ICT & International Communication 1

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Course Overview:

In this, the 8th rendition (though in various forms) of this class, an elective rather than a requirement for students in the Education for International Understanding (EIU) Course, 18 students registered: 16 from EIU, one from EFL, and another from Special Education.

Each year there are normally 15 EIU sophomores that this class is offered for, and this year was no exception. Of the 15, 14 took the course. Of the remaining four, two were from other majors (as noted above), and the other two were EIU majors, but one was a junior and the other, a senior. One student never attended the classes, leaving the finally tally at 17. The number of students taking the class has fluctuated a bit over the years—8 (2009), 10, 15, 8, 10, 12, and 16 (2015)—so this year was a record, and the number of students pushed the capacity of the MacLab to its limits.

It also pushed the instructor to his limits. As this is a computer class requiring heavy use of one-to-one interaction, keeping the number of students relatively low is necessary to allow the heavy amount of individual instruction needed in such a class. This year, with all but one of the EIU sophomores, along with the three additional participants, maintaining individual interaction was quite a challenge.

Previous Renditions of the Course:

In past iterations, 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.

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 of 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 .

Major change in the Course:

There has always been a companion, or sequel, to this course—inventively named ICT & International Communication 2—which is offered to EIU majors in the Spring Term of their junior year, essentially just the next semester after this one.

In the class, the goal was somewhat similar to that of the first ICT course in that students were also to use Macintosh software to produce cross-cultural learning materials. However, in this case, the final projects were to be in a multimedia format, rather than in the form of webpages. The materials being produced progressed from image manipulation in stop motion videos (using iStopmotion) and slideshows (Photos and Keynote), moving on to the production of videos exported from presentation software (Keynote), followed by audio compositions using GarageBand,

and culminating in final video projects (completed in iMovie) which made use of all the techniques learned throughout the course.

The two courses have always been intended to complement each other. The difficulty level between the two did not differ greatly; they merely concentrated on different areas and had the students produce ICT materials in different formats.

Major change in the Course:

This year, the instructor decided to change the order for the first time. ICT1 covered the multimedia material production discussed in the previous section, while the companion course, which will be offered to juniors next semester, will go into the webpage design and coding previously covered in the first course (though with some possible additions, including a polishing up of the video materials and perhaps a brief introduction to iOS app production).

As mentioned above, there is not a great deal of variance in the difficulty level of the two courses. In fact, the coding done in the previous years, while on a simple level, might be considered to be on a higher level than the multimedia production which had heretofore been seen in the "follow-up" course.

While the level of the two courses was not a major issue, the choice to change the order was, however, consciously made. In recent years, one of the goals of the second class was to have at least some of the groups produce material that could be used for international students at Ehime University.

With this goal in mind, in recent years, one of the faculty members in the Institute for International Relations (IIR) at the university has been kind enough to provide ideas, suggestions, and feedback to the students of the class. This has helped to provide some concrete structure to the direction the projects have taken, but, once the final projects were presented and commented on, the students' contact with ICT was essentially over, unless they decided to continue working in this area on their senior research papers. And so, the projects have for the most part, gone unused, because there was no one to refine them after the second class ended.

However, changing the order allows much needed follow-up work to be completed during the second course. Not all students will take that second course, but all are aware that those that do will have the chance to refine their work in the class next semester. The final projects that were presented at the end of the first course look quite promising, and we are anticipating practical use of at least some of them.