

# RYUGAKU

## STUDY ABROAD N-SIG NEWSLETTER

### The SA N-SIG

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## STUDY ABROAD N-SIG PRE-CONFERENCE ISSUE

The Study Abroad Special Interest Group (SA SIG) is a forming SIG officially recognized by the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). 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. If you are interested in having an influence on the future of study abroad research in Japan, please contact us at [studyabroadsig@gmail.com](mailto:studyabroadsig@gmail.com) for more information.

This pre-conference issue highlights 14 sessions related to Study Abroad that will be presented at the 34th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning, Tokyo, Japan, from October 31-November 3, 2008. *All dates, times, and room numbers are subject to change. Please reconfirm the schedule with the conference book.*

### Meet the Executive Officers



Coordinator  
Andrew Atkins



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Todd Thorpe



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Chair  
Byron O'Neill



**We want you for  
SA SIG!**

## Effectiveness of a Short-term Study Abroad Program Culture Shock and Japanese Students Overseas

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)  
**Presentation Time:** 11:15-11:40  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 412  
**Presentation Title:** Effectiveness of a Short-term Study Abroad Program  
**Presenters:** Yasushi Sekiya, Siwon Park, Yasuko Ito

**Abstract:** In their empirical studies on the effectiveness of a short-term study abroad program, Sekiya and Park (2007a, 2007b) argued that learners in their programs had made sizable gains in multi-aspects of English oral proficiency. However, their findings were based on gain score analyses, and they did not address to what extent learners' actual speech had gone through linguistic changes. In this presentation, we report a similar study to Sekiya and Park; yet, based on both gain scores and speech sample analyses. The speech samples that the learners produced before and after the program were analyzed to examine linguistic changes that they were able to make in the program. We first analyzed the gain scores for each five oral proficiency category - pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and communicative skills. We then examined the speech samples for their linguistic quality and quantity collected from the pre- and post group oral exams that the learners sat. For quality, we used mean length of T-units, mean length of clause, and mean number of clauses per T-unit for complexity, percentage of error-free T-units for accuracy, and standardized TTR-50 for lexical diversity. For quantity, the numbers of tokens, types, and turns were counted from the speech samples. In our presentation, we will first briefly introduce the features of our short-term study abroad programs. We will then discuss the results of the gain score analysis as well as linguistic measures. Finally, we will suggest pedagogical implications of our study to those who are to develop similar programs.

**Format:** Poster Session  
**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)  
**Presentation Time:** 12:15-14:15  
**Presentation Length:** 120 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** EME  
**Presentation Title:** Culture Shock and Japanese Students Overseas  
**Presenter:** Reinier Mikami

**Abstract:** Although several communication scholars have tried to discover causes of culture shock, there are different factors and variables in each cultural encounter (Hall, 1976; Kluckhohns & Strodtbeck, 1960; Kim, 2006). Hoff (1976) and Hofstede (1986) suggest that the style of education differs from one culture to another. Therefore, this aspect of a student's study abroad may be a major part of their culture shock. For Japanese exchange students, there are numerous differences between education in Japan and in places such as the U.S. These include the 4 cultural dimensions suggested by Hofstede: Individualism-Collectivism, Masculinity-Feminity, High and Low Uncertainty avoidance, and Large and Small Power distance. Two questionnaires were administered to 26 Japanese students in their third or fourth year of studies who had finished a year of studies overseas. The first questionnaire measured academic, relational, and environmental problems with Social Readjustment Rating Scale (Jou & Fukuda, 1996). The second questionnaire incorporated terms from Hofstede's cultural dimensions and education in order to identify students' cultural value (1986). These two questionnaires would find out whether the students have the same problems and cultural dimensions as in the previous findings. The findings from this research will help both teachers and university administrators in better preparing Japanese students for educational exchange programs.

## Discussing Issues Related to Study Abroad Help Students Prepare for a Homestay or Short Trip

**Format:** Forum

**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)

**Presentation Time:** 13:15-14:55

**Presentation Length:** 100 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** Discussing Issues Related to Study Abroad

**Presenters:** Todd Thorpe, Andrew Atkins, Byron O'Neill, Russell Hubert

**Abstract:** With the growing diversification of study abroad students, programs and learning goals, there needs to be more opportunities for language teachers, students, study abroad professionals and institutions committed to international education to reflect on the issues and concerns related to study abroad. In this forum, attendees will have chances to ask questions, share ideas, express concerns and meet others who are interested in the area of study abroad.

**Format:** Workshop

**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)

**Presentation Time:** 16:10-17:10

**Presentation Length:** 60 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** Help Students Prepare for a Homestay or Short Trip

**Presenter:** Kevin Cleary

**Abstract:** Many students hope to travel abroad for fun, study or business. One way to prepare students for successful travel is to show them what they will see and how they will interact with people on such trips. Students will then realize what language skills they lack and become keen to improve so they can survive "on the road." This presenter will introduce materials, including a DVD, that are in book form for easy classroom use.

## English at Work: Organizing Overseas Internships Effects of Study Abroad on Learner Motivation

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)  
**Presentation Time:** 17:25-17:50  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** English at Work: Organizing Overseas Internships  
**Presenters:** Jerald Halvorsen, Norihito Kawana

**Abstract:** Internship programs of varying lengths provide a valuable work experience for university students and inexpensive labor for the company providing the internship. This boost to a fledging job applicants' resume can be further enhanced by an internship spent working overseas. The presenters will share their insights into the organizing of a six-week internship program in the office of the mayor of a large U.S. city. The students selected received college credit as well as having the experience of being in an office setting in a foreign country. Additionally, the students benefitted by using their internship to improve their English. Topics to be discussed include: where to find places for internships, when to do the internships, communication with the proposed company/organization, some obstacles you might encounter and how to get around them, selecting an intern, evaluating the internship experience from the perspective of the school, the company, and the student, evaluation tools including a blog written by the students, an evaluation of the students by the supervisor and the teachers, and a report from the students.

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 1 (Saturday)  
**Presentation Time:** 18:05-18:30  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** Effects of Study Abroad on Learner Motivation  
**Presenter:** Frank Bailey

**Abstract:** This study will investigate changes in motivation in Japanese university students returning from a study abroad program. While it is widely accepted that study abroad programs can be useful, teachers have noted that while many students return with increased confidence and motivation to study English, some do not. They seem to lose motivation after their overseas experience. The author hopes to gain understanding into the beliefs, motivations and expectations students possess before their overseas experience, and how these change during the experience. Gaining insight into the nature of these changes may suggest ways in which changes in curriculum and/or preparation can improve outcomes. Before this experience, the majority of students have only used English in a classroom context, and in most cases, their interactions have been limited to each other or their English instructors. An immersion situation confronts learners with the necessity to use English for daily communication with people from other cultures and backgrounds. They will find their existing beliefs and assumptions, (not only about language, but also about culture and the world) challenged, which may in turn affect their motivation for further study. Subjects will take a modified BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) survey instrument and be interviewed shortly before and after returning from an eight-week intensive English program at an Australian university. It is hoped differences in BALLI scores and perceived changes reported in interviews will give useful insight into the nature and extent of motivational change.

## Beyond Language Acquisition The Academic Challenges of a Year Abroad

**Format:** Short Paper

**Presentation Date:** November 2 (Sunday)

**Presentation Time:** 10:30-10:55

**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** Beyond Language Acquisition

**Presenters:** Brenda Bushell, Katsuya Yamadera, Keiko Shimizu

**Abstract:** While many Japanese universities today are attempting to both internationalize their curriculum and attract students through various English language study-abroad programs, the outcomes do not always fulfill the stated goals. While studying abroad, students have few opportunities for building social networks in the host society, and rarely do they benefit from a full immersion experience due to structured programs, traditional of study abroad. Given the reality, there is a need to revise the conventional model. This paper reports on weaving together language learning and environmental issues. The program, based in Nepal, is informed by the theory of motivation and experiential language learning, and reflects a pedagogical environment where Japanese students partnered with Nepali students experience language learning, while participating in environmental research-based activities connected to their study major. After a synopsis of research findings on English study abroad programs related to language learning, the paper then gives an overview of the elements of the study program based in Nepal, followed by findings based on quantitative data from student questionnaires, as well as qualitative data from students' daily journals during the program. From the findings, recommendations are provided for teachers interested in enriching their students' learning experiences abroad.

**Format:** Long Paper

**Presentation Date:** November 2 (Sunday)

**Presentation Time:** 13:05-14:05

**Presentation Length:** 60 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** The Academic Challenges of a Year Abroad

**Presenter:** Teresa Cox

**Abstract:** Japanese universities dispatch many students each year to participate in long-term study abroad programs in English speaking countries. What challenges do these *ryugakusei* face, and how do they adapt in the course of the intercultural academic experience? To see what could be learned from students who have already been abroad, the presenter filmed in-depth debriefing interviews with students from Kansai area universities who had returned from a year abroad at a university in the USA or Canada. Interview segments focusing on the theme of academic life have been selected and made into a training video, *Japanese Students Abroad: Academic Challenge and Strategies for Success*. It is aimed at Japanese university students who intend to study abroad in the future. In the video, returnees discuss the differences they encountered during study in the US/Canada, including differences in the academic system, teaching practices and the style of classes, student workload and student attitudes, and testing and grading. Based on their own experiences, the Japanese student interviewees suggest a number of useful, practical strategies for coping with academic differences in order to have a successful year abroad in America or Canada. These insights may be useful in pre-departure training. This presentation will be of interest to international program advisors and administrators, cross-cultural trainers, teachers of intercultural communication and comparative education, and Japanese university students who intend to spend a year abroad. The presenter will speak in English but the interview excerpts on video will be in Japanese.

## Cultural Experience Programmes Outside Classroom Interaction during Study Abroad

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 2 (Sunday)  
**Presentation Time:** 14:20-14:45  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** Cultural Experience Programmes  
**Presenter:** Stephen M. Ryan

**Abstract:** Cultural Experience Programmes (CEPs) are a new model for Study Abroad. The focus is on cultural experience rather than language learning. Activities are real-world rather than classroom based, and include visits to supermarkets, observation and photography tasks, and close contact with peers in the host country. The original motivation for CPEs came from the realisation that many more students desire to visit a foreign country than possess the foreign language skills needed to benefit from a traditional Study Abroad programme. Initial reports from participants, however, indicate not only high levels of satisfaction and rapid development of cross-cultural sensitivity but also, to the surprise of the programmes' instigators, appreciable progress in foreign language skills. The presenter will describe the motivation and philosophy behind CEPs and share first-hand experience of the first two programmes – one in Japan, the other in the Philippines. Specific areas addressed include: practical advice on persuading students and teachers to support such programmes, sample activities from the two programmes conducted so far, reflections on the role of the accompanying teacher, advice on structuring activities for maximum cross-cultural interaction and possibilities for further development of the concept.

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 2 (Sunday)  
**Presentation Time:** 16:25-16:50  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** Outside Classroom Interaction during Study Abroad  
**Presenter:** Emi Fukasawa

**Abstract:** Study abroad for EFL students is a good chance to use English outside of the classroom. However, it seems that achievement can be different depending on the students. Although various studies have been done to verify how study abroad effects positively towards grammar (Schmidt, 1983), communicative knowledge (Siegal, 1994), speech acts (Kondo, 1997), and anxiety (Otsuka, 2008), to name but a few, the qualitative research on learner's informal interaction outside of the classroom is still limited. Therefore, the aim of this study is to reveal the opportunities to use English outside of the classroom during the study abroad and its relationship to students' attitude. By interviewing before and after the study abroad and exchanging questionnaires using email every two weeks with seven female university students who stayed in an English speaking country for five months, the amount of time and the variety of interaction were discovered. The results showed that the amount of time and opportunities differed depending on the students. Moreover, student's positive attitude towards study abroad sought out more opportunities to use English outside of the classroom. For example, the students who had clear objectives of the study abroad and a positive impression on English prior to the study abroad actually had broader experiences than the ones who didn't. Hence, it can be said that we should put more emphasis on the preceding period of study abroad as much as the program itself to encourage students' motivation and positive attitude towards study abroad and English to make programs more effective.

## English-Only in a Three-week Study-abroad Program

### Personality and Study Abroad Success

**Format:** Short Paper

**Presentation Date:** November 2 (Sunday)

**Presentation Time:** 17:05-17:30

**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** English-Only in a Three-week Study-abroad Program

**Presenter:** Izumi Kanzaka

**Abstract:** This paper will discuss rationale for promoting English-Only (EO) in the study-abroad context. Many students view that study abroad is the optimal way to learn a foreign language because it gives them an environment for being immersed in the target language, and they believe that language learning can be achieved most quickly in such an environment. For this reason, a number of students apply for short-term study abroad programs organized by their university. In reality, however, in such programs, students from the same institution are often placed in the same class in the hosting institution. They possibly stay in the same accommodation, and even go on weekend trips together. This means that outside English classes they might not have to use English at all during their study-abroad, and this is what disappoints many participants who are enthusiastic about their language development. In order to improve the situation, the presenter experimented with EO during a three-week study-abroad program in the Philippines when she served as the chaperon for 21 Japanese university students. Based on the result of this experiment, guiding principles for pursuing EO in short-term study abroad programs will be proposed.

**Format:** Short Paper

**Presentation Date:** November 3 (Monday)

**Presentation Time:** 10:30-10:55

**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes

**Presentation Room:** 415

**Presentation Title:** Personality and Study Abroad Success

**Presenters:** Omar Karlin, Megumi Nishikawa

**Abstract:** Using a number of variables, including motivation, WTC, anxiety, and speaking proficiency, study abroad students were compared with non-study abroad students to determine if personality played a significant role in their language success. Students were assessed with self-report questionnaires and an oral proficiency interview. Since this is a longitudinal study, data collection is ongoing. A personality questionnaire was created and compared with an existing personality questionnaire (through qualitative observation and statistical analysis) to determine the best way of assessing a second-language personality. Additional questionnaires assessing motivation, WTC, anxiety, and exposure to English were administered to two groups of students (one going abroad, and a similar group staying in Japan). Speaking proficiency was assessed with an OPI. Data was/will be collected at four intervals to determine if certain personality types are more inclined to studying abroad, if certain personality traits enhance language learning while abroad, and if there are any significant relationships with other individual differences.

## Study Abroad as Motivation for Language Study Characteristics of Students Who Study Abroad

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 3 (Monday)  
**Presentation Time:** 13:00-13:25  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** Study Abroad as Motivation for Language Study  
**Presenter:** James Lassegard

**Abstract:** Language skills and the ability to interact effectively with people from other cultures have become even more essential in our globalized world. An increasing awareness of the importance of these skills has contributed to the growing numbers of university students participating in study abroad programs. However, students who do not have the opportunity to do study abroad may have a limited conception of the usefulness of learning linguistic and intercultural skills. This may be most pronounced in cases where students' major area of study is not foreign language, yet are required to take a foreign language as a part of their graduation requirements. Lack of understanding the intrinsic value for learning could negatively affect motivation toward study, and any future relationship with the subject. This is certainly the case for many Japanese students who are required to study English to take the university entrance examinations. The prospect of visiting and studying in a foreign country could potentially exert a positive influence on students' attitudes toward foreign language, and may result in increasing their motivation for study. This research uses a questionnaire survey of 300 non-language major university students to examine these issues, and to see if there is a relationship between foreign language study and the prospect of study abroad. Based on the results of these findings, implications will be discussed for educational administrators to actively seek more study abroad opportunities for their students, and for foreign language teachers to incorporate information on overseas study into their curriculum.

**Format:** Short Paper  
**Presentation Date:** November 3 (Monday)  
**Presentation Time:** 13:40-14:05  
**Presentation Length:** 25 minutes  
**Presentation Room:** 415  
**Presentation Title:** Characteristics of Students Who Study Abroad  
**Presenter:** Mika Shimura

**Abstract:** Many studies have been conducted on students who study abroad. However, most of these studies have focused on their motivation to learn English, their accommodation levels to new cultures and their learning process of English while they study abroad. Besides their motivation, not many studies have been conducted on their characteristics. Thus, this study analyzes those Japanese university students who plan to study abroad, and shows their distinct characteristics. The participants of this study consist of two groups of university students: those who plan to study abroad and those who do not. The students are asked to take a personality test, fill out a questionnaire, and write an essay. The results of the personality test and answers of the questionnaire show that those two groups of students have different personalities and ideas towards Japanese culture. The analysis of the essay also shows differences in ways of solving a problem. The results of this study indicate that instructors should consider the different characteristics of those two groups of students to conduct classes. This leads the instructors to employ activities that benefit each group of students. The students who take advanced English classes and plan to study abroad especially need supports that suit with their high motivation and academic skills that they seek.

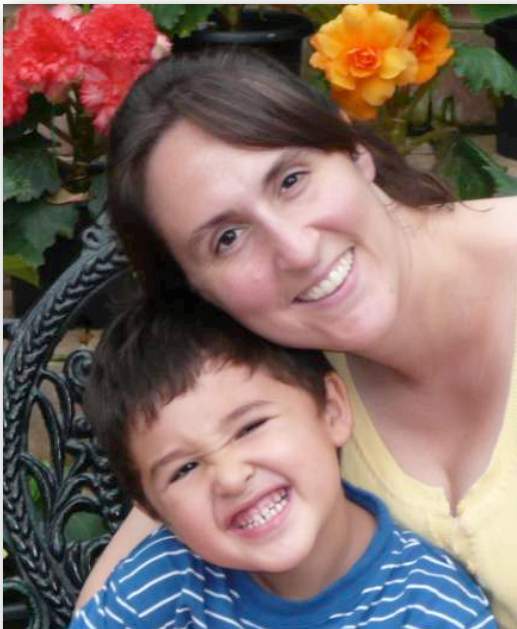


## Member-at-Large

### Recording Secretary

#### Shannon Noda

I first became interested in working in the field of study abroad during the summer of my junior year in college. I worked as an assistant for a group of students from Kanazawa Technical College who were participating in a summer program at my college. I enjoyed the experience and worked as an assistant for further programs. After graduation, I worked at Showa Institute for Language and Culture in Boston. I was a Resident Assistant and helped students from Showa Women's University get adjusted to life in America. I eventually went on to work as a junior and senior high school teacher at their main campus in Tokyo. After teaching for six years and giving birth to my son, I decided to change careers and began working at GIO CLUB, a study abroad agency in Tokyo. I stayed there a year and am now working again as a high school teacher. As I am interested in study abroad and international education, I am really excited about getting involved in the Study Abroad SIG.

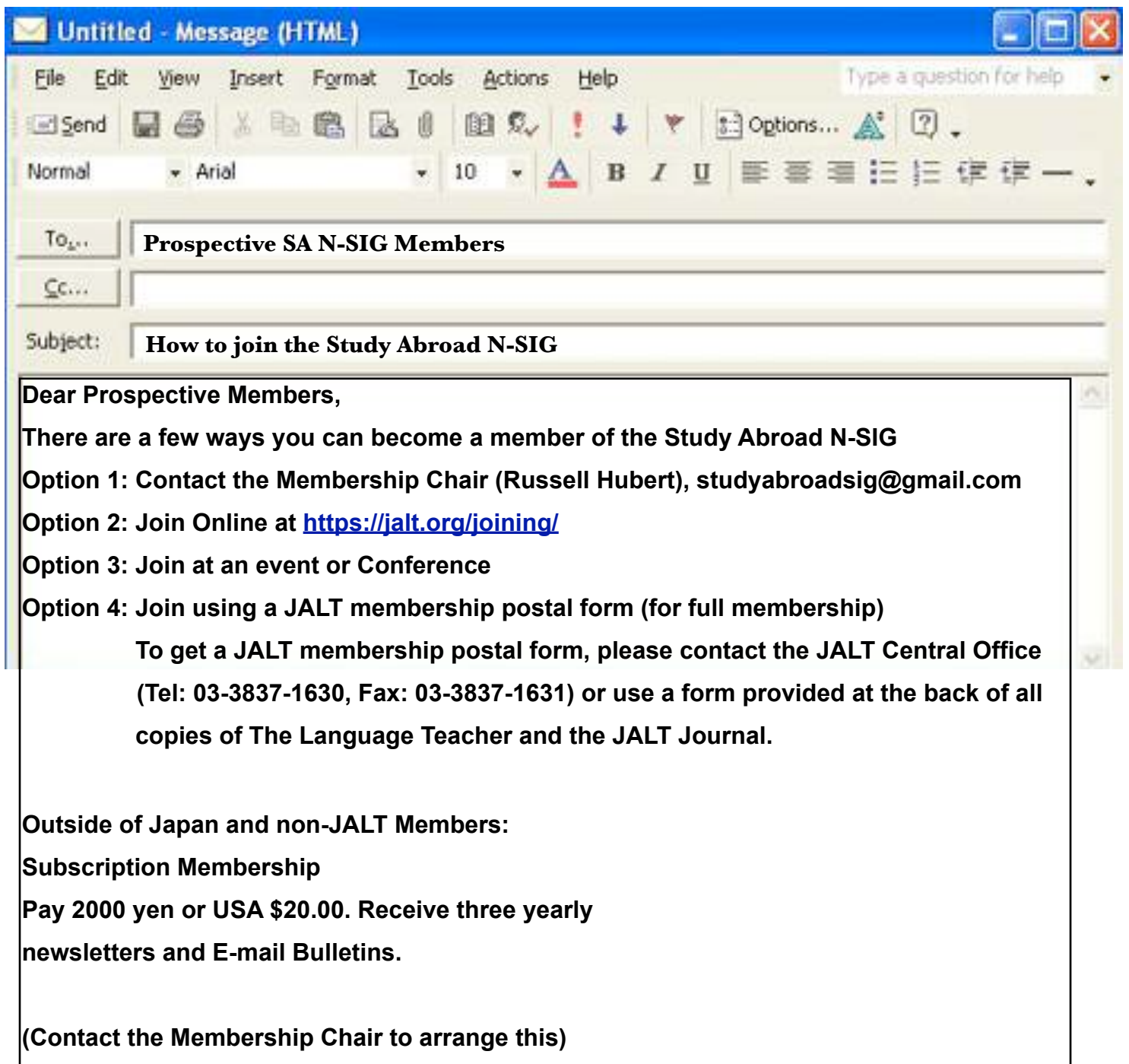


## Treasurer

#### Mark Jones

Mark Jones is an ESL lecturer at Kwansei Gakuin University in Nishinomiya, Hyogo-ken. He is a former high school homeroom teacher for students participating in a one-year study abroad program to Australia. He is one of the authors of *Global English and Primary Schools: challenges for elementary education* (2004, CAE Press) and is currently researching his Ph.D. on English as an international language. He has been living in Japan since 1994.





## ***Ryugaku* Submission Guidelines**

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

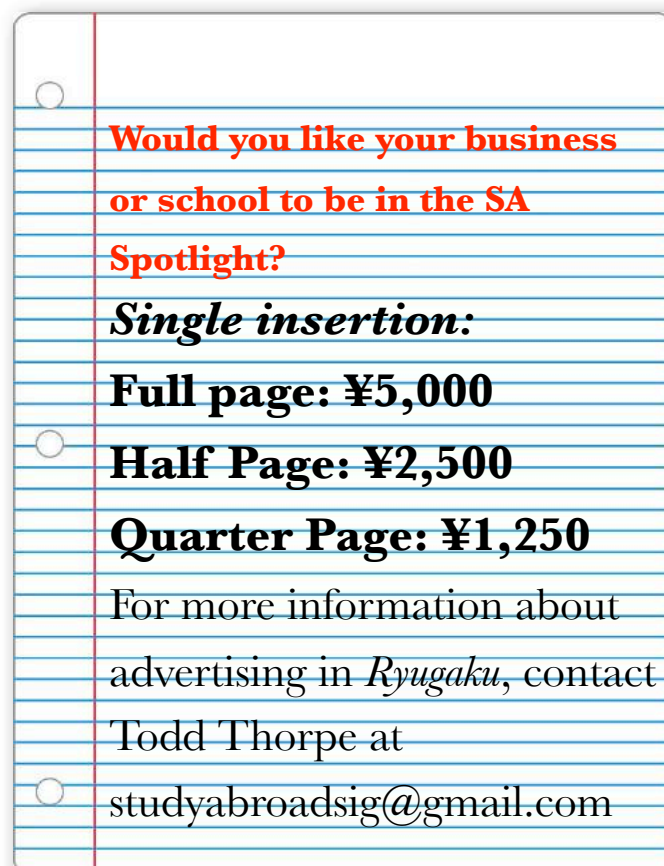
1. Feature articles: 1500-3000 words
2. Short articles: Maximum 1000 words
3. Interviews
4. Classroom Ideas: Maximum 1500 words
5. Book reviews
6. Study abroad program reviews
7. Study abroad experiences from students: Lets hear what our students have to say!

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](mailto:studyabroadsig@gmail.com)

The submission deadline for the next issue of *Ryugaku* is March 31st, 2009.



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