

RYUGAKU

STUDY ABROAD N-SIG NEWSLETTER

The SA N-SIG

Find out more about one of the newest additions to JALT

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ABOUT THE STUDY ABROAD N-SIG

We are really pleased that the Study Abroad Special Interest Group (SA SIG) has been officially recognized as a forming SIG. We look forward to providing language teachers, students, study abroad professionals and institutions committed to international education with opportunities to reflect on the issues and concerns related to study abroad. In addition to creating an avenue for dialogue among its' members, the Study Abroad N-SIG aims to publish insightful essays, thought-provoking research articles, interviews and book reviews to add to the innovation and development of this area which needs and deserves attention. This is a new group and there are a few executive and non-executive positions which have yet to be filled. If you are interested in becoming part of this exciting new group and having an influence on the future of study abroad research in Japan, please contact Andrew Atkins or Todd Thorpe at studyabroadsig@gmail.com for more information.

Meet the Executive Officers



Coordinator
Andrew Atkins



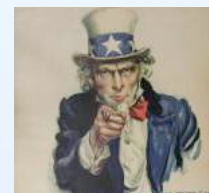
Program Chair
Publicity Chair
Todd Thorpe



Membership
Chair
Russell Hubert



Publications
Chair
Byron O'Neill



**We want you for SA SIG!
Positions still available!
See Page 9 for more.**

Important Issues in International Study

Daniel J. McIntyre

Author: *Developing a Unified Conception of Long-Term Overseas Study* (ProQuest UMI)

Introduction:

The international experiences of individuals and the concept of *internationalization* were principal driving forces of governmental educational policy of Japan in the Meiji era. The educational system has seen an increasing intensification of the focus on *re-internationalization* over the past 60 years. The JET program has undertaken to introduce foreign language and culture to youth in the educational system on a massive scale. Many universities in Japan have sought to expand their international exchange programs. Educational planners have formed new departments that are based on the premise of an interdisciplinary approach to international issues. Some educational planners have also established new campuses that are specifically intended to serve the needs of Japanese students who have returned from abroad, and students in Japan who are from abroad. Educational planners have also begun to design curricula that include overseas study as a required component for graduation. These phenomena have coincided with an accelerated advance of Information and Communications Technology, and globalization in general, that has resulted in a heightened global interest in the place and importance of overseas study in formal curricula; and a heightened interest in the interplay between language learning and cultural adaptation. In the broadest terms, it has been increasingly recognized throughout the world that institutionally sponsored overseas study has the potential to afford opportunities for language learning, personal development, cross-cultural understanding and adaptation, and might even contribute to the achievement of world peace.

In light of the above, the formation of a Study Abroad N-SIG of the Japan Association for Language Teaching is timely and significant. The curricular development of overseas study programs should be principled and methodical. This raises several issues that should be thoroughly discussed and researched.

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Important Issues:

The establishment of the Study Abroad N-SIG at this time is critical, and it raises several critical issues that should be discussed, researched, and resolved. I will briefly describe some of them. It should be noted that I have not presented them in a chronological sequence, or in order of importance. It should also be noted that these critical issues are not exclusive to Japanese as a cultural/linguistic group. These issues have implications for members of any cultural/linguistic group who participate in formal study abroad in home context, host context, or both.

1. Culture influences individual tendencies to adopt attitudes and beliefs. In a specific study abroad context, what are the discrepancies in the mutual role expectations among the three principal groups of participants: the sojourners, the educators of the home institution, and the educators of the host institution? How can discrepancies be reconciled?
2. How do professional staff and immediate stakeholders (i.e., administrators, teachers, and students) conceptualize the process, conditions, and desired outcomes of overseas study?
3. What are the specific learner needs (e.g., academic, linguistic, and cultural needs) that should be bolstered in preparation programs for overseas study?
4. How can the needs of sojourners be addressed by formal instruction?
5. What are appropriate curricular goals that instructional designers should incorporate into the construction of the preparation and overseas phases of study abroad programs?
6. What are desirable characteristics of the techniques and activities of instruction?
7. What tangible curricular objectives can be set to reflect the achievement of the competencies that the sojourners need?
8. The current mean of Japanese takers of the TOEFL iBT is 65. The overwhelming majority of

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tertiary institutions in North America require a minimum score of 71 for participation in long-term overseas study. Is it feasible to use dedicated TOEFL preparation courses to bridge this gap? If so, how should such test preparation courses be designed?

9. Sojourners often report experiencing pre-departure anxiety. What are the sources of pre-departure anxiety? What are remedies for pre-departure anxiety?

I would like to thank the organizers of the forming Study Abroad N-SIG of JALT for their interest and work in this field, and for giving me the opportunity to nominate these critical issues for discussion. They should be highly commended. I hope that the group will develop into a vibrant forum that will contribute to the personal development and the achievement of the objectives of sojourners, and the advancement of international understanding locally and globally.

Best wishes and bon voyage.



About the Author:

Daniel J. McIntyre is managing director of Creative Communications. He has taught at universities in the United States and Japan. He came to Japan in 1989 under the auspices of an international faculty exchange. He has also participated in the design and implementation of four preparation programs for overseas study for Japanese university students. He has published four research papers and completed a doctoral dissertation on the topic of long-term overseas study. Two more articles on this topic are forthcoming. He was a member of the editorial advisory board of *The Language Teacher* from 1995 to 2007. From 1996 to 2005, he was editor of two occasional columns for that publication that focused on Instructional Design. His academic interests include Activity Theory, Instructional Design, Contrastive Rhetoric, computer-mediated instruction, and English for Academic purposes.

Fostering Communication with Student Portfolios

Todd Thorpe

Learner English Level: Junior High to University

Time: 8-10 weeks (meeting once a week)

Introduction:

Having students make portfolios about their life in Japan can help them learn more about individual differences and culture in their own country and also facilitate communication with their host family and friends while abroad. The portfolios my students made consisted of five sections and each section was two pages in length. The five sections I used for my class were:

1. About Me 2. About My Family 3. About My School Life 4. Life as a ____year old in Japan 5. Popular Culture in Japan
Students were encouraged to use drawings, photographs and color when constructing their portfolio and every class they used their portfolio for speaking practice. See Figure 1 and 2 on the next page for an example of a finished *About My School* section.

The Procedure I followed:

Week 1:

Give the students some examples of what they could include in each of the five sections. Before assigning the first section, ask students to fill out a photo/drawing log to help them organize their thoughts. See Figure 3 on the next page for an example of a photo/drawing log.

Week 2:

Check the students' photo/drawing log and correct their photo and drawing descriptions. Students will have to take the photos they want to include in each section and then get them developed. If students don't own a digital camera, they can use the camera on their cellular phone.

Week 3:

Assign the *About Me* section of the portfolio. Encourage students to be creative and use a lot of color.

Week 4:

Ask the students to find a partner and describe the *About Me* section of their portfolio. Change partners and continue practicing. If students have difficulties describing their photographs or drawings, tell them to refer to their descriptions in their photo log. Assign the *About My Family* section.

Week 5:

Again in pairs, have students explain the two sections they have finished to their partner. Switch partners and continue talking. Encourage the listeners to ask questions after their partner has finished explaining each section. Assign the *About My School Life* section.

Week 6:

Ask the students to form groups of three or four and describe the first three sections of their portfolio. Change groups and continue practicing. Encourage the listeners to ask questions after their group members have finished explaining each section. Assign the *Life as a ____year old* section.

Week 7:

Ask the students to form groups of three or four and describe the four sections they have finished. Change groups and continue practicing. Encourage the listeners to ask questions after their group members have finished explaining each section. Assign the *Popular Culture in Japan* section.

Week 8:

Get the students to form groups of three or four and talk about each section in their portfolio. Change groups and continue practicing. Listeners should once again ask questions after their partners have finished explaining each section.

Week 9:

Get each student to present their portfolio to the entire class.



Figure 1: About My School Life Section (page 1)



Figure 2: About My School Life Section (page 2)

Picture / Drawing #	Section	What will the photograph / drawing be of?	Description of the photograph /drawing	(✓) the box after taking the photograph
Ex.	School Life	A picture of the cafeteria	This is where many students eat their lunch. The food is delicious and it is cheap. We have forty minutes to eat our lunch.	✓
1	School Life			
2	School Life			
3	School Life			
4	School Life			
5	School Life			
6	About Me			
7	About Me			

Figure 3: Photo/Drawing Log



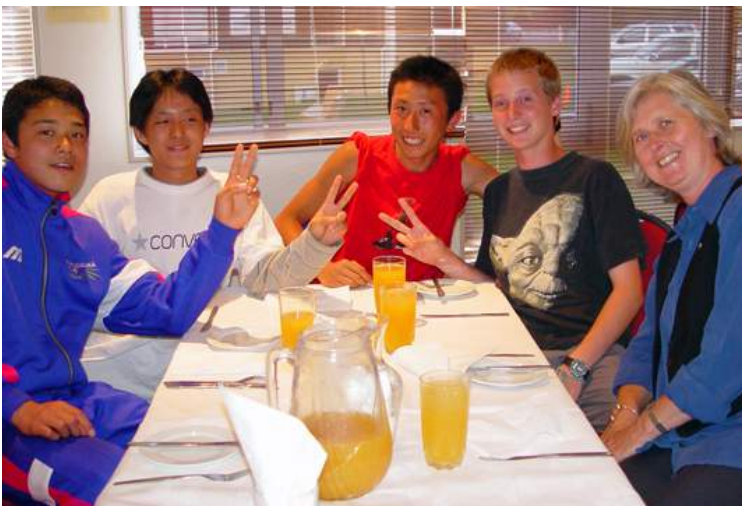
New Zealand – only ten hours by air from Tokyo - is a popular destination for Japanese to study English, do some sightseeing, and enjoy a sports-filled vacation. Since Japan and New Zealand have a working holiday program, young people can stay for varying periods of time so that they can learn English and pay their way by working, often part-time.

Volunteer assistant teacher programs allow university students, graduates or trainee teachers to experience school life in New Zealand and to contribute positively to Japanese language classes.

High School students can join **study abroad** homestay programs and become part of a Kiwi family for periods ranging from several weeks to a year or more while attending a local secondary school.

School groups can sample the New Zealand way of life, combining English classes with outdoor activities and sightseeing and join regular classes with a buddy to help.

For further information on study abroad programs, volunteer teaching, education group visits or sister school relations please contact Paddy O'Grady [ogrady@xtra.co.nz].



Would you like your business or school to be in the SA spotlight?

Single insertion:

Full page: ¥5,000

Half Page: ¥2,500

Quarter Page: ¥1,250

For more information about advertising in *Ryugaku*, contact Todd Thorpe at studyabroadsig@gmail.com

Student Experiences: Eri Kishimoto

I would like to write about my short study abroad experience during the summer of 2007. I am a fourth-year university student who went to Sydney, Australia to study English for two weeks. It was the first time for me to study abroad by myself.

Getting to Australia was an adventure in itself. First, I chose a bad route to reach Sydney. I live in Kyoto, but my plane left from Narita Airport to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. When I arrived, I didn't know where I was. Next, while I waited for my connection to Sydney, I found out that the airplane had engine trouble. I waited over 12 hours for the repairs to be completed, and ended up taking a flight to Melbourne and having to stay the night. However, two good things happened-- I made some Japanese friends during the wait, and there were many people at the Port Moresby airport who were kind. After arriving at the hotel in Melbourne, I had dinner and went out to a casino with my new Japanese friends.

I got up at 4 a.m. to catch the plane to Sydney. I went to the school directly from the airport by taxi. I had to attend an orientation meeting for studying English there and take a placement test. Everything had to be done in English, and I had to use all of my courage to do it. Two women and a man, who were also Japanese and about my age, started studying English at the GEOS school at the same time as me. I had a good opportunity to become friendly with them. After I was done at school, I immediately went to my host house. My host-family members consisted of a mother, grandfather, and puppy. They were very kind and took really good care of me. When first meeting them, I cried because I was happy to finally see them and arrive there safely.

In school, I studied English conversation, IELTS for life in Australia, and about how to express myself better in English. There were many teachers from Ireland, Canada, England, and other countries. It was very hard for me to understand Irish English, so I didn't take her class. But all of the teachers were very good at teaching English. They motivated me to study more.

While I had a lot of trouble getting to Sydney, I learned a lot. This experience will help me in the future. I should have researched everything more carefully before going, but I feel it was really good for me to study abroad.

WANTED

***People interested in SA N-SIG Executive or
Non-Executive Officer Positions***

Executive Officer Positions:

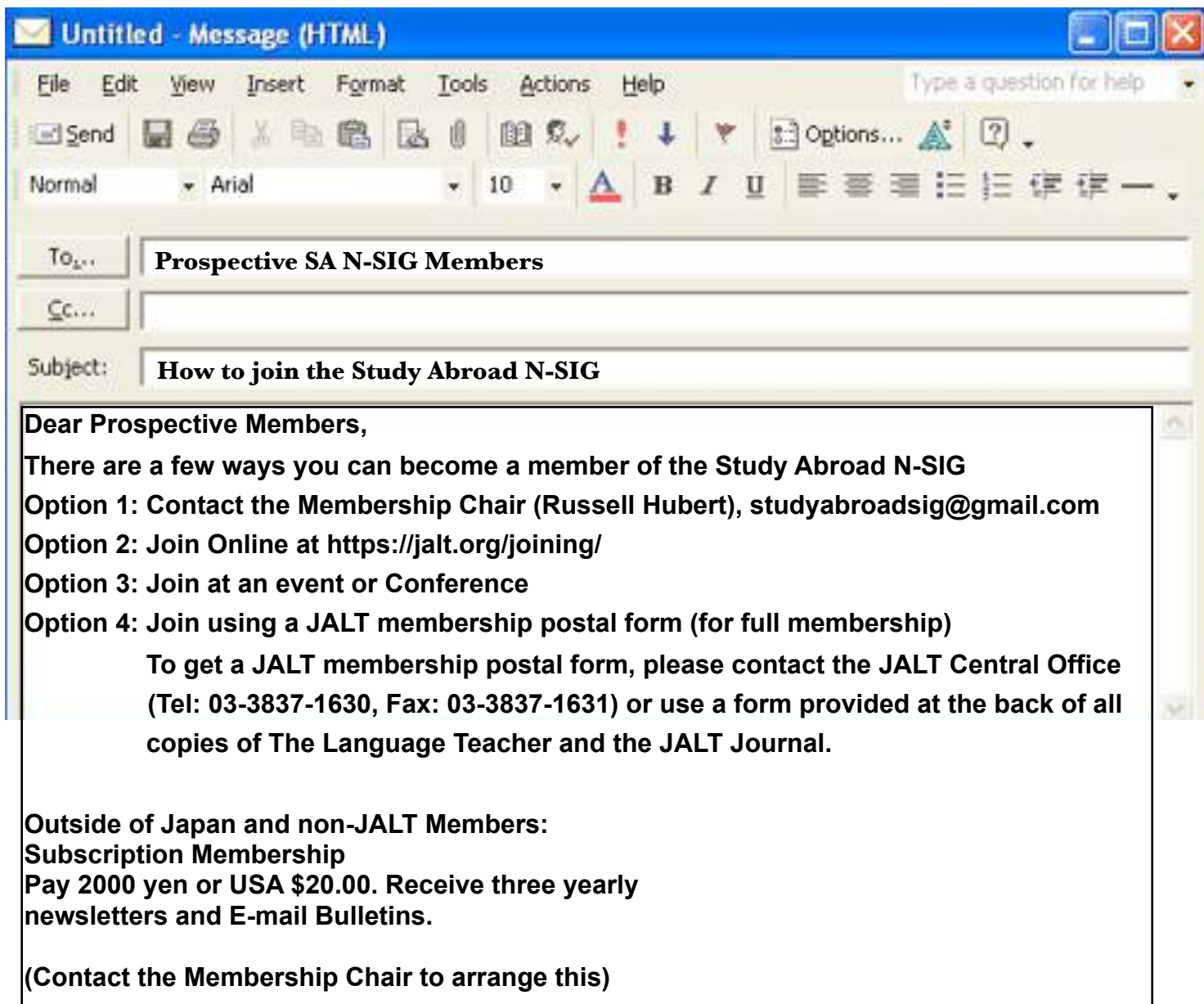
1. Treasurer

Non-Executive Officer Positions:

1. Recording Secretary

2. Member-at-Large

If you are interested in or have questions about any of these positions, please contact the Study Abroad N-SIG at studyabroadsig@gmail.com



Dear Prospective Members,

There are a few ways you can become a member of the Study Abroad N-SIG

Option 1: Contact the Membership Chair (Russell Hubert), studyabroadsig@gmail.com

Option 2: Join Online at <https://jalt.org/joining/>

Option 3: Join at an event or Conference

Option 4: Join using a JALT membership postal form (for full membership)

To get a JALT membership postal form, please contact the JALT Central Office (Tel: 03-3837-1630, Fax: 03-3837-1631) or use a form provided at the back of all copies of The Language Teacher and the JALT Journal.

Outside of Japan and non-JALT Members:
Subscription Membership
Pay 2000 yen or USA \$20.00. Receive three yearly newsletters and E-mail Bulletins.

(Contact the Membership Chair to arrange this)



***Don't miss
these:
JALT events!***

7th Annual Pan-SIG Conference

May 10-11, 2008 at Doshisha University, Kyoto
<http://www.jalt.org/pansig/2008/index.html>
(The SA N-SIG will have a table at this event)

JALT2008 and PAC7 International Conference

October 31-November 3, 2008 at
National Olympic Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo
(Deadline for abstracts: April 25, 2008)
<http://jalt.org/conference>

***Ryugaku* Submission Guidelines**

Submissions related to Study Abroad are welcome in the following categories:

1. Feature articles: 1500-3000 words
2. Short articles: Maximum 1000 words
3. Interviews
4. Classroom Ideas: Maximum 1500 words
5. Book reviews
6. Study abroad program reviews
7. Study abroad experiences from students: Lets hear what our students have to say!

Format for submissions:

1. Attached Microsoft Word document
2. Limit the use of bold and italics in the document

Please send all submissions and inquires about submissions by e-mail to studyabroadsig@gmail.com

The submission deadline for the November 2008 issue of *Ryugaku* is September 30th, 2008.

