, Oregon. They produce many different types of processed potato products. The processing was accomplished primarily by automation; therefore the number of employees hired was kept at a minimum. Also, the movement of the raw product was accomplished by the use of water, which transported it from the beginning of the process until the product was air dried and packaged. These two factors were very impressive to the students. The message students recognized and internalized was that people must use their mental capabilities, which would give them an advantage over machines.

Evaluation of Students' Progress

On the first day of class, the students were given a speaking test similar to the ACTFL speaking test (Omaggio, 1986). This test began with very short conversational sentences and at the end progressed to a description of certain graphic materials. The students were given a second test at the end of the three-week session. The results were as follows.

Speaking Test Results			
Date of Test	Score (1-10)	Date of Test	Score (1-10)
8/14/2000	1st.-yr. students	9/1/2000	1st.-yr. students
	5		7
	7		8
	5		7
	6		8
	6		7
	2nd.-yr. students		2nd.-yr. students
	7		9
	4		6
	6		8
	7		8
	6		8

As can be seen from the table, the test was based on a scale of 1-10. The importance of the result is that although the increases were slight for some students, they all increased. This would indicate that the classroom speaking exercises were effective. An observation that the author discerned was that at first the students were reluctant to speak and their pronunciation of certain words was incorrect. However, after the course, students became more self-confident and activated conversation, pronounced certain words better, and their

conversation more fluid. With speaking, the students' facial expressions were more expressive and they became more socially active.

The next measurements employed were pre- and post-course TOEFL tests. One thing that must be noted here is that since Spring Semester of 2000, students were given the option to take the TOEFL or TOEIC test. Three of the first-year students elected to take TOEIC. The tables below will show TOEFL scores for seven of the students and will show the TOEIC scores for three of the students. In analyzing the final increases or decreases, the TOEIC scores were converted to TOEFL scores using a conversion chart distributed by the Educational Testing Center who creates and distributes both tests (Educational Testing Center, 1999) (see appendix A). Following are tables of TOEFL and TOEIC scores for the ten students.

TOEFL SCORES BEFORE AND AFTER SUMMER PROGRAM
First-Year Students

7/00	*Avg. of all Students	9/00 **Score After Program	12/00	***Avg. of All Students	9/00 Gain From 7/00	12/00 Gain From 9/00	12/00 Gain From 7/00
400	429	412	458	412	+12	+46	+58
403		412	437		+9	+25	+34
463		460	497		-3	+37	+34
395		402	387		+7	-15	-8
395		418	430		+23	+12	+35

* 7/00: 80 students took the TOEFL test.
 ** 9/00: TOEFL - practice TOEFL test.
 *** 12/00: 82 students took the TOEFL test

Second-Year Students

7/99	*Avg. of All Students	9/00 **Score After Program	12/00	Avg. of All Students	9/00 Gain From 7/00	12/00 Gain From 9/00	12/00 Gain From 7/00
423	406	443	447	412	+20	+4	+24
417		433	463		+16	+30	+46
480		446	Did not take test				
470		463	490		-7	+27	+20
480		493	487		+13	-6	+7.

* 7/99: 347 students took the TOEFL test.
 ** 9/00: TOEFL-practice TOEFL test

BEFORE AND AFTER TOEFL LISTENING, GRAMMAR, READING SCORES

First Year Students	Listening	Grammar	Reading	* Total
7/00	48	45	46	463
12/00	<u>52</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>497</u>
	+4	+5	+1	+34

7/00	41	36	44	403
12/00	<u>43</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>437</u>
	+2	+11	-3	+34

* Total score-converted TOEFL score

BEFORE AND AFTER TOEIC LISTENING, READING SCORES

	Listening	Reading	Total	TOEFL Conversion
7/00	225	170	395	400
12/00	<u>305</u>	<u>215</u>	<u>520</u>	<u>458</u>
	+80	+45	+125	+58
7/00	210	155	365	395
12/00	<u>185</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>340</u>	<u>387</u>
	-25	0	-25	-8
7/00	245	125	370	395
12/00	<u>260</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>430</u>
	+15	+65	+80	+35

BEFORE AND AFTER TOEFL LISTENING, GRAMMAR, READING SCORES

Second Year Students	Listening	Grammar	Reading	*Total
7/99	44	45	38	423
12/00	<u>47</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>447</u>
	+3	+2	+2	+24
7/99	44	46	35	417
12/00	<u>44</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>463</u>
	0	+7	+7	+46
7/99	44	47	53	480
12/00	Did not take test			
7/99	44	47	50	470
12/00	<u>49</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>490</u>
	+5	+4	-3	+20
7/99	44	51	49	480
12/00	<u>48</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>487</u>
	+4	+3	-5	+7

* Total score-converted TOEFL score

The pre- and post- TOEFL scores indicate that four of the first-year students and four of the second-year students increased their scores. For the first-year students, the gains from July to September 2000 were 12, 9, 7, and 23 points. There was one student whose score decreased 3. The decrease in score seen by one student is characteristic of the TOEFL and TOEIC test and no one can really explain why this occurs. Although there may be a decrease in individual tests, the scores generally go up over time. Therefore, it is much safer to look at several scores rather than just one. The gains from September to December 2000, were 46, 25, 37, and 12. One student decreased 15 points and it should be noted that it was not the same student that decreased between July to September. The largest gains can be seen from July 2000, which was just before the summer program, to December 2000, which would be one semester after the program. The gains were 58, 34, 34, and 35. One student decreased by 8 points. Another factor that should be noted is that in July one student was above the average of all students, but in December four out of five of the students were above the average of all students. The July 1999 TOEFL scores were applied for second-year students because after the first year, English is not required and some of the students didn't take the TOEFL in 2000. It should be noted here concerning TOEFL and TOEIC score results that applying the theory of learning curves, students who have a higher TOEFL score would not be expected to increase as much as students who obtained lower TOEFL scores. The tables point out that the second-year students had higher scores prior to the program than the first-year students, therefore realistically the second-year students could not be expected to make as dramatic an increase as the first-year students. The second-year students' gains from July 1999 to September 2000 were 20, 16, and 13. One student went down 7 points. From September to December 2000, the gains were 4, 30, and 27. One student went down 6 points. The gains from July 1999 to December 2000 were 24, 46, 20 and 7 points. Here again, what is significant in looking at the scores from July 1999 to December 2000 is that all students that took the test obtained gains. What can be stated about the results of the scores is that for the first-year students 80% of them increased from July to September, 80% increased from September to December, and 80% increased from July to December. As for the second-year students, 75% increased from July to September, 75% increased from September to December and 100% increased from July to December for those students taking the test. As the chart exhibits one student did not take the December test.

As revealed by the table showing the individual listening, grammar, and reading scores, the results indicate that although speaking and listening were emphasized, most of the students increased in all three areas. Also, the first-year students increased more than the second-year students although an absolute statistical comparison cannot be calculated because three of the students took TOEIC and the components of the scores on the TOEFL and TOEIC tests are different. Although scores on one test cannot be considered

equivalent to scores on the other test, general comparisons can be made (Educational Testing Service, 1999). TOEFL has three designations and TOEIC has two. The TOEIC combines grammar and reading into one section. Observing most of the students, some increased in listening, while others increased in grammar and reading. The initial assumption by the author was that since speaking and listening were emphasized, students would increase their listening scores but not their other scores. The results indicate otherwise. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the immersion and the class instruction contributed to increasing all areas related to the TOEIC and TOEFL test for the majority of the students. Two other studies of a similar nature are worth noting here. One is a study by Erich White at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho and another is a study conducted by Masaaki, Matsumoto at the Yasuda Women's College in Hiroshima, Japan. The study by Erich White was two consecutive eight-week intensive English courses in which the majority of the students increased their TOEFL scores. In fact, five students scored between 500-587 (White, 2000) (see appendix B). Another study by Masaaki Matsumoto received similar results. Fourteen students attended a three-month business course at California State University in San Bernardino, California. Here, the analysis was based upon TOEIC score improvements. Before the overseas program, only one student in the group had a score higher than the average of other students taking the test. However, after returning from the program, nine of the fourteen members obtained scores higher than the average of all students. The fourteen students increased their average scores 149.3 points (Matsumoto, 2000) (see appendix C).

A pre- and post- ICAP test was administered to the students. This test describes graphically whether personality characteristics have changed. After reviewing the results, it was concluded that there were no significant differences. This was to be expected because three weeks is certainly too short a time for any significant personality changes.

Students' Evaluation of the Program

The following are responses from the students concerning the summer program. The comments are not edited and are the actual words written by the students. Of the ten comments there was only one negative comment, but this individual was contradictory about the remarks that were written.

1. "It (the program) was useful for me, and I could understand what I should do and improve if I come to U.S. again."
"My thinking is that this program should be stopped because a few girls always speak Japanese aloud when they gather or meet each other. So it is very nonsense for them. Some girls made a noise every night until midnight while I was reading books. They often bothered me. If they used English, I wouldn't care about them. However, they

mainly speak Japanese.” The same person made the above comments.

2. “After I took this summer program, I changed. First, I became to join any conversations in English among people who speak it. Next I realized with conversation is that it is important to pronounce exactly.”
3. “As a result of this short studying abroad it made my hope for studying abroad in my future very strong. I will study English harder now, and study Japan also. It was really precious experience in my life. I won’t forget everything about this trip.”
4. “I was ashamed myself because I have studied English for six years but I can speak a little. I decide that study more and more. I found the most important thing is curiosity. Fearing to talk, there was no communications. It’s my treasure to meet many foreigner.”
5. “English class was useful to speak English. It was different from Japanese style. I really enjoyed this three weeks. I’ll never forget this experience because this is my treasure. I learned not only English but also the importance to have warm heart when I meet people. I think I grew up myself in this experience.”
6. “I could experience many things in the U.S.A. At the start, it’s food. I was determined to eat many meat meals. At first I felt resistance but I got used to eat these foods little by little. At first, I could not talk with friends. So, I gathered up courage to talk with them in English. Then I could talk with them very well, I had confidence in my speaking. Things I learned were ‘Never give up’ and ‘No pain, no gain’. I think these mottoes are very helpful in studies as well as life itself.”
7. “I had a lot of experiences in the U.S. It was new to me to stay in dorm, but I could meet people and they taught me many things. The class was very interesting to me and I could practice speaking. It was a great opportunity to see American Company Micron and Heinz. I was surprised the amount of machine. I found American Company is a little different from Japanese one. To get a job in Micron, don’t need much prior experience. If I make effort, I can do anything. But if I am lazy, it’s my responsibility. I feel I had a broad outlook and growth from this experience.”
8. “For many reasons this program was good. It was the first time to go abroad. We could get wide view more than before. We could make friends with many foreigners. The best thing for me is I could recognize what I most wish to do. I’ll study English more hard. Students in the U.S. study very hard. They learn things faster and more than us. I think I can realize my plan for my dream to meet and talk to many people. I hope this will help me to do well in the future.”
9. “I was surprised that my listening skills allowed me to understand English conversation. But I am not satisfied with my conversation skill. So, I want to continue studying English as hard as possible. Also, I should read many English books as I can while I am a college student. From this program I learned and think that ‘knowledge is power’. I think this experience is useful not only my college life but also my life.”

10. "I experienced wonderful event while I stayed in America. I was not good at speaking so it was my goal to strengthen the speaking. I found the most effective study is speak with native actually. I could experience not only studying but also living in America. I will make good use of this opportunity. I think this experience will be the most precious memory during my college life. I will study English continuously."

Analysis of Students' Comments

The students' comments attest to the fact that the majority of them returned with a positive motivated attitude towards learning. There was only one negative comment, but even this individual admitted that the program provided self-enrichment, and pointed out areas for self-improvement. The criticism from this individual about other students speaking in Japanese when they gathered together is warranted. This is a problem with a group study abroad program, however, this should not be the sole criterion to determine whether the program is successful or not. Other students remarked that to improve speaking they must actively join in conversations and pronounce words correctly otherwise they would not be understood. Once students practiced this, they gained self-confidence and initiated conversations instead of always being the recipient. Although the above were stressed in English classes at APC, students did not realize this until they actually experienced it. Before this program, several students had the desire to study abroad but were doubtful about proceeding on such a course. However, the program served as reinforcement and renewed conviction to apply for a longer study abroad program. Another important factor that was continually stressed at APC is that students should apply themselves concerning subjects taught at APC. During the program, there were several students that realized that they had not studied very hard and returned with renewed motivation to concentrate on them. Here again, actual experience was necessary to convince the students. Another observation made by the students concerned the tours of American businesses. They pointed out that they were enlightening, interesting, and educational, which resulted in motivating them to put forth effort concerning future tasks. Comments also related that it was difficult at first to adjust to the new environment and culture, but that eventually this was accomplished. This points out that tolerance and receptiveness were acquired from the experience. One of the most profound comments by a student was the realization that with knowledge comes the ability and the power to accomplish a multitude of tasks. There was also the awareness that vocabulary is essential to speaking and that reading is one of the most effective methods of accomplishing this. Lastly, students stated that the classes were beneficial, but apparently exposure to American academic culture and life-styles left a lasting impression upon them which in essence motivated them to improve their English competence as evidenced by their test scores in December. A subjective evaluation from the author's point of view is that

students became more gregarious and their demeanor more luminous. This should serve them well after they graduate and seek jobs. The experience the students received should allow their vision to become more expansive and their aspiration level much higher. Their comments relating to certain mottos, the competitiveness of American college students, and American businesses indicate that they indeed became more open-minded.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper is an evaluation of the summer overseas study program established by APC. Ten students attended an intensive English program at TVCC in Ontario, Oregon for a duration of three weeks in the summer of 2000. APC and the students financed the program equally. In addition to English studies, the students were exposed to many cultural and academic aspects of an American college environment. This section will summarize students' experiences, dilemma encountered by a group study abroad program, evaluation of the program and the selection criterion, recommendations for the English Department at APC, and suggestions for future short-term programs.

Students' Experiences

Traveling abroad appeared to have opened new horizons for them. Their frame of reference for life and their future aspirations become much broader. Moreover, the students became aware that they could become independent. Their English ability improved considerably and more importantly, they realized that nothing could be obtained unless one expends the energy, effort, and time. They learned that one couldn't remain passive or complacent and grow. The previous statements can be supported by their improvements in English as evidenced by their test scores and comments related by the students. Although the time abroad was short, the lessons learned by the students appears to have been internalized and should provide positive results for their future.

A Dilemma Encountered by a Group Study Abroad Program

One of the problems that probably a group study abroad program cannot overcome or avoid easily is that when a group of students congregated in a foreign country, they conversed in their native language. This was a major problem and could have been somewhat alleviated if the students were roomed with American students or in a home-stay environment. The reality is that for many APC students this was the first time they were away from their families and friends for an extended period of time. Without support from their fellow students, some of them could not have endured the program. They would have become homesick and would have had to be sent home. Several students related this. For mature, independent individuals, isolation from native language and culture is acceptable

and extremely beneficial, but for those who are immature, this situation would probably be unsuitable and unbearable.

Evaluation of the Program and The Selection Criteria

The program, reviewing it from academic results obtained and whether the selection criteria were appropriate, appears to be viable. Since the program has been in effect for only one year, it is premature to make a definite evaluation of the results of future programs, but as indicated in the body of the paper, the current outcome is favorable as supported by improvements in test scores and subsequent results in December for the majority of the attending students. In reviewing the original selection criteria and evaluating whether these were appropriate and effective, the results indicate this. The students' English abilities increased as evidenced by several evaluation tools such as the speaking, TOEFL, and TOEIC tests. The students were motivated to improve their speaking abilities and from this became more outgoing and would initiate conversation with American students and instructors. Some students did suffer from culture shock, but all of them overcame this and attempted to assimilate some of the culture and customs from America. Safety was one of the big concerns, but the students responded very well to advice presented by the people responsible for the program. From the above, it can be stated that the selection criteria and the program itself were positive initial steps toward encouraging students to participate in the short-term study abroad program.

Recommendations for the English Department

The study abroad program should motivate and encourage English instructors to develop programs to reinforce and advance students' abilities. It is essential to set standards of proficiency which the students must meet. The program should prepare students with sufficient ability to allow them to converse with native speakers and comprehend directions, cautions, etc. written in English. The summer session can be used as an interim goal for the English program, and upon the students return to APC, reinforcement and advancement should be the goals so that measurable improvements will be obtained. It is the opinion of the author that the current English program can be improved. This relates to students who are in the upper level of their class. These students should be given a challenging and fairly difficult course of study. Although the department has received criticism from internal and external sources, as far as the students that attended the summer program, the English preparation was sufficient and the results satisfactory. One of the goals that the English Department has been striving to attain since the inception of APC is to send students to an American university to study regular courses. To accomplish this, the English Department needs to improve its program in certain areas and stress to the admissions committee that students with higher English proficiency should be recruited and admitted.

Suggestions for Future Short-Term Programs

The summer program initiated in 2000 is still in its infancy, but from the results, APC should continue this program and data could then be collected and analyzed for continual improvement.

Some suggestions for future programs are as follows.

1. APC students should be housed in a dormitory with American roommates.
2. Weekend home-stays with American families should be arranged.
3. The duration of the program should be four weeks thereby allowing more exposure.
4. More students should be allowed to participate in the program (fifteen-twenty students).
5. A certain number of the students should have TOEFL scores above 430 (five out of fifteen or five out of twenty students).
6. The course instruction for the five students should be more rigorous and challenging than the courses for the others in order to improve to the point where they can take regular university courses.
7. English staff should serve as coordinators of the program, but the day to day responsibility for the students should lie with the institution conducting the program.
8. Medical insurance should be handled by an American insurance company because most doctors and clinics will not accept Japanese medical insurance.

As previously mentioned, it is the author's opinion that the summer program should be continued. Furthermore, the students that attended the program will be monitored and records will be kept of their future achievements. This should reveal whether there would be continual positive motivational results that can be statistically measured. The students' comments certainly indicate that they are grateful to APC for making this opportunity available to them. Lastly, the instructors in charge of this program want to express their appreciation and gratitude to the students and to APC for allowing the summer program to be initiated.

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Appendix

APPENDIX A

TOEFL, TOEIC CONVERSION TABLE

The research accomplished by TOEIC Service International indicates that there is a fairly strong relationship between the TOEIC and TOEFL ITP tests ($r = .75$). People who score highly on one test will also tend to score highly on the other. However, while the two tests are broadly related in that they both measure English proficiency, the purposes, uses, scales, and context of the two tests are different. Therefore, only general comparisons should be made between scores on the two tests.

Score Range Comparisons

TOEIC	TOEFL
50 - 100	272 - 291
100 - 150	291 - 311
150 - 200	311 - 331
200 - 250	331 - 351
250 - 300	351 - 371
300 - 350	371 - 390
350 - 400	390 - 410
400 - 450	410 - 430
450 - 500	430 - 450
500 - 550	450 - 470
550 - 600	470 - 489
600 - 650	489 - 509
650 - 700	509 - 529
700 - 750	529 - 549
750 - 800	549 - 569
800 - 850	569 - 588
850 - 900	588 - 608
900 - 950	608 - 628
950 - 990	628 - 644

*This table is based on an analysis of the scores of a group of 360 examinees and is intended to serve as a guideline only and will not necessarily apply equally to every individual.

**Source: Educational Testing Service, 1999

APPENDIX B

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY SHORT-TERM INTENSIVE ENGLISH STUDIES 2000

Number of Students	Duration	Incoming TOEFL	Outgoing TOEFL
19	8 weeks (2 consecutive courses)	360-520	390-587
9 out of 19 students 450-587			
4			450-500
5			500-587

*Source: Erich White, 2000

APPENDIX C

TOEIC RESULTS (BETA 1999)
YASUDA WOMEN'S COLLEGE, HIROSHIMA, JAPAN
– Comparison of Average Score –

			Change
Listening	Pre-course	198.6	
	Post-course	278.6	80 points
Reading	Pre-course	132.9	
	Post-course	203.6	70.7 points
Total	Pre-course	331.4	
	Post-course	480.7	149.3 points

1. The data above derived from a study conducted at Yasuda Women's College in Hiroshima, Japan in 1999.
2. The above chart indicate results received from fourteen students attending a three month business course in English at California State University, San Bernardino, California.
3. The pre-course test was administered on 12/19/1998. The post-course test was administered on 5/8/1999.
4. As can be seen from the total score, fourteen students increased their average scores from 331.4 before the course to 480.7 after the course, a change of 149.3 points.

*Source: Masaaki Matsumoto, 2000