

## **PLANNING, ORGANIZING, AND EXECUTING A SHORT-TERM FIELD STUDY COURSE IN JAPAN FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS**

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### **Introduction**

Reflecting business and academic leaders' beliefs that U.S. students need greater exposure to the international business environment, accreditation standards of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) identify the improvement of this area as one of the key missions of education for both undergraduate and graduate students. This mandate applies to all current and prospective member institutions. The academic community, working in concert with the private sector, must accept and satisfy the responsibility for preparing students for the increasing challenges and opportunities found in the global marketplace.

Academic institutions have been doing various efforts to meet this responsibility, such as frequent references to international topics in lectures and discussions in traditional courses, creation and addition of international business courses, utilization of international culture and business videos, and invitations of international project managers as guest speakers. Some have introduced "semester-abroad" programs. They have also been encouraging their faculty members to acquire international knowledge and experience themselves through participation in workshops and seminars.

Most of them, however, have not introduced the most effective approach, namely direct exposure of students and faculty to international culture and business through participation in short-term field studies abroad. This paper is intended to assist the diverse academic community facing the challenge of introducing such programs.

Middle Tennessee State University has developed and implemented a 15-day "Japan Field Study" program over the past four years. Five years ago, we were fearful of undertaking the program and primarily concerned with avoidance of major blunders. Since then, we have acquired much experience in planning, organizing, and executing it. Still we need to improve several areas, but we are now confident that our program is one of the very best, in terms of both quality and cost.

Our program takes 10-15 students to Japan for two weeks as a summer session undergraduate-graduate combination course, typically in the month of May. Although the itinerary somewhat varies every year, its

theme generally is “Japanese Culture, Economy, and Business.” Geographically, the program covers a long stretch of Japan, including Hiroshima, Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Tokyo, and Fukushima. It includes visitation of more than 30 cultural and economic/business sites or organizations. It contains not only presentations by Japanese business executives, university professors, and government officials but also interactions with Japanese people through discussions, parties, and a home-stay. The itinerary is action-packed every day, from early morning through evening. Depending on the dollar-yen exchange rate, the total program costs ranges from \$1850 to \$2150 per person. Incredible as it may appear this amount covers all expenses, including air and ground transportation, lodging, meals, and museum admission fees.

As an academic course, the program starts with several hours of orientation and training over the two-month period preceding the departure. It ends when the participating students write and submit three reports upon their return to the U.S. Certainly, the supervising faculty member must grade these reports, settle accounting matters, and send out numerous thank-you letters to collaborators in Japan. Two typical summary comments by program participants have been “the best trip I have ever had” and “the trip I will cherish all my life.”

Because each institution has a unique set of parameters, the program explained in this paper cannot be reproduced precisely elsewhere. But we are sure that it will serve as a good benchmark and provide many ideas and suggestions that can readily be adopted by others.

### **Rationale of the Short-Term International Field Study**

To materialize a two-week field study abroad program, administrators, faculty, and prospective students at the institution must first be persuaded about benefits of the program. The following points can be advanced as rationale.

First, the short-term field study helps the students learn, through the traveling process, such basics of international business as passports, visas, customs clearances, import duties, foreign exchanges rates and its impact, international telephone cards and other instruments of communication, and language barriers. They acquire the knowledge naturally and intuitively, and therefore retain it for a long time, as compared with the short-lived knowledge learned from books and lectures.

Second, similarly the program helps the students witness and experience the international differences in doing business and learn

principles of cultural adaptation needed for international business. For instance, with respect to service business, our students realize that franchises in Japan of such American firms as McDonalds, KFC, and Pizza Hut operate differently from their American counterparts, in terms of product lines, displays and advertisements, and customer relations. With respect to merchandise business, they realize that Japanese consumers prefer fewer but more reliable, high-quality products of smaller size, as compared with Americans, be they automobiles, furniture, televisions, computers, or cellular phones.

Third, throughout the program students learn intuitively the link between institutional framework and business culture. For instance, visitations of schools in Japan and interaction with students and teachers provide our students with much insight into the group orientation, discipline, and quality consciousness of Japanese people and organizations. Transportation on trains, subways, and buses in Japan offers much insight into the life styles of businessmen, advertising methods of firms, and communication modes of people in Japan.

Fourth, students who participated in the field study abroad tend to become motivated to study more about the country and the world on their own, through literature reading, video viewing, language-tape listening, and other means. In other words, their global education tends to be perpetuated, which is difficult to expect from students who have merely attended a conventional international business course.

Fifth, the study abroad, or any international travel for that matter, provides a great opportunity for the participants to reflect on themselves, their community, and their country. They may undergo a humbling experience of realizing how little they know about their own country and the world. They may also become accustomed to thinking of ways to improve themselves and their homeland, while appreciating what they have.

Finally, interactions with people abroad through home-stay and other formats may help the students to grow as international citizens without cultural bias or racial prejudice. This process is a critical ingredient in promoting world peace.

It should be added that "semester-abroad" and "year-abroad" programs, which many American universities arrange for interested students in collaboration with institutions abroad, are also recommendable vehicles of international education. They are particularly effective in acquisition of language skills and in cultivation of international friends. However, unlike our field study program, they typically keep the students at a specific

location (e.g., campus of the host institution) and are centered around lectures and discussions. Moreover, they are less affordable to students, in terms of money and time.

### **Key Components of a Successful Program**

There are several key areas that must be managed well to make the program successful.

They include the following:

- (1) Pre-departure administration of the program as an academic course, including setting it up as a special course for credit, recruiting of participants, and orientation/training.
- (2) Arrangement of a 15-day itinerary, defining all specific visits and activities, their day-by-day and hour-by-hour sequence, modes of transportation, locations of lodging, and meals, among others.
- (3) Minimization of the cost of program participation for students, particularly by paying attention to transportation, administrative services, lodging, meals, home-stays, and financial aid.
- (4) Post-return administration of the program, including reading and evaluation of reports submitted by students, settling all accounting matters with the relevant offices, and sending out thank-you letters to all collaborators and supporters in Japan and in the U.S.

Of the list above, Items (2) and (3) are the most challenging. They are also inter-related. Thus, they are discussed first. Items (1) and (4), particularly the former, are by no means easy. But they can be taken care of substantially by application of common sense and hard work.

### **Strategy for a High-Quality Itinerary**

Suppose the theme of the program is “Japanese Culture, Economy, and Business.” The program should take the participating students to cultural and historical sites, schools and colleges, mass media, manufacturing industry firms, service industry firms, financial institutions, trade associations, and government offices, among others. It should provide them with opportunities to hear from, and discuss with, corporate executives, university professors, and other opinion leaders. The program

should also make them participate in cultural activities and interact with Japanese students, families, and businessmen. Many approaches are possible to incorporate these elements in the two-week schedule.

If prospective Japanese hosts feel that you are a close friend, a family member, or a trusted business partner, they will go to extra efforts to provide meaningful and enjoyable tours and/or presentations for you. Whether the content of the field study is excellent or just above average is essentially determined by how many such hosts you have in Japan.

For such close friends or contacts, think of Japanese professors with whom you worked on research projects, Japanese students for whom you were a mentor, Japanese businessmen with whom you worked on community projects, Japanese neighbors whose adaptation to American life you helped, Japanese artists for whom you held reception parties, Japanese bankers with whom you served on conference panels, Japanese politicians who were your collegiate classmates, and Japanese government officers who did their home-stay at your place. They themselves, as well as their close friends and relatives, may be well-connected to firms and organizations you wish to visit in Japan. The more they appreciated what you did for them, the more direct and indirect resources they will mobilize to assist your program. In our case, a majority of visits and activities are arranged through such connections.

Next think of Japanese firms which have a subsidiary in your state, preferably near your university. They may feel an attachment to your university, faculty, and students, because of collaboration in recruiting and training of their employees, research, community projects, and the like. Their home office and sister facilities in Japan would also like to promote a good relationship; moreover, some executives lived in your state and have fond memories. Our visits of manufacturing plants and/or head offices of Bridgestone, Nissan, Toshiba, and Mitsui, as well as Bridgestone Museum of Arts, are arranged through such connections.

While some cultural visits and activities in our program are arranged through the above-mentioned routes, others are added by ourselves. Most shrines, temples, museums, gardens, theaters, and other attractions are open to the public. Many of them can be visited without reservation. These additions fill weekends and a few leftover time slots in the daytime and evenings of weekdays.

It may be added that the Gion Center in Kyoto stages a seven-part-series of traditional performing arts of Japan (including tea ceremony, koto music, and puppet drama) in an hour, twice every evening, providing busy

foreign travelers in Japan with a convenient opportunity to experience such arts. It may also be added that early evening strolls in the Ginza district in Tokyo and the Shinsaibashi-Dotonbori district in Osaka, as well as a daytime stroll in the Imperial Palace between appointments in the Marunouchi business district, are excellent, low-cost group activities.

As mentioned earlier, our program is action-packed from early morning through mid-evening, although we keep a few free activity evenings. In general, with the exception of a more relaxed 2-day home-stay, we try to avoid wasting of even 15 minutes. Interestingly, students tend to get tired, bored, and even get lost, when much time lapse exist between specific activities.

It should be noted at this point that home-stays, visitations of elementary and high schools, and partying with Japanese people (e.g., college student clubs, civic organizations, and hobby groups), are consistently rated the most memorable part of the program every year. Inclusion of them in the itinerary is highly recommended.

As also mentioned earlier, our program covers a considerable stretch of Japan, enabling visits of the Peace Park in Hiroshima, temples and shrines in Kyoto and Nara, business district and entertainment districts in Osaka and Tokyo, manufacturing plants in the Kanto region, and country-side towns and schools in Fukushima. Starting from a youth hostel in Osaka, we change the place of lodging four times during the two-week period. We also use JR trains for most transportation needs, as the students carry a two-week pass. These features distinguish our short-term field study program from most "semester-in-Japan" programs, which are largely confined to a particular geographical site and incorporate only occasional excursions with buses.

Those institutions which attempt to introduce a short-term Japan field study program for the first time may find it difficult to duplicate our type of itinerary from the first year. Our suggestion is to settle for an "above average," instead of being too ambitious. To the extent they do not have our type of connections for the arrangement of visits of business and economic organizations, as well as cultural interactions. They may ask for assistance from the Japan National Tourist Organization, the Japan Business Information Center (Keizai Koho Center), and similar organizations which have offices in the U.S. They may also settle for two places of lodging, one in the Osaka-Kyoto area and one in the Tokyo area, and make excursions from these bases. They are also advised not to fill everyday with

appointments and activities as we have done, and prepare somewhat more time for moving from one place to another.

### **Strategy for a Low-Cost Program**

Since our Japan Field Study is offered as a 3-credit hour course, all participants must pay the same regular tuition that they would pay for any other 3-credit hour summer course. The tuition varies according to the status of the student, undergraduate or graduate, and in-state or out-of-state. When we say “program (participation) cost,” it does not include this regular course tuition. But it does include payment for all expenses associated with the trip, including air and ground transportation, lodging, meals, admission charges (for temples, museums, and theatres), and program administration. It may also be noted that the “actual cost” was considerably less than the program cost, as we were able to find financial aid of at least \$500 for each student.

As stated earlier, our program cost has been between \$1850 and \$2150, depending on the prevailing foreign exchange rate. Incredible as it may appear, these are correct figures. There are several factors that explain the low cost.

First, we do not maintain or employ any agent in Japan to organize the itinerary or to supply escort and translation services. The course instructor himself makes all arrangements working with his friends, associates, and relatives. He becomes an escort interpreter when the tour group lands in Japan.

Second, while our lodging in Japan is comfortable and convenient, we pay very little for it. We stay at a regular hotel for only one night, at the rate of about 7500 yen. (The exchange rate has varied between \$1=Y106 and \$1=Y130.) We do two days of home-stay, where lodging is free. We stay the rest of the two-week period at youth hostels in Osaka and Tokyo where the lodging charge is only 2600-3100 yen per night, and breakfast, only 400-500 yen. In retrospect, discovering a nice youth hostel in Tokyo and a “temple lodge” in Kyoto, both conveniently located near a JR railway station, was the deciding factor for our first year program to be implemented.

Third, we make a very effective use of the two-week JR railway pass to take care of ground transportation in Japan. As implied, with the pass (for which a voucher can only be purchased outside Japan), the program participants can use JR-group trains (as well as buses and ships) as much as they want for a fixed price. Moreover, we located our lodging sites

very close to a JR station, so that we do not need to take a taxi or bus from the station. Furthermore, we generally avoided inclusion in our itinerary of visits of cultural sites and business organizations, which are not located close to a JR station, although we did not compromise regarding the quality of the over-all program.

Fourth, although this was in our calculation from the beginning, many host firms, particularly those which had a subsidiary in Tennessee, treated our group to lunch, and some host groups, particularly those headed by a personal friend or relative of the course instructor, treated them to dinner. Needless to say, during the period of the two-day home-stay, meals were provided by the host families. In addition, the students were given guidance regarding how to select restaurants and how to buy food at convenience stores and supermarkets. Thus, the average cost of daily meals was very reasonable.

Finally, we acquired air tickets between Nashville and Japan, as well as the JR pass vouchers, from a Japan-specialized travel agency in the U.S., which would match any lower price quoted by competitors and provide reliable services. Thus, we made a maximum saving in the airfare also. It should be noted that there exist more than ten Japan-specialized "consolidators" in the U.S., mostly operating in big cities and offering attractive discounts.

#### **Notes Concerning Pre-Departure Orientation and Training**

Our program holds pre-departure orientation and training meetings of 6-8 hours altogether over a two-month period, on two or three separate days. Additional 2-4 hours is used for homework assignment. As part of travel preparation for the 15-day period, the following are done, among others:

- (1) Compilation of a list of all participants, with a profile of each. The list was not only used for internal purposes but also advanced to prospective hosts in Japan.
- (2) Confirmation that they have valid passport and current health insurance, and have purchased air tickets and railway pass vouchers, as instructed.

- (3) Distribution of maps of Japan, Osaka, Tokyo, Kyoto, and other places to visit. They can be obtained from the Japan National Tourist Organization in the U.S., free of charge.
- (4) Distribution of the 15-day itinerary, and explanation of day-by-day activities, pointing out, with the above-mentioned maps, where we will be on each day.
- (5) Viewing 3 travel videos, which refer to geography, climate, points of interest, and modes of transportation, among others. Those who do not have a collection of such videos can readily borrow them from neighborhood video rental stores and such organizations as the JNTO and Japanese consulates in U.S.
- (6) Discussion of things that should be taken to Japan, including footwear, clothes, toiletries, and camera. Reference is made to the weather, dress customs, and facilities available at the major places of lodging (e.g., washer & dryer, hair-dryer, iron board, and iron). An emphasis is placed on "travel light."
- (7) Discussion of how to prepare for the home-stay with the Japanese family. Preparation of gifts is an important topic (e.g., selecting items that reminds the host of the student's university, hometown, and family). Another is how to start a conversation with those Japanese who have limited experience in English conversation and are very shy (e.g., taking a family album and showing pictures as ice breaker).
- (8) Discussion of ways to exchange dollars into yen (e.g., cash, traveler's checks, etc.). Included in the discussion is when and where exchange transactions should be made.
- (9) Discussion of various ways to make telephone calls from Japan (e.g., Japanese and American telephone cards, credit cards, and collect calls).

As for pre-departure academic training and post-trip evaluation, the following points are noteworthy:

- (1) Viewing of several videos on manners and customs in Japan and on Japanese business and economy. Those who do not have a collection

of their own may borrow them from the JNTO, KKC, JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization), and Japanese consulates.

- (2) Study of literature on Japanese economy, business, and culture. The literature consists of publications contributed by the above organizations, Japan-focused pages in the web site of the Department of State and the CIA in the U.S., and handouts prepared by the instructor. Care is taken not to make the reading too demanding.
- (3) Introduction of major Internet sources of information on Japan, such as the Japan Information Network, and exercises to find information specifically relevant to the field study trip, such as weather, foreign exchange rates, and firms and organizations to visit.
- (4) Explanation of the basis of course grade determination, namely participation in all phases of the trip and three reports. Two of the three report-writing assignments are common to all students. One is a diary (or a day-by-day “journal”). The other is an annotated list of Japanese systems and practices, learned through their own observations and experiences (not through literature and videos), that they would like to transplant in the U.S. The third writing assignment, which is adjusted to the background of each student, deals with a depth report of one to five places of visit; here the expectation is higher for graduate students.
- (5) Explanation of the timing of the course grade determination. All participants are given the grade of “incomplete” at the end of the trip. When they complete the assignments over the next 30 days.

#### **A Sample of the Itinerary**

A day-by-day itinerary of the “Japan Field Study 2000 of MTSU” is given below as a sample. This program was titled “Japanese Culture and Economy” and participated in by 13 students (5 undergraduate and 8 graduate students, and 7 male students and 6 female students). The group left Nashville, Tennessee, in the morning of May 16, and returned there in the evening of May 30, 2000.

Several notes should be added. First, two faculty members, other than the course instructor, were to participate in this program as part of their training and development, but dropped out, at an early stage, for family-related reasons. No replacement was made in consideration of timing-

related reasons. Second, the group entered Japan at Kansai (Osaka) airport and left at Narita (Tokyo) airport. This arrangement, as compared with a Narita/Narita combination, saves 1/2 day of activity time in Japan, with the same airfare. Third, weekdays were chosen for our air travel, as fares are lower than on weekends. Fourth, on the other hand, a Sunday was used for moving from Osaka to Tokyo with large luggage, as trains are much less crowded. Fifth, lockers and storage services at train stations were used whenever possible, to avoid carrying around of heavy and/or large items.

Sixth, a scheduled visitation, on the last day, of the headquarters of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Diet, which incorporated a lecture/discussion with a diet member, was canceled because of critical developments within the LDP as well as election campaigns. This part was replaced, nicely, with a visit to the Rainbow Town (Odaiba), a futuristic, dreamlike urban development. Finally, names and telephone numbers of contact persons, many of whom are personal friends of the course instructor, are erased in the itinerary given below for privacy reasons.

5/16 (T) 7:50: LV Nashville (AA#877)—11:20: LV Dallas-Ft. Worth (#AA157).

\* Be at the Nashville Airport (at least) one hour before the departure time.

\* More reading assignments in the plane.

5/17 (W) 15:15: AR Osaka-Kansai Airport. Customs clearance, money exchange, and JR voucher conversion to JR railway pass. Move to Nagai Youth Hostel (Tel 06-6699-5631, Fax 06-6699-5644) in Osaka City via Hanwa (Railway) Line. 17:30: Check-in at NYH. 18:30: Strolling around Namba and Shinsai-bashi (--several subway stations away), participation optional. 21:00: Back at NYH.

\*Japanese time is 14 hours ahead of Nashville time.

5/18 (Th) 7:45: Leave NYH. (Local train.) 8:56: LV Shin-Osaka (Shinkansen or "bullet train," Hikari #361) 10:32: AR Hiroshima. (Street-car.) 11:10-13:40: Atomic-Bomb Dome, Peace Park, and Memorial Museum. Reassemble at the A-Bomb Dome. 14:07: LV Hiroshima Station (Hikari #116). 15:30: AR Himeji Station. (Walk.) Visit Himeji Castle. 17:06: LV Himeji. (Bullet train.)

17:57: AR Kyoto Station. Walk to Nishi Honganji Temple. Walk to Shijo-dori and Kawara-machi. 19:40: Gion Corner (a glimpse of Japanese performing arts, including Kyoto-style dance, puppet play, koto music, tea ceremony, and flower arrangement). 22:45: Back at NYH.

5/19 (F) 8:00: Leave NYH. (Local train.) 9:00-10:00: Kansai Economic Federation (Subway, Sakaisuji-Line. Get off at the Honmachi Station and take Exit 17.) 10:30-11:30: Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Osaka head office. (Subway and private Nankai-Line train.) 12:30: Kishiwada High School and vicinity (sandwich lunch at the Gofuso Japanese garden, class observation and participation, and discussions). 15:10: LV Kishiwada High School. (Walk.) 15:23 take train at Takojizo Station, change trains at Kishiwada, do so one more time at Sakai, and get off at Sumiyoshi Taisha). 16:00: AR Sumiyoshi Shrine. Stroll through the shrine complex and observation of aiki-jujutsu martial art practices. 16:30-17:30: Tea ceremony participation. 17:45-20:00: Welcome-to-Japan dinner party at the Martial Art Hall, hosted by Daitoryu Takuma-Kai members. (Taxi.) 21:45: Back at NYH.

5/20 (Sa) 8:00: LV NYH. 9:15: AR Kyoto Station. Visit of Rokuonji Temple (Golden Pavillion), Ryuanji, Kiyomizu Temple, and Nijo Castle. \*For the above, we plan to purchase and use an all-you-can-ride bus/subway coupon at the Kyoto Station. \* Be prepared to pay for admission charges at each site. 17:30-20:00: Welcome-to-Kyoto snack/drink/singing party, hosted by the "Kenji Nagatomi and the Tennessee Five," at the Kenny's, a live house of the band, near Kitaoji bus or subway stop. (Take trains.) 22:00: Back at NYH.

5/21 (S) 8:00: Checkout and LV NYH. (Train.) 9:30-11:30: Nara (visiting Todaiji Temple and its vicinity only, while keeping luggage near the Nara Station). 11:45: LV Nara. (Local train to Kyoto, and then bullet train to Tokyo.) 16:00: AR Tokyo Station. (Change to a local train.) 16:30: AR Iidabashi Station and Tokyo International Youth Hostel (TYH, Tel 03-3235-1107, Fax for in-Japan use 03-3267-4000). (Check-in.) 17:30: Welcome-to-Tokyo greetings, by a few MTSU alumni and friends, dinner at TYH

together, and possible outing with them or free activities.

- 5/22 (M) 8:00-9:15 (Meeting Room, TYH): Robert Callahan Lecture & Discussion: Personal Introduction to Japanese Economy and Business Practices. \*Mr. Callahan is an MTSU MBA alumnus. 9:30: LV TYH. (Trains). 10:00: Marunouchi business district stroll, while meeting needs for money exchange, post office, and the like. 11:00-12:30: Mitsui & Co. Presentation by Mr. Katsuhiko Kamazawa (Director, International Research), followed by a Japanese style luncheon. (Taxi or subway.) 13:00 -14:30: Bank of Japan (Tour, lecture, and Q&A.) (Subway or taxi.) 15:00-16:30: Dentsu (video and powerpoint presentations on the company, recent CFs, and mass media in Japan). 17:00: Stroll the world-famous Ginza, and find ways to return to TYH, with trains and subways .
- 5/23 (T) 7:30: LV TYH. (Trains. Go to Iidabashi to Yotsuya Station. Get off and take a Chuo Line train to Kokubunji. Get off at Kokubunji and take a Seibu-Kokubunji Line train to Ogawacho). 9:00-12:30: Bridgestone Tokyo Plant (including lunch). (Trains.) 13:30: AR Ozaku Station. 14:00-16:00: Toshiba Oume Plant (presentation, lap-top-computer plant tour, and Q&A.) 16:30: Walk to the station. (Train.) 17:45: Back at TYH. Free evening activities. (Suggestions: Asakusa Temple arcade and/or Akihabara electronics district.)
- 5/24 (W) 7:10: LV TYH. (Train.) 7:30: LV Tokyo Station. (Trains- Yokosuka and Keihin Kyuko Lines.) Walk from Oppama Station. 9:30-11:30: Nissan Oppama Plant. (Nissan bus, and trains.) 12:50-13:45: Bridgestone Art Museum (\*The above period includes a brief sandwich break at 13:30.) (Taxi or walk.) 14:15-15:30: Nissan Head Office. Meeting with Mr. Philippe Cline, Vice President (Chief of COO Office). (Trains or subways.) 16:00-17:15: Toshiba Head Office. Presentations by managers on the company, industry, and outlook). 17:30: Free activities. (Suggestion: Shinjuku.)
- 5/25 (Th) 7:50: Checkout and LV TYH. \*Keep heavy/big items in the storage room of TYH, as we will return to the place three days

- later. (Local train.) 9:00: LV Tokyo Station (Yamabiko #35). (Bullet train.) 10:23: AR Koriyama Station. (Chartered mini bus, 30-40 minutes.) 11:00 -12:00: Asahi Beer Plant tour. 12:00-13:15: Luncheon (all-you-can-eat "Jingiskan-nabe" and all-you-can-drink). (Mini bus.) 14:41: LV Koriyama Station (Yamabiko #131). 14:56: AR Fukushima Station. Check-in at the Fukushima View Hotel across the station (Tel 0245-31-1111, major U.S. credit card accepted). 15:40: LV Fukushima Station. (Local train.) 16:00: AR Fukushima University. (Campus tour, including President Yoshihara's office. 17:00: Welcome-To-FU Reception Party.) 20:00 (?): LV Fukushima University for the hotel.
- 5/26 (F) 8:00: Hotel checkout 8:30: Leave by a special bus arranged by FU. 9:00: AR Fukushima University. (Campus tour.) 11:30: AR Obama Elementary School. (School tour, class observation, lunch with children, and discussions with the principal and teachers). 14:00: AR Tour of the MOLDEC, a high-tech, precision-machine plant in the country-side producing plastic and other molds exported to the U.S. 16:00: AR Sugita Station. (Get off the bus and take a local train.) 16:30: AR Koriyama Station. 16:48: LV Koriyama. (Suigun Line JR train.) 17:47: Ishikawa Station. Home-stay.
- 5/27 (Sa) All day with the home-stay family.
- 5/28 (S) Home-stay continues through the morning. 10:06: LV Ishikawa. (Local train.) 10:54: AR Koriyama Station. (Train change.) 11:22: LV Koriyama. (Lunch in the train.) 12:52: AR Tokyo Station. \*Those who have personal friends and relatives may plan to meet them here (--your train car and seat numbers will be known ahead of time), spend the afternoon together, and report to the Tokyo International Youth Hostel in the evening. \*Others will do a few errands (letter mailing, money exchange, book-store visit, etc.) at or near the Tokyo station. (Trains.) 15:00: Check-in at TYH. Free evening activity. (Suggestions: Tokyo Dome, only several blocks away from TYH, to see a Japanese professional baseball, or Kabuki Theater near Ginza, or Meiji Shrine and Shinjuku.) \*A major league baseball at the Tokyo Dome, Giants vs. Dragons, starting at 18:00. All tickets are sold out, but get there 3 innings later and buy your ticket from a desperate scalper.

\*Note that there will be more shopping opportunities later. Odaiba (“Rainbow Town”) to be visited on the last day is excellent. The Narita Airport also has a good shopping area, with a variety of reasonably-priced souvenir items; you can count on this place for a last-minute shopping.

5/29 (M) 8:00: LV TYH. 9:00: Japan Development Bank (Presentations by noted economists.) 10:15: Tour of the Imperial Palace. 12:00: Lunch at the Hibiya Park. 14:00-15:15: Keizai Koho Center (Japan Business Information Center)—discussions with Mr. Tashiro, chief, North America Division). 16:00-17:50: Nikkei (Nihon Keizai Shimbun)—tour of facilities and discussions with executives. Evening: dinner at THY, and a possible Sayonara-Japan karaoke party.

5/30 (T) 8:30-45: Check out. (Trains.) 9:00: AR Tokyo Station. (Storelarge luggage in lockers.) (Local trains.) 9:30-13:50: Odaiba (Rainbow Town). (Local trains.) 14:00: AR Tokyo Station. 14:30: LV Tokyo Station. (Narita Express train.) 15:45: AR Narita Airport. Luggage Check-in. (About an hour of shopping time. 17:55: LV Narita (AA#60). 19:16: AR Nashville (AA #580 from Dallas-Ft. Worth).

### **Conclusions**

It is essential for collegiate students of business today to visit at least one foreign country and experience its culture, economic structure, and business practices. Educators should prepare for them opportunities for low-cost-high-quality, short-term study-abroad programs. This paper was prepared to contribute to the achievement of such educational goals. We are hopeful that the information will provide theoretical and pragmatic insight into the challenge.