

A Study of the Accomplishments of the Cross Cultural College Program
～ Case study on the Core Subjects Global Career Seminar、Global Internship ～

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1. Introduction

For this paper, research was conducted on the accomplishments of the Cross Cultural Program (herein CCC Program) – a Canada-Japan collaborative educational project between Mount Allison University, Queen’s University, the University of Toronto, and Kwansai Gakuin University (KGU). KGU received a subsidy from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) “Re-Inventing Japan Project” from FY2011 to 2015, aiming to foster human resources capable of being globally active, by establishing high-quality cooperative educational programs with universities in Asia, America or other developed countries, to promote internationalization of Japanese universities.

The verification samples of the accomplishment results were collected from actual program participants.

Research Aim and Background: Established in April 2011, the CCC Program has reached its 4th year and now that the program has overcome the busiest time of the year, August, it is an optimal time to clarify the level of achievement the program participants have acquired by gathering information through interviews.

Purpose: To clarify the success of the program and to use the research results as a reference for the expansion and development of the program in the future.

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire the English Language Skills of the Global Standard.

Hypothesis 2: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire communication skills through mutual understanding and the overcoming of cultural barriers.

Hypothesis 3: Corporations who cooperated with the CCC Program will gain inspiration from the Canadian and Japanese participants, allowing them to realize the level of urgency to globalize their respective companies.

Method of Research: Conduct interviews and surveys of both the participating students and companies of the core subjects. Individuals, who are subject to the interviews and surveys with respect to the three hypotheses, are the companies who have cooperated in the GCS or GI program, former student participants, and the academic coordinators. The collected data will then go through the analysis process.

2. Overview of the CCC Program

Canada-Japan collaborative educational project – a “Cross-Cultural College” Program (CCC). Kwansai Gakuin University (KGU), Japan has received a subsidy from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) “Re-Inventing Japan Project” from FY2011 to 2015, to establish a Canada-Japan collaborative education project CCC in collaboration with Mount Allison University, Queen’s University, and the University of

Toronto.

The programs of CCC will be held in both countries, and thanks to the subsidy, there will be financial support for student mobility between Japan and Canada, and also for accommodation and course fees (Refer to CCC brochure).

Also for the FY 2014 Top Global University Project, (Type B: Global Traction Type) Kwansai Gakuin University's vision to 'Establishing the Global Academic Port, an international hub for academic exchange' was highly evaluated, allowing the adoption of world-class and innovative programs such as CCC "A collaborative educational project between 3 Canadian Universities" to be possible at our university.

The CCC Program is composed of two programs. One is the Multidisciplinary Studies (MDS) Program which is a program only offered to students from KGU whose aim is to complete the Certificate Program (CP). It consists of three programs of International Business, International Cooperation and Administration, and International /Area Studies.

On the other hand, the Certificate Program (CP) is offered to students from both KGU and the three Canadian universities where the completion of a CP Core Course along with successful understanding in Multicultural Studies and International Relations are obligatory for program completion.

3. Core Programs

In addition to the Multicultural Issues and Theory courses students take at their respective universities, the Core Program offers opportunities for students from Japan and Canada to work together and to proactively make use of their problem solving skills. In this study, we will put our focus on courses within the core program – Global Career Seminar and Global Internship.

① Global Career Seminar in Canada/in Japan

This course is offered and listed as "CCC Global Career Seminar in Japan (3 credits)" on the university syllabus. It is carried out by having a total of 40 students from 4 universities work together to analyze and solve real problems posed by industry and company representatives. For the final report, participants present their conclusions to the representatives of the participating firms. In the program year of 2014, 27 students (11 students from the three Canadian universities/ 16 students from KGU) participated, along with cooperative support from 5 multinational firms, Toyota, Canadian Embassy, Manulife, Ippodo, and bioScene.

By winter 2014, the CCC Global Career Seminar in Canada is to be offered, composed of 40 students (20 students from the three Canadian universities and 20 from KGU).

② Global Internship in Canada/in Japan

This course is offered and listed as "CCC Global Internship in Canada/in Japan (3 credits per course)" on the university syllabus. For this course students will be assigned in pairs, each pair composed of a student from KGU and a student from a Canadian university,

and they will work together and gain practical experience over a span of 2 weeks in a real business environment in Canada/Japan. Before the internship, each pair will undergo individual research on their respective industry and company in order to deepen their understanding of their host institution. After successful completion of the internship, each pair will make a presentation in front of the other students as a final wrap up.

In the year of 2014, a total of 20 students (10 pairs) did their internship at Mitsui & Co., Toyota Motors, Shiseido, EY, Manulife and others during the Global Internship program in Canada. As for Global Internship in Japan, a total of 17 firms such as Panasonic, Fuji Xerox, JTB, Hilton Hotel, Nitto Denko, Hankyu Travel, etc. cooperated in the program, allowing 40 students (20 pairs) to successfully complete the program.

4. Hypothesis and Verification

On behalf of CCC Program's aims to have "Students from both Japan and Canada to work together in discovering topics and propose possible solutions that combine their diverse perspectives" and to "Nurture World Citizen Leaders who contribute to the sustainable development and growth of a global society", the underlining hypotheses of this paper are as follows.

Hypothesis 1: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire the English Language Skills of the global standard*1.

Hypothesis 2: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire communication skills through mutual understanding and the overcoming of cultural barriers.

Hypothesis 3: Corporations who cooperated with the CCC Program will gain inspiration from the Canadian and Japanese participants, allowing them to realize the level of urgency to globalize their respective companies.

Hypothesis 1: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire the English Language Skills of the Global Standard.

The concept of English Language Skills of the 'Global Standard*1' is based on the program completion requirement of a TOEIC score of 820+. Also, another loosely-defined concept of "can sufficiently communicate as a non-native speaker" would be depicting subtle signs of nativity where one would be able to openly speak and express their opinions about topics that are outside one's subject of interest or study. Even though the concept of being a 'native speaker' is very ambiguous, there is a general expectance for individuals who are categorized under this group, to be fluent in all three areas in vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure (refer to the official website of TOEIC).

Furthermore, due to the increasing number of Japanese companies that have been including TOEIC scores within their set of requirements for their hiring and promotion processes, it has driven university students to strive for high marks since it is directly-

connected to their future.

During the course of the program, students will be spending large amounts of their time with native speakers (their partners) during the program. Therefore it is expected for them to gain a sufficient amount of training and they will thus acquire adequate communication skills. Being assigned in pairs, students will discuss and research based on what they have decided and will work towards giving a final presentation on the final day of the program. Additional skills students are required to brush up on to complete the program are the abilities to conduct industry analysis and SWOT analysis in English. Supplementary effort in keeping daily conversation completely in English, organizing deadlines in-line with the program, and enjoying time outside of the classroom also in English would be beneficial to oneself. Such aspects are what students will be evaluated on through the course of the program.

When we take into consideration how this program can only be completed if participants keep their communication in English as much as possible, it is apparent how a Global Standard Level of English is an underlying requirement to become part of CCC. Therefore, even if the programs are relatively short, each individual's English language ability is expected to improve rapidly through participation.

1. Improvement of TOIEC score

One student dramatically increased his TOIEC score by participating in CCC programs; from 300 to over 820 after the course. He studied English hard to participate in the program, and got 680 which is a requirement to enter this program. However, during the program he felt frustrated with his English conversational skills, and started studying English hard again. As a result, he succeeded to get over 820 on TOIEC which is a 520 point increase from his original score. What he did in order to improve his score was to focus on reading and grammar. He finished a textbook within a limited time of one month, and looked up every single word he did not understand. (Wataru Inoue, 4th year, Sociology, Kwansei Gakuin University)

2. Improvement of Presentation and Writing skills in English

- ① Through having opportunities to do presentations and discussions in English, my public speaking skills improved. (Lara Luo, Graduated from University of Toronto in 2014)
- ② CCC was the best place to test my knowledge from my English studies at Kwansei Gakuin University. Experiencing presentations in English with Canadian students helped me a lot to improve my English skills as well. (Sonoka Yamashita Graduated from Kwansei Gakuin University in 2014)
- ③ It is a great opportunity to improve my English skills through doing every single step of my presentation in English with Canadian students. I put effort into telling my opinions clearly in English and practicing

presentations with them. (Mio Nakago, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwasei Gakuin University)

- ④ It is an incredible opportunity for students to listen to people who are actually working and contributing to the global society, like executives of the Global Career Seminar. (Canadian Embassy in Japan)
- ⑤ I learned the difference between Japanese presentations and Western ones which are more focused on presenting rather than listening. (Mio Nakago, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ⑥ I felt as if we were attending the course at an overseas university because CCC program has many opportunities to work with Canadian students. (Multiple students)

3. Improvement of Daily Conversational Skills

Since Japanese and Canadian students stayed together in a room in pairs, they sometimes needed to explain things in detail. There were many opportunities to improve their acceptance of each other's culture and build friendships.

- ① Spending one week with Canadian students helped a lot to improve my English listening skills. (Multiple students)
- ② At the beginning of the course, I was thinking things in Japanese but by the time the program finished, I was able to think in English. (Hitomi Oguni, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ③ In my University classes I was able to absorb academic English, but this time through interacting with people at my Global Internship, I was able to understand what business English is like. (Mio Nakago, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ④ After finishing my Global Career Seminar, I was able to understand English without translating it into Japanese. (Yuta Oku, 4th year, Business administration, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ⑤ For the second half of the program, I was surprised that I was able to say what I wanted to say in English immediately. (Kana Umeda, 4th year, Literature, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ⑥ I was able to get used to slang and native phrases through this program. (Sayuri Asano, 4th year, International Studies, Kwasei Gakuin University)
- ⑦ Although I was good at reading and writing beforehand, I developed my confidence in speaking through participating in this program. (Multiple students)
- ⑧ I used to translate Japanese into English when I spoke English, but by the time I finished the program, I was able to think in English. (Multiple students)
- ⑨ Because I was using English all the time during the program period, my

English was back as good as when I studied abroad. (Multiple students)

Hypothesis 2: Student participants of the CCC program will acquire communication skills through mutual understanding and the overcoming of cultural barriers.

Qualitative Data (Interviews):

Since this program is constructed with students from different universities who are diverse in culture and background, the learning environment often becomes multicultural. More significantly, by having a variety of student's from different grade levels (ranging from 2nd ~ 4th year) and departments, it gives students the experience and opportunity to overcome cultural barriers more often.

This particular hypothesis is derived from the interviews conducted with students who actually overcame the cultural barriers with their Canadian partners during their participation in their respective programs. (1 week for the Global Career Seminar/ 2 weeks for the Global Internship)

- ① When one Canadian student came in late for a lecture, a Japanese student claimed that this program is supported by the Japanese government, therefore participants should not be late. The Canadian student felt extremely sorry about it, and not only her but also all the participants were impressed by what had happened. (February, 2014, Global Career Seminar in Japan) (Nobuo Masumoto, 3rd year, Theology, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ② A student from Colombia had a habit of coming in late, so the paired Japanese student was careful to set meeting times early every day for two weeks. As a result, they were never late for their internship, and the Canadian student thanked her partner for all she had done. The Canadian student also learned a part of Japanese culture, punctuality. (Otowa Muragaki, 3rd year, Economics, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ③ August 2014, a Canadian student was using a cell phone while the company staff was not around, and the Japanese partner encouraged her to work properly. The Japanese student played an important role between the company and the partner. They succeeded to complete their tasks with a strong will. (Maho Funada, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ④ The schedule of Global Career Seminar in 2014 was very packed, but on the other hand, the students appreciated it. It ended up strengthening the friendships and cooperation among the members. (Yukiko Ukei, 3rd year, Policy Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University)

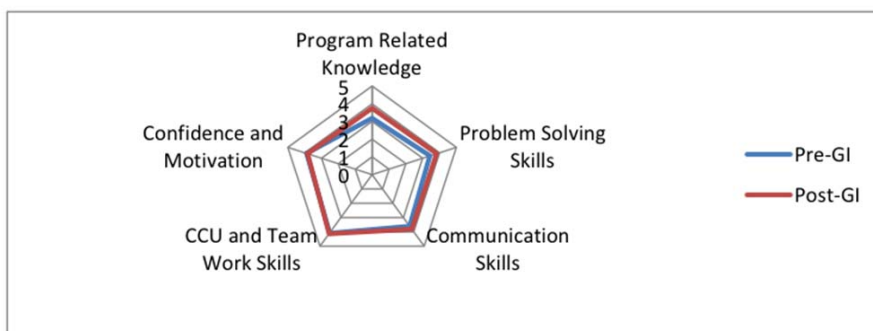
Quantitative Data (Questionnaire):

The levels of improvement for overcoming cultural along with linguistic barriers are quantitatively measured, allowing easy and clear indication of data results. The diagrams

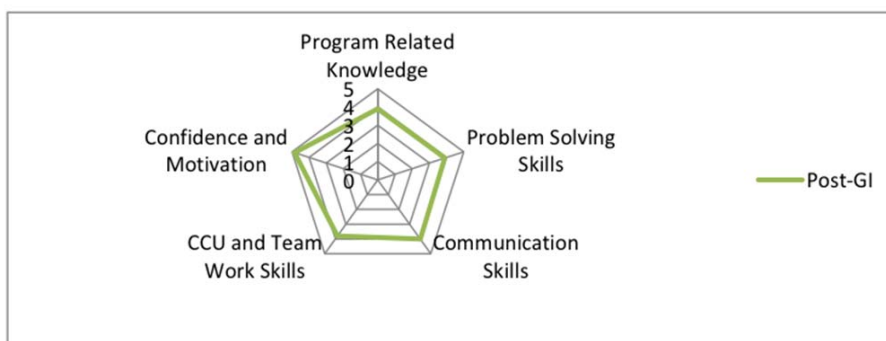
below are the analyses of the survey results taken by the participating students of year 2014 summer, Global Internship in Canada/Japan.

- 1) Analysis: Survey results of the 20 students (10 pairs) who participated in the Global Internship in Canada, 2014 summer

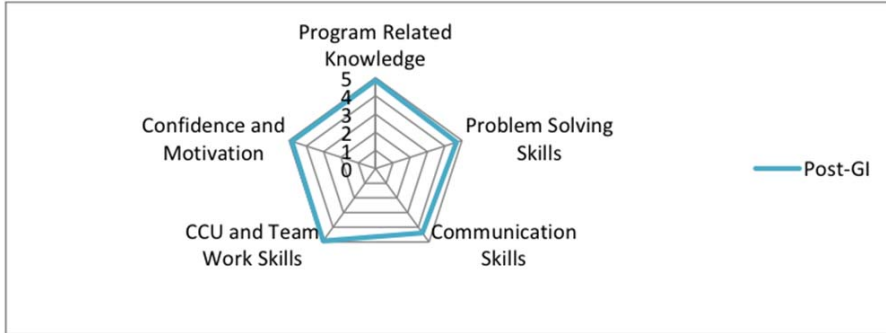
Student Self-Evaluation (Pre-GI Program / Post-GI Program)



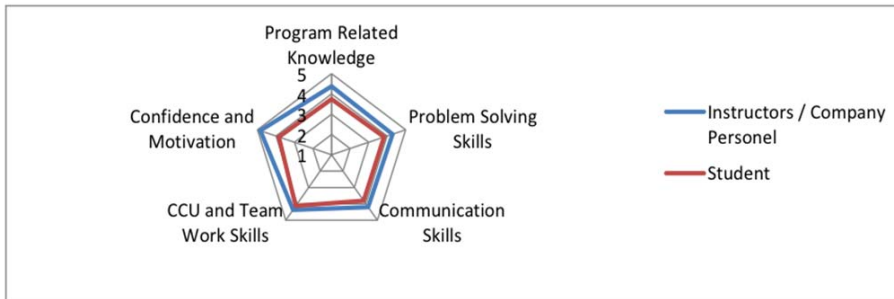
Evaluation by Course Instructors (Post-GI Program)



Evaluation by Supervisors at Host Institutions (Post-GI Program)



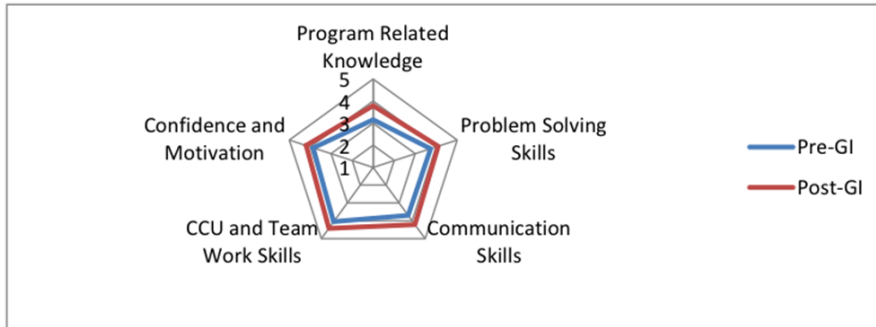
Student Self-Evaluation v.s. Evaluation by Instructors / Supervisors (Post-GI Program)



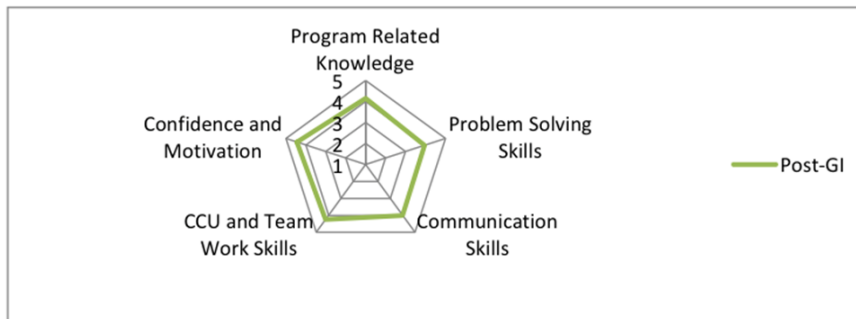
As it is apparent in the diagrams above, all five attributes – Problem Solving Skills, Communication Skills, CCU and Team Work Skills, Confidence and Motivation and Program Related Knowledge – improved in comparison to how they were pre-GI program.

- 2) Analysis: Survey results of the 40 students (20 pairs) who participated in the Global Internship in Japan, 2014 summer

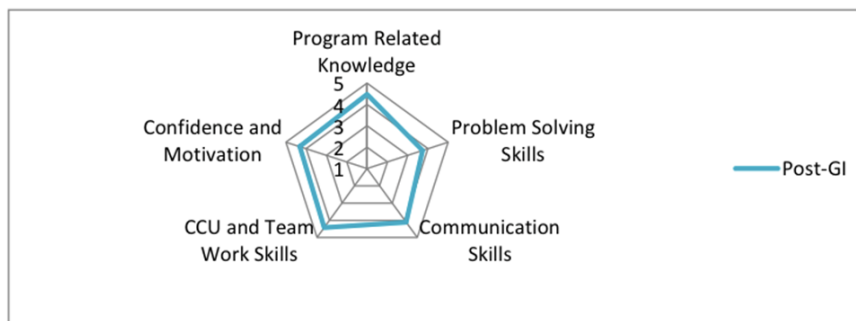
Student Self-Evaluation (Pre-GI Program / Post-GI Program)



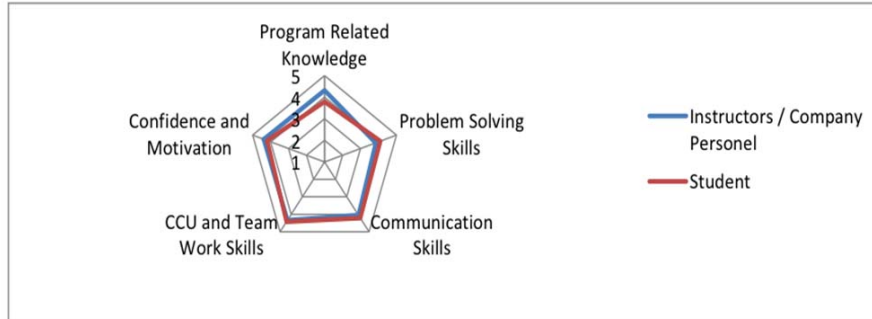
Evaluation by Course Instructors (Post-GI Program)



Evaluation by Supervisors at Host Institutions (Post-GI Program)



Student Self-Evaluation v.s. Evaluation by Instructors / Supervisors (Post-GI Program)



Even though the survey was completely based on self-evaluation, the levels on all attributes have also risen when we compare pre-GI and post-GI results. From how quantitative data have shown positive results, it tells us that the participating students have indeed been able to overcome cultural barriers to a certain extent, and have also acquired communication skills along with skills in multicultural understanding.

Hypothesis 3: Corporations who cooperated with the CCC Program will gain inspiration from the Canadian and Japanese participants, allowing them to realize the level of urgency to globalize their respective companies.

What kind of merits would the companies have?

In the midst of a having Japanese companies undergo globalization, such a program as CCC that brings corporations and students together to formulate possible solutions to existing problems is not only beneficial but a large investment for the participating companies.

- ① Although it is one of the biggest Japanese companies, it is still not easy to listen a presentation in English and comment back about it. During the internship period, we are asked to do a presentation in Japanese for the executives at Panasonic. (Otowa Muragaki, 3rd year, Business, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ② The pair who interned for Nitto Japan was asked to do a presentation in Japanese instead of in English. (Vivian Yang, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ③ Ippodo, a Japanese traditional tea store, has currently two concerns; one is preserving their tradition which has been continuing for 300 years, and the other is attempting to attract more tourists. They recently opened a shop in New York, and were introduced in a Japanese guidebook overseas. They, however, cannot deny that there is demand for English speakers even though they want to continue their relationships between

traditional customers. The internship pair was asked to do customer service in English for English speaking customers. (Hitomi Oguni, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University)

- ④ One Japanese student noticed that even at Toyota Motors, globalization inside the company is not as much as it may seem. He wondered if this is because they want to apply the Japanese way of business or it is globalization just difficult for them to do. (Yuta Oku, 4th year, Business Administration, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ⑤ While doing her internship period at EY in Toronto, one Japanese executive showed a strong interest in CCC program because he wants young Japanese people to travel overseas more. (Mio Nakago, 3rd year, International Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University)
- ⑥ It was a wonderful opportunity to look at our own company by answering even simple questions from students at GCS. I was able to think about my ideas toward work from many perspectives. (Ippodo)
- ⑦ Business is done by people, and among those people there are always connections. This CCC program truly contributes to build those connections while students are young. Those connections will surely be good for their future, and the young generation now needs those opportunities more than ever. (bioScene)
- ⑧ Since students are gathered from different backgrounds, study fields, and countries, it was quite interesting as a company executive to hear all of the ideas that they came up with. (Participant company A)

5. Conclusion and Future Prospects

Through extensive research by conducting interviews with each and every participant of all programs, the reality of the program has been successfully revealed. From the way that the data collected from interviews truly reflected the opinions of participants of the CCC program – Canadian students, KGU students, cooperating companies, and the academic coordinators, the current status of the program could be depicted as accurate as possible. Video recordings were taken in addition to the group discussions and individual interviews in order to preserve data for future reference.

Of course, the results reported in this paper do not show the full extent of the capability and success of the CCC program. Rather, there is still much more research to be done, especially on topics such as English Language improvement, intercultural communication and intercultural understanding. Most notably, since the way that globalization within Japanese companies has only recently started, there are still many concepts that are yet to be researched.

This paper marks the start of the research on the CCC Program and it would be fortunate if this could be supplemental for further research in the coming future.