

日英文化比較 [Contrastive Studies on Japanese and Western Culture]

国際理解教育／英語・D.R. ボグダン

Introduction:

Nichiei Bunka Hikaku "Contrastive Studies on Japanese and Western Culture" is a course taught by the author (DRB) which was offered in the 2014 academic year. A brief description of the course is followed by a discussion of the results of a student survey conducted at the end of the term. Some of the results are compared with those from the same course taught two years previously, in the 2012 academic year.

Course Overview:

The course is open to all students in the Faculty of Education. Usually second-term sophomores majoring in Education for International Understanding (EIU) and EFL training take it, along with several students from other majors. For the 2014 Fall Term, 25 students registered for the course, and 24 completed it (one student dropped out after the second meeting).

The textbook was *Exploring Hidden Culture: Deeper Values and Differences between Japan and North America* written by Paul Stapleton and originally published in 2001. While the text is over 10 years old, much of the content is still valid.

Grading was based on five quizzes, participation in 10 asynchronous on-line discussions conducted through Moodle forums, and five group presentations, along with in-class and Moodle feedback activities.

The content discussed in the forums and presentations came from selected chapters in the textbook and from three movies shown in the class.

Use of Moodle:

The instructor disseminated materials to the students through Moodle or give assignments, while the students used Moodle to submit assignments throughout the course. However its major role was to allow the students to participate in the two discussion forums; one for groups, and one for all members of the class.

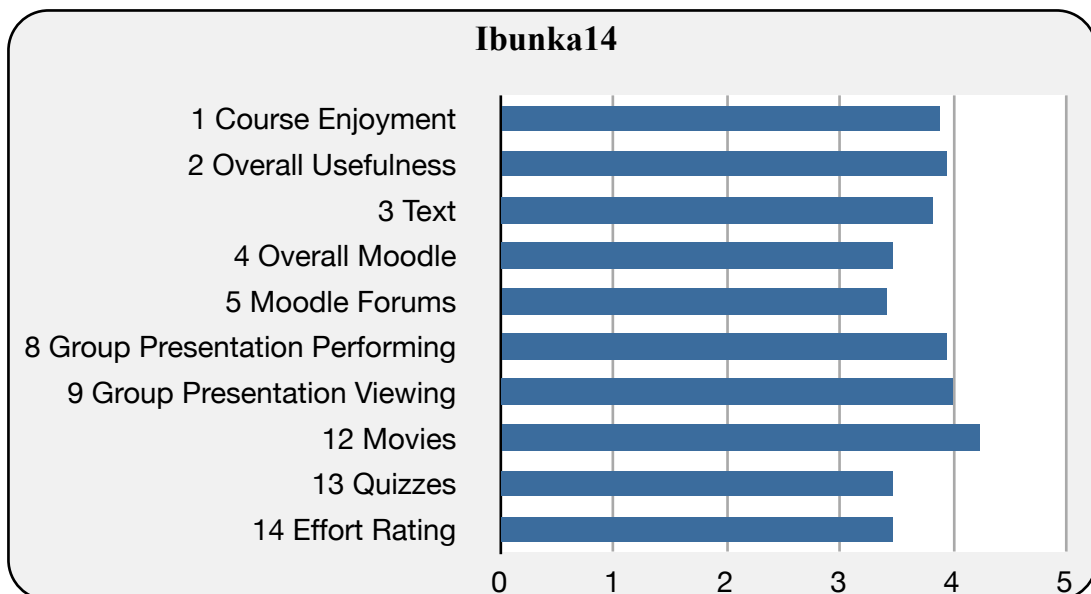
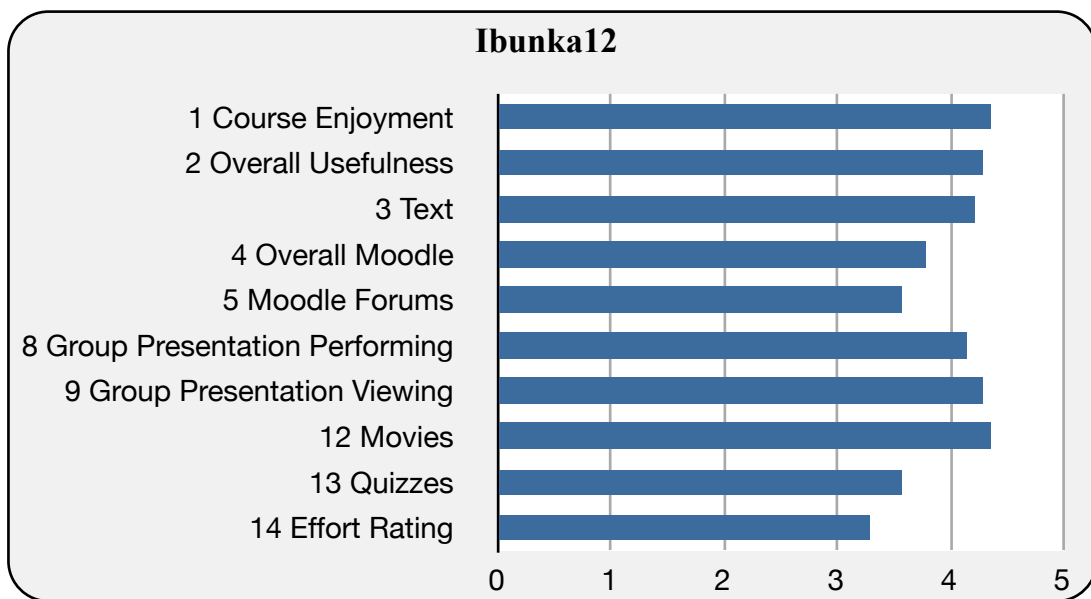
Student-based Course Evaluation:

Using the Moodle questionnaire module, the students were asked to complete a relatively simple evaluation at the end of the course. The evaluation consisted of 14 items asking for ratings of statements on a five-point Likert scale, a question in which the student is asked what grade they would expect from the course, and, finally, four open-ended items.

Likert Scale Ratings:

The students were asked to rate various aspects of the class in 10 5-point Likert-scale questions, and, in Question 14, to rate their own performance. The questions along with charts showing the results are given below. (Note: the numbers on the chart do not match exactly with the ones in the list, but they are given in the same order.)

- (1)The course was enjoyable.
- (2)The course was useful.
- (3)The textbook was useful.
- (4)Using Moodle helped me in this class.
- (5)The Moodle discussion forums were useful and educational.
- (6)Doing the group presentations was useful.
- (7)Watching the group presentations was useful.
- (8)The movies were educational and helpful.
- (9)The quizzes were helpful in learning the subject matter.
- (10)How would you rate the amount of work you put into the course?



Unfortunately, there was a slight drop in the ratings (along with a rise in the grade they expected). However, the responses to the open-ended questions about the course were generally positive.