

平和享受と問題解決：日本大学英語模擬国連大会への参加を通して グローバル・コミュニケーション能力を磨く

Embracing peace and solving problems: Developing global communication skills through participation in the Japanese University English Model United Nations

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本稿は静岡文化芸術大学の学生が2012年および2013年に参加した日本大学英語模擬国連会議（JUEMUN）について報告するものである。まず、模擬国連大会の歴史と参加することによる教育的意義について説明する。次に、本校から、2012年に5名、2013年には16名が参加した実績に基づき、参加申し込み、準備、本会議の様態を報告する。その中には、学生を参加させるにあたっての事務手続き及び参加費資金調達を含み、さらに、課外活動であるJUEMUNに備え、ミーティングや準備、練習等の調整等についても詳述する。JUEMUNは、学外にて英語だけで行われる3日間の大会で日本の様々な大学から日本人学生および外国人留学生、また教員、スタッフが集まる。この素晴らしい教育体験から学生が得るもの、またJUEMUNを支援することによって本校が手にするものについては、グローバル・コミュニケーション能力の発達、世界平和に向けての取り組みを語ることで明らかになるだろう。

This article reports on the participation of students from Shizuoka University of Art and Culture (SUAC) in Japanese University English Model United Nations Conferences (JUEMUN) in 2012 and 2013. Before describing what students did at the conferences, some background will be given on the history of Model United Nations events and the educational benefits they provide to students, teachers, and members of society. A team of five SUAC students participated in JUEMUN in 2012, and sixteen students joined the 2013 conference. This report will explain the process of entering, preparing for, and participating in these events. The administrative process undertaken to allow students to attend the conferences, and also how student participation was funded will be explained. Furthermore, since this event was extra-curricula, details will be given on the management of team meetings, preparation, and practice for JUEMUN. JUEMUN is a three-day all-English event that takes place off campus and its participants include students, teachers, and staff from various universities in Japan and abroad. How students benefitted from this unique educational opportunity, and what SUAC gained by supporting JUEMUN will conclude this report on the efforts of teachers and students at Shizuoka University of Art and Culture to develop global communication skills and work for world peace.

1.0 The Model United Nations

A Model United Nations is a simulation of the United Nations General Assembly and other multilateral bodies such as the Security Council. While there is no official record, it is believed that Model United Nations were held as Model League of Nations simulations before the founding of the United Nations. The United Nations was founded in 1945 after World War II; the UN has four main purposes: “1. To keep peace throughout the world; 2. To develop friendly relations among nations; 3. To help nations work together to improve the lives of poor people, to conquer hunger, disease and illiteracy, and to encourage respect for each other’s rights and freedoms; 4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations to achieve these goals” (<http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml>). Such noble goals at the UN draw the attention of educators at most levels of education; teachers would be remiss not to find an interactive methodology to introduce these concepts to their students. Fortunately, there has been a model in place for over sixty years.

Early Model United Nations (MUN) simulations include student-led events at Harvard University. However, as this paper will show, the reach of the MUN is much wider than that. In fact, hundreds of MUN events are held across the globe at middle schools, high schools,

and universities each year. The educational benefits of the MUN are quite extensive and multi-disciplinary. Participants in MUN can learn about “the evolving system of global governance” (Crossly-Frolick), as well as develop skills that can be used beyond government and politics. Teachers use MUN simulations to teach global education in the context of skills building and content, including: “debate, deliberations . . . human rights, global stability, and peacebuilding competence” (Kirkwood-Tucker). Furthermore, some teachers have recognized that MUN skills can go beyond academic learning, and also encompass a number of interpersonal skills, “The process of student teaching student, both within and across courses, is beneficial for the experienced student and the novice alike, encouraging peer interaction and cooperative learning” (Macintosh). What follows is an explanation of some of the specific types of learning that took place at the JUEMUN; to conclude, details of the SUAC team’s participation in the 2012 and 2013 Model United Nations events will be given.

1.1 What students learn from participation in the Model United Nations

Students who take part in JUEMUN learn how to do general research on the United Nations and its role in the world. They also improve English research and

reading skills by doing detailed research on a particular country and topic. Delegates become experts in that area, so they can participate in debates from the perspective of a citizen from that country. Students role-play and assume the persona of a person from that country. They learn empathy and develop a greater understanding of people from other cultures.

Students make speeches at the Model UN; they also work in Committees to draft resolutions (written proposals to solve particular problems). Students listen to and consider these resolutions and then vote on them. Again, students are role-playing so their decisions must be based on the needs of the country they represent.

Students learn much about the world and themselves through these activities. They learn teamwork, debate and negotiation skills, public speaking skills, and writing and research skills. They also learn that their ideas and actions can make a difference in the world, and that if everyone works together, they can make the world a better place. How students worked together at the JUEMUN 2012 and 2013 conferences will be described below.

2.0 JEUMUN 2012

In February of 2012, the author of this report was contacted by the organizers of the Japanese University Model United Nations and given an invitation to bring a team of students from SUAC to participate in the 2012 JUEMUN Conference to be held during the first weekend of July at Kinki University in Osaka. After announcing this opportunity to students capable of participating in this type of event, and subsequently getting positive feedback from various teachers at SUAC, plans were put in place to form a team of students to take part in the event. To ensure adequate support, the team was limited to five people: three sophomores and two juniors from the Department of International Culture. Students were recruited via word-of-mouth, and also through announcements in the English Diploma Courses, and at English Speaking Society events. What follows is an explanation of the administrative procedures undertaken to get support for students at JUEMUN, and the eventual receipt of official sponsorship from SUAC.

2.1 Administrative Preparation

The logistics of this event include arranging transportation, booking hotel rooms and providing meals, reserving a large meeting space at the host university to hold the conference, and organizing a support team to aid students. The support team includes student volunteers, university staff, and university professors to act as advisors. Fortunately, the

JUEMUN team has had several years of experience organizing such events and there is a system in place to ensure things run smoothly. Nonetheless, organizing a three-day international, English event at a Japanese university is no mean task.

Since it was SUAC's first time to participate, a number of obstacles had to be overcome. First and foremost, receiving support and funding from the administration proved to be very challenging. As with any new idea or event proposed to a large bureaucracy, the default response is often to reject it. A lack of understanding of JUEMUN and its educational benefits meant that at first support would be denied. Despite this initial disappointment, all was not lost. The plans were already in motion, and the students were informed that they might have to cover their own expenses to the event. Because of their determination to attend this important educational conference, the SUAC JUEMUN team agreed to cover their own costs if necessary to go to JUEMUN in Osaka for three days. Through the support of Professor Baba from the Department of International Culture, the administration eventually provided support. Funding was provided from the special events budget managed by the Publications Office. Professor Baba's knowledge of the educational benefits of this event and his support of students in their English studies at SUAC helped to convince the administration to take a chance and provide funding. The rest of the work for this event would be left up to students and teachers to research and prepare content to be ready to take part in the English debates, speeches, role plays, and committee work that comprise Model United Nations Conferences.

2.2 Educational Preparation

The JUEMUN conference themes, and the types of committee work students took part in are explained in the appendix below; however, details of what students needed to know, and how they prepared to be successful at JUEMUN follows. The conferences are centered on a main theme, and each student is assigned a country to represent; the students are called delegates. The countries are grouped into regions based on geographic proximity. Each delegate is assigned to a committee; the committees have a special, narrow focus and must consider issues related to the conference theme at large and the specifics of their committee work. For example, a student who was a delegate from South Africa at the 2012 conference on population issues was on the Committee on Children. That student was in the regional bloc of Africa and had to know about issues in South Africa in general and issues relating to "children" in particular. Each student must prepare a Position Paper about his or her country and how the issues to be discussed at the conference impact the country they represent. The Position Paper is

written in the form of a speech and should be between one and two minutes long. The Position Paper is the starting point for JUEMUN preparation, but students must also become experts in the content related to their committees, regions, and the world.

The research for JUEMUN can take the shape of a portfolio that can be created to hold data related to basic knowledge about a country and the country's perspective on a variety of issues. More research can be done on the committee's issues and how they impact not only the delegate's country, but other countries as well. For the SUAC JUEMUN team, students created portfolios using Google documents and shared the documents with their advisor, the author of this report, so they could receive feedback and support. Furthermore, examples of position papers, working papers, and resolutions were provided to help students see what had been accomplished at previous events.

Since 2012 was the first time to participate in such an event, there was much to learn. The advisor worked closely with the JUEMUN organizers to observe seminar classes at Kinki University to see how other students were preparing for JUMUN. He used that information to create instructional videos and slide shows that were shown to students at team meetings. Once this information was provided, the remaining steps included having students research, write, and practice their speeches; students also had to learn about the rules of procedure for Model United Nations conferences. The 2012 conference was so successful that more students wanted to take part in the event, and a team of sixteen students was formed to participate in the 2013 JUEMUN at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies during the first weekend in July 2013. Details about that event will be provided below. Figures 1, 2, and 3 in the appendix show SUAC JUEMUN team member participation at JUEMUN.

3.0 JEUMUN 2013 Changes

Some major changes to JUMUN 2013 include the increase (almost doubling) in the number of participants and also the inclusion of more universities from Japan and abroad. The appendix lists some of the delegate affiliations from past conferences. The increase in the number of students from around the world not only raised the level of English at the conference, but also the feeling of global communication; the three-day event exuded the true spirit of the United Nations. Because of the complexity of the 2013 conference theme, a number of extra events were included in the agenda to give students more information about natural disasters. These supplementary educational events included guest speakers from various fields of expertise. These events were interactive and valuable

learning experiences that not only aided students in their participation in the conference, but also helped to raise awareness and broaden students' knowledge about important global issues. Descriptions about these events are given below.

3.1 JEUMUN 2013 Guest lecturers

Guest lecturers, special seminars, and Q&A sessions at the 2013 JUEMUN increased students' knowledge and provided them with more information to use in their committee work and when writing resolutions. The lectures were timely and interactive. Special guests included a former Ambassador to the United Nations, a Professor of Sociology and an expert on Disaster Identification and Prevention, and Professors who have founded an NPO. There were also news teams from Kinki University who recorded the proceedings and reported on them. This news feature added to the flow and exchange of information and also allowed a group of students to participate in JUEMUN from another perspective. Furthermore, this news and PR information can be used by SUAC to show the learning community the type of educational experience their students had.

4. The benefits of JUEMUN participation

The educational benefits of JUEMUN participation have been outlined above. To conclude this report, some of the benefits to universities that encourage and support their students in Model United Nations events will be explained. First of all, for a university interested in promoting global education and strengthening its English curriculum, this event is ideal. It helps students set clear goals, increases motivation, and exposes students to many types of learning and learners (including several international students), all without leaving Japan. Secondly, students who have such life-changing experiences such as those encountered at JUMUN, return to the university and bring a new approach to learning that improves the classroom atmosphere. Thirdly, from a public relations point of view, being able to show prospective students that such a unique program is being offered at SUAC is certain to generate appeal. Fortunately, for the 2013 JUEMUN, the author was able to work closely with the Publications Office to promote the event to the public and upload information to the SUAC website (<http://www.suac.ac.jp/news/success/2013/00173/>).

Conclusion

Being able to meet the needs of young learners in the 21st Century is a challenge for educators. Debates over the merits of a humanities education vis-à-vis Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

will doubtless continue over the years. Nonetheless, goal setting, and making connections to learning outside of the classroom in a global context are critical components in any university curriculum. The JUEMUN is a program that has numerous benefits at many levels: academic, interpersonal, personal, professional, and linguistic. The fact that so many students at SUAC, (as well as many other universities in Japan) want to participate in JUEMUN is testimony to the interest in global learning among today's youth. Having had the opportunity to take teams of students to JUEMUN in 2012 and 2013, the author can attest that it was an extremely valuable learning experience.

When SUAC students return from JUEMUN each year, there is a bit of a shock and a need for debriefing. Some egos get wounded at the realization that they have become small fish in a big ocean of learners from all walks of life, academic and cultural backgrounds, and educational experiences. Nonetheless, the experiences and memories will last a long time and perhaps shape students' views of learning and global communication. For more information about JUEMUN, readers can go to: <http://juemun.weebly.com/>.

Appendix

1A. JEUMUN 2012 Themes and Committees

Theme: A world of 7 Billion People: Challenges, Opportunities, and Actions

The theme of the 2012 conference focused on population issues around the world. It coincided with the birth of the 7 billionth person on earth. Students worked in the committees below to look at important issues affecting people across the globe through the lens of an increasing population and the impact that can have on people. Each committee drafted and wrote resolutions (official proposals) and presented them for a vote at the end of the conference.

Committees:

- Ageing
- Environment
- Poverty and Inequality
- Reproductive and Health Rights
- Urbanization
- Women and Girls Empowerment
- Young People

2A. JEUMUN 2013 Themes and Committees

Theme: Strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance and relief for natural disasters

The theme of the 2013 conference focused on how natural disasters have an impact on people across the globe. Focus was not only given on providing aid after calamities, but also much thought was given to preparedness and how to protect those most vulnerable

in society from such catastrophic events. In light of the horrific earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011, and other recent natural disasters, the educational benefits of studying about these issues were great. Each committee drafted and wrote resolutions (official proposals) and presented them for a vote at the end of the conference.

Committees:

- Children
- Displacement
- Emergency Preparedness
- Food Security
- Gender Equality
- Protection

3A. JEUMUN 2102 and 2013 delegate affiliations

The 2013 conference had ninety-seven delegates with 30% of those delegates coming from outside of Japan. University affiliations of delegates are provided below.

- Augustana College (U.S.A.)
- University of Burgundy (France)
- Ca'Foscari University of Venice (Italy)
- De La Salle University (Philippines)
- Doshisha University (Japan)
- Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Kinki University (Japan)
- Kobe City University of Foreign Studies
- Kyoto University of Foreign Studies
- Kwansai Gakuin University (Japan)
- Mongolian University of Culture and Education (Mongolia),
- Nanzan University (Japan)
- Osaka University (Japan)
- Paris Institute of Political Science (France)
- Shizuoka University of Art and Culture
- Tsukuba University (Japan)
- Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara (Mexico)
- University of Bologna (Italy)
- University of Foreigners Perugia (Italy)
- University of London (England)
- University of Mannheim (Germany)
- University of Naples (Italy)
- University Science Malaysia (Malaysia)
- University of Texas at San Antonio (U.S.A.)
- University of Zurich (Switzerland)
- Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)

Figure 1. Guest speakers shared expertise at JUEMUN 2013



Figure 2. Students participating in Committee work at JUEMUN 2013



Figure 3. Students participating in a vote at JUEMUN 2012



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