

ICT & International Communication

国際理解教育／D. R. ボグダン

Course Overview:

This is the seventh year this class has been offered as an elective rather than a requirement for students in the Education for International Understanding (EIU) Course. Normally, each year there are 15 EIU sophomores that this class is offered for, and the number of students taking the class has fluctuated a bit over the years: 8 (2009), 10, 15, 8, 10, 12, and, this year, 16 (2015). As this is a computer class requiring heavy use of one-to-one interaction, keeping the number of students relatively low really helps, but every year more than half take it. This year, nearly all of the sophomores, along with two upperclassmen, signed up, making individual interaction somewhat more difficult. Of the 16 registered students, one only attended the second meeting, and another, a junior, dropped out about halfway through, so the final tally was 14.

As in past years, the students were asked to accomplish two major goals: to create personal web pages (principally in English), and to produce JavaScript-based interactive educational material which could be used for language learning and/or cultural awareness. This year, for the first time, latter also took the form of individual projects.

Basic Make-up of the Course:

As in previous years, the course followed the following timeline: Basic Introduction (one class only), Webpage Design (HTML and CSS), and, finally, Interactive Projects with JavaScript.

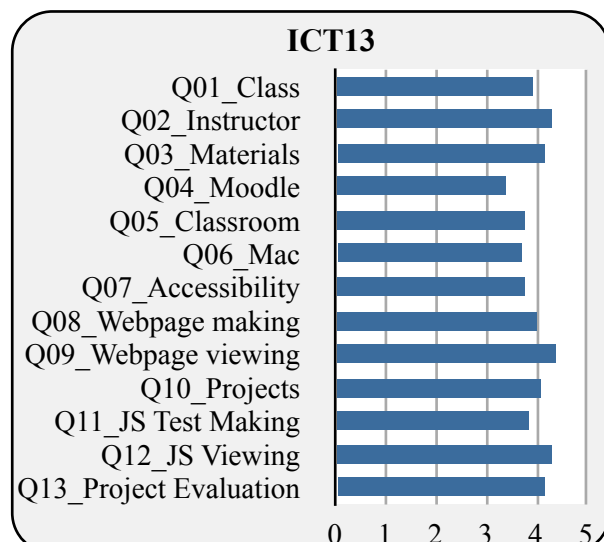
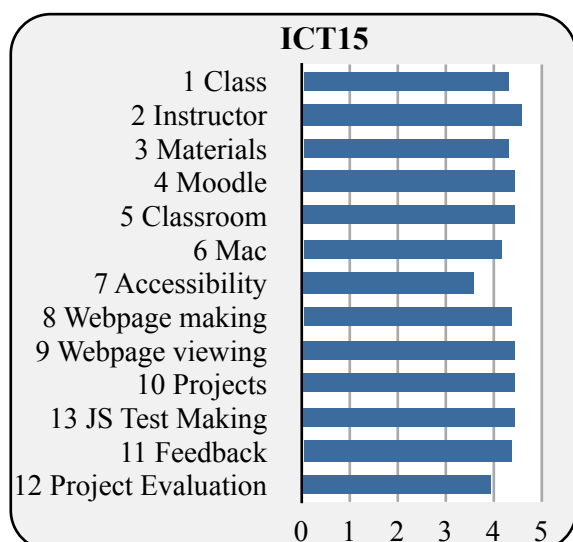
The first half of the course was very nearly evenly divided between HTML and CSS instruction, culminating in a peer evaluation of the individual webpages. In the second half, the students were to produce and make presentations on interactive web content which used HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to present and test upon either some aspect of Japanese culture and/or language for a foreign audience or else some aspect of foreign culture and/or language for a Japanese audience.

Student-based Course Evaluation:

The students were asked to complete a short evaluation at the end of the course. The evaluation was conducted using a Moodle questionnaire module and consisted of two parts: 13 items asking for ratings on a five-point Likert scale followed by three open-ended items. This year, all 14 of the students who finished the class filled out and submitted the evaluation.

Likert Scale Ratings:

The students were asked to rate the following: Class, Instructor, Materials, Moodle, Classroom, Accessibility, Webpage Making, Webpage Viewing, Projects, JS Test, Giving and receiving Feedback, and Project Evaluation. Below we see two charts which help in making a comparison between the results from an evaluation conducted two years ago and the one conducted for this class. There were some slight changes in the names and order of the items, but they have been rearranged here to make for an easier comparison



The average (4.3 versus 3.8) and all of the ratings except for one were higher this year than two years ago, which is both gratifying and somewhat surprising because of the higher number of students (14 versus 10) and the resulting increased difficulty of providing attention this time around.

Fortunately the instructor (i.e., me) received the highest rating (4.6 and 4.1) both years. The one item which received a lower rating (3.6 down from 3.8) this year was Accessibility, and it received the lowest score of all the items this year.

There was a problem with the electronic door lock recognizing some of the students' ID cards, so they had a difficult time entering the room. (One of the comments mentions this specifically as a "Change Needed").

The only other item to receive a mark of less than 4 out of 5 was Project Evaluation (at 3.9). In this case also, one of the "Changes Needed" comments notes that it was difficult to evaluate other students' projects.

Open-ended Questions and Wrap-up:

As mentioned above, in addition to the Likert Scale ratings, the students were allowed to make comments in the following three categories: what they found useful about the course, what things they thought needed changed, and "other comments" Fortunately, the positive comments far outweighed the negative ones, but perhaps this should not be so surprising considering the relatively high ratings given on the Likert Scale questions.

There is no room here to provide translations of all the comments, so let's just cover the "Changes Needed" ones for now. In addition to the two comments noted in the previous section--concerning Accessibility and Project Evaluation, respectively--there were two comments suggesting they would have liked more time to complete the assignments. During the course, some of the students had indicated that this class required more work than any of their other classes. It's that kind of class! Another student mentioned that they would have liked more time to familiarize themselves with the Mac environment. This does not mean that they did not like the Mac (In fact, during the course, a number of students had said how much they would really like to have a Mac of their own.), but rather that they were used to a different operating system and would have liked more time to learn about and adjust to differences.

Again, a vast majority of the comments (including those in the "Other" category) were quite positive. Quite a number of students had indicated that they wish to take the follow-up computer course next term.