

Japanese Culture-Focused Practicums: Observations for Japanese Universities and Institutions

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Abstract: International students studying in Japan can undertake a variety of culture-related classes at their host university or institution in order to increase their linguistic and intercultural skills. This report looks at the operation of the practical component of culture-focused classes, which ideally takes the students out of the classroom and places them in authentic environments to undertake instruction in Japanese art forms. International students, host institution students, and facilitators can benefit from these programs, which in themselves require careful planning, close monitoring, cultural sensitivity, and logistical work. The author's experience in facilitating such a program at a university in Osaka forms the background from which salient issues, program insights, and principles relating the program contents to their implementation are reported. It is hoped that this report will assist institutions in forming, operating, or renewing their culture-focused programs.

Keywords: international student curricula, culture-focused practicum (CFP), cross-cultural learning, Japanese traditional arts

1 Introduction

Introducing practical, culture-focused learning opportunities into incoming international student curricula can offer educational avenues to enrich and support international student learning. Far from being just a form of superficial activity attached to the syllabus, guided practical sessions (practicums) not only expose international students to cultural traditions but also allow them direct contact with environments and people in the host institution or surrounding community that would most likely be difficult for these students to access on their own. In addition to offering international students authentic interaction within institutions or the local community, these culture-focused learning opportunities can also contribute to promoting stronger ties between departments within the host institution and between the host institution and the local community.

This article focuses on the *culture-focused practicum* (CFP) that can be offered in international

student curricula and to which exposure to a culture-specific discipline in the form of instruction and practical participation occurs.

CFPs for international students are no doubt in operation at institutions throughout Japan to varying degrees, and combined with a solid theoretical component, such practicums can augment international students' culture-related course content. In Japan's case, CFPs may include arts such as the tea ceremony (*sado*), calligraphy (*shodo*), flower arrangement (*kado*), martial arts (*budo*), drumming (*wadaiko*), dance (*buyo*), ink painting (*sumie*), and many more. The extent to which CFPs can play a role in international student programs will vary between institutions, forming a dominant part of offered courses or operating as separate experiential classes.

Regardless of the scale and format of CFPs, these types of sessions can aid international students in further processing new information through practical participation and experiential exposure. Knowledge embodied in cultural disciplines is not always easily accessible. Therefore, the

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opportunity to gain exposure to such disciplines in authentic situations should be promoted, as these experiences can offer international students further insights into the host culture and society.

2 The Kindai University Martial Arts Program for Incoming Exchange Students

This paper^[1] will highlight a selection of salient points that arose from a Japanese martial arts program facilitated by myself and introduced into the 2019 Kindai University international exchange student curriculum (for a report on the Kindai martial arts program with a predominant focus on the 2019 first semester, see Eckford, 2019a)¹⁾. The core objective of the Kindai University program was to give incoming exchange students (ES) a first-hand taste of various Japanese martial arts and the cultures and subcultures that envelop them by having them participate in actual training sessions with the Kindai University clubs.

Throughout the semester (Table 1), the ES undertook a combination of theory and practical learning inclusive of 12 CFPs (judo, kendo, karate, sumo, iaido, kyudo, aikido, naginata, Nippon Kempo, Shorinji Kempo, bojutsu [staff], and shodo [Japanese calligraphy]).

It was surmised that spending time in these

authentic environments (however brief) would afford these students with a steppingstone to approach a deeper study of Japan, culture, and traditions in general. Indeed, the entire program has created food for thought for the facilitator and has laid the platform for a number of potential future programs.

While the Kindai program is weighted heavily with practical sessions, the takeaway from this paper should not be the quantity of practicums, rather the possible benefits and suitability to an institution’s international student curriculum such CFP sessions can offer.

In this paper, a cross-section of practical, pertinent, and logistical items are presented, which may offer some insight into the possibility and validity of certain approaches to take when facilitating CFPs. There is no limit to how CFPs are constructed, and while situations will naturally differ, if interested institutions find these observations helpful when considering their present or new programs, this paper will have achieved its goal.

This was one of the best experiences I have ever had and greatly helped me to understand Japan and its culture more. There is a lot of

Table 1 Kindai University Martial Arts Program Semester Schedule

Classes	Activity	Week Following Class
First two classes of the semester	The ES are in class receiving instruction on Japanese martial arts, Japanese martial history, relative Japanese language and culture, and dojo etiquette.	The ES begin their prescribed readings for the program.
Weeks 3 to 14	The Day of the CFP	Week Following CFP
The ES do prescribed readings on the art they undertake in that week.	The ES and facilitator meet just prior to the session for a pre-CFP briefing.	The ES journal their thoughts and impressions on the art they just experienced.
	The ES and facilitator enter the relevant Kindai club dojo to commence the CFP.	
	After the session, the ES undertake a Q&A with the host club and are free to talk with the host club instructors and members. A simple post-CFP meeting is held, and the ES do a written quiz on their readings and the art they just experienced.	The ES begin their prescribed readings for the next art.
Final Class	The ES give a presentation on a topic of interest derived from their experiences within the program.	

Japanese history embedded into all the budo programs, which are all very interesting. I like that we can learn a little bit of each. (Kindai martial arts program ES—hereinafter KES.)

3 Preliminary Considerations

The composition and nature of CFPs bring international students directly into the domain of the host culture. Paige and Vande Berg (2012) state that although research shows “immersion in another culture, in and of itself, is not as powerful as immersion plus reflection, engagement with the culture is still at the heart of the study abroad experience. Becoming involved with another culture brings abstract cultural concepts to life” (p. 54)²⁾.

Research informs us that simply providing these types of experiential classes will not automatically guarantee advances in intercultural or language development for international students. In their 2009 study, Vande Berg *et al.* suggested that in relation to experiential activities, “students failed to learn effectively because they were left to their own devices: those who designed the programs featuring experiential activities may have believed that such activities naturally allow students to engage with host nationals” (p.31)³⁾. Therefore, if international students are to benefit from the practical sessions of a syllabus, facilitators must not just simply provide these sessions, but keep au courant with study-abroad research and demonstrated pedagogical approaches, and organize CFPs to present a valuable learning component to the international students’ course of study.

4 Pedagogical Approaches and Teaching Methodologies for CFPs

To capitalize on the availability of tangible culture in the study abroad experience and to avoid pure theoretical understanding, culture-focused courses should ideally comprise in some

part of an active experience of or close exposure to the discipline being introduced. In most cases, this will take the student out of the classroom and place them in authentic environments. In many cases, these sessions will require international students to work with members of the host culture (e.g., university club instructors/students or experts in certain fields). The learning opportunities international students receive while participating in CFPs in Japanese institutions cannot be easily duplicated, and for many, it may be the only real chance they have in order to experience certain cultural disciplines in the host country.

In a 2020 study involving 719 study-abroad students, Chwialkowska focused on ascertaining those areas of exchange study abroad programs that assisted cross-cultural learning (CCL) among students. Chwialkowska’s (2020) study, developing on the *transformative learning theory* (TLT; developed originally by Jack Mezirow), found that “academic context emphasizing coursework based on cross-cultural collaboration, and student engagement in the local community [two areas applicable to CFPs] were positively related to student acquisition of cross-cultural skills” (p. 15)⁴⁾. This is, of course, only a small portion of Chwialkowska’s (2020) findings. However, it points to possible windows of opportunities where CFPs can contribute to the value of the overall study abroad experience.

The experiences international students receive in CFPs do not happen in a vacuum. The Kindai ES had to navigate the cultural dynamics within their own multicultural class as they progressed through the semester. In addition, the ES received instruction in each discipline, and were required to communicate with the Kindai club instructors and club members while being active participants in the cultural scenes that played out around them. These can be uncomfortable experiences for the students, but this is where

learning can take place. Chwialkowska's (2020) study found that in the preliminary phases of their sojourn, study-abroad students experienced discomfort in relation to the abovementioned "academic context emphasizing coursework based on cross-cultural collaboration, and student engagement in the local community" (p. 15)⁴⁾. This led Chwialkowska to declare, "Thus, while cross-cultural immersion results in an initial discomfort, it is necessary for the CCL, consistent with the TLT" (p. 15)⁴⁾.

While the TLT may not be part of a host institution's pedagogical approach, it can be assumed that CFPs could provide rich learning environments and possibilities for both students and educators alike.

ES in the Kindai martial arts program undertook readings, reflective writing, quizzes, and discussion on the Japanese martial arts and calligraphy, and this was all encased in active participation in the arts themselves alongside Kindai University club members. The hands-on challenges were new and demanding to the ES on various levels. However, on observation and written and verbal feedback from the students, it was noted that these experiences benefitted them in a number of ways. Regardless of the scale of such programs, many CFPs will require the students not only to navigate cultural and linguistic differences but also to invest holistically in the experience, and doing this may assist them in discovering more about themselves.

Probably the hardest and best part about the course was that it was uncomfortable. It really forced me out of the comfort zone, but it was never so uncomfortable that I could not stand it anymore. (KES)

The very nature of CFPs (i.e., an immersive mind and body holistic approach) makes them suitable for an array of different pedagogical

approaches and teaching methodologies. Post program exposure to the abovementioned transformative learning theory and the *experiential learning theory* (ELT; developed by David Kolb) allowed reflection on the roles these theories could play in study abroad programs, offered insight into some of what I had been observing throughout the 2019 Kindai program, and highlighted potential avenues for more effective programs in the future. Strange and Gibson (2017) noted the following:

Through applying the basis of experiential learning to the potential outcomes of transformative learning, it may be possible to further direct educational programming in study abroad for the better. Since the outcomes of both experiential and transformative learning are in alignment with those desired in study abroad, it is appropriate to use them both as frameworks to assess the effectiveness of a variety of study abroad models. (p.86)⁵⁾

Admittedly, the application and possibilities for theories such as these are perhaps more suited to discussion on pedagogical platforms and approaches as they apply to *overall* study abroad programs (as opposed to single components of such programs). However, the requirements of CFPs (e.g., immersion in foreign environments, the development of cross-cultural skills and sensitivity, and the introduction of new physical or artistic skills and philosophies) suggest that they are fertile grounds for the appropriation of crucial ideals and best practices from both the transformative learning theory and experiential learning theory approaches.

While the transformative learning theory and experiential learning theory are not new to the study abroad arena (Strange & Gibson, 2017 pp. 88, 97)⁵⁾, and while CFP learning opportunities may only represent a small part of an institution's

study abroad curriculum, such theories and pedagogical approaches could offer further teaching possibilities to the facilitators of such programs in addition to potential research opportunities in and beyond the facilitator's institution.

Practical sessions will also support the theoretical knowledge that students already possess or gain from their studies in Japan. In CFPs, students are exposed to culture-in-action and are required to be participants in that environment. This is where things get very real for the international students, and such experiences forward them with the opportunity to observe and *practice* certain societal rules of the host culture. This allows the international students to compare such practices with their own culture and perhaps to develop a more informed perspective.

One example is the behavioral intricacies entwined in Japanese hierarchical relationships (上下関係 [*jogekankei*]). As an illustration, students in the Kindai martial arts program were expected to abide by accepted protocols such as formally greeting the instructor and the Kindai students in a clear and firm voice, verbally acknowledging those instructing them when receiving instruction, remaining receptive during instruction, and bowing at the appropriate times.

Such practices may not be required or assessed in a student's home country when learning a skill, but to take part effectively in most traditional Japanese learning environments, these practices, and many more, are the norm. The onus here is on the facilitator who has to be an active participant in the learning process and, armed with cultural knowledge, guide and assist students in comprehending and navigating unfamiliar cultural terrain.

Through the course I have understood the importance of the common benefit, the importance of teamwork and the respect for

the hierarchy and the experience the elderly have that exists in the Japanese society. (KES)

5 CFP Content and Considerations

There are numerous possibilities for the content of CFPs, and many variables must be considered when preparing a program. What is available to an institution will vary depending on respective situations. However, the assessment of possibilities can be a rewarding experience and can highlight various learning opportunities in and around the host institution. In relation to local resources, Calvert (2015) states, "Regardless of the topic, the instructor can brainstorm a list of available local resources and make contact with stakeholders in the community to connect learners with authentic contexts for communication" (p. 209)⁶. While Calvert's comment relates to one component (the utilization of local resources) of a model of out-of-class learning used for language learning, the principles and similarities with CFPs are applicable and apparent. Calvert states that the model that she discusses "could be applied in multiple contexts" and "is ideal for content-based classrooms where field trips can enhance the learning experience of students through authentic communication, community building, and classroom cohesion" (p. 209)⁶.

In planning any form of CFP, educators must be on guard not to let the program or individual sessions turn into some type of intrusion where the international students are present just to be entertained. Many of the cultural disciplines international students encounter are the result of centuries of tradition and development, and it is imperative for international students to understand this as well as their roles in the interactions.

The Kindai University martial arts program gave the utmost importance to acceptable student behavior throughout the learning sessions. The obligation here was on the facilitator to make the

ES aware of the aims of the program and how the results of their conduct could reverberate beyond the program itself. Discussion on the attitude and behavior that one should carry into CFP sessions and why appropriate behavior is necessary provided the students with an opportunity for further reflection on the requirements of productive cultural interactions. While it is only natural that students will have varying opinions, discussion and reflection on such issues can accentuate the role of international students in the whole learning experience and allow them to appreciate how important attentive conduct is in the global community. In addition, the facilitator's maintenance of close communication and empathic dialog with the instructors of the cultural disciplines not only assures that the best possible measures are taken for approaching classes but also contributes to the development of the overall cross-cultural initiative.

The lessons that arise out of the CFP should benefit not only sojourners but also the hosts. In these sessions, the hosts also confront cultural and linguistic differences, and they face decisions in relation to appropriate and effective teaching strategies for those of other cultures. As the possessors of the knowledge of their art, the hosts will field questions that, in some cases, may lead to further reflection on the art itself and perhaps on the best way to disseminate such knowledge. This is vital when we consider that if the cultural arts (of any nation) are to survive, effective communication is indispensable. Fortunately, in the initial stages, a high level of linguistic and cultural competence is not a prerequisite for this to take place, and active association with various nationalities, such as CFPs offer, may plausibly ignite interest from all those involved in pursuing language studies and the cultural elements that surround them.

6 Student Preparation

Most of the content of any CFP will be new to international students. Therefore, it is essential that they are prepared in advance for what is coming. However, it is also important not to give so much information that might distort their judgment and spoil accompanying surprises when learning something new. To minimize self-consciousness about what was expected of the ES in the CFPs, I instructed them on behavioral aspects and appropriate etiquette. However, I was careful not to divulge too much about what the ES would actually be taught or observe in the CFPs. That is, specific techniques, training methods, and/or particular practices certain clubs undertake. These CFPs may be a once in a lifetime learning experience for many ES, and I was not only adamant about having them prepared but also able to enter these environments with an open, inquisitive mindset free from the influence of others who had gone before them.

Unfamiliarity with the accepted behavior and protocol in unversed environments can be distressing, so to help prepare the Kindai ES, a study guide was provided that included information on accepted behavioral norms within the dojo, essential Japanese phrases and terminology, and a brief background of each art in the program. Being aware of what they were likely to face, let students concentrate on experiencing the lessons at hand (Eckford, 2019a)¹⁾.

The Study Guide helped me to more understand what we would be doing and feel less culture shock. It permitted me to be more interested to ask more relevant questions. (KES)

Just distributing the study guide and expecting students to assimilate would have been

irresponsible. I felt it important to discuss and explain any areas that students were uncertain about and attempted to preempt questions by identifying areas that students could find perplexing. It was important to take all questions as learning opportunities, and as CFPs can offer so many of these learning occasions, it is important to capitalize on them.

The goal here is not the blind acceptance of certain practices; rather, it is a development of the ability to look at all aspects with an inquisitive approach. In traditional cultural arts, the original reasons for many practices and behavioral protocols may be lost to the annals of time, and while there may not be universally agreed-upon answers, this provides a fortuitous opportunity for curious students. The knowledge attained in searching for the origins of such practices in traditional art forms may open the student's mind even further to the culture in question.

7 Cultural Mentoring

It is imperative that CFP facilitators make themselves available to the students for discussion and guidance on any issue.

Research points to cultural mentoring as an important facet of study-abroad programs (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012; Vande Berg *et al.*, 2009)^{2,3)}, and onsite mentoring in study-abroad programs can be beneficial for the development of intercultural skills (Engle & Engle, 2012; Vande Berg *et al.*, 2012)^{7,8)}. While such research focuses on overall study abroad programs, the spontaneous nature of CFPs where students are actual participants in cultural interaction makes them an essential candidate for the intervention of a cultural mentor to provide students with an efficacious learning environment.

Lou *et al.* (2012) recommend that cultural mentors be instructed “in the theory and practice of intercultural teaching and learning” advising

that “this investment of time and other resources will ensure that those serving as cultural mentors will be effective in this challenging work” (p. 416)⁹⁾. This may seem like a large hurdle for institutions who only have small or irregular programs or staff new to study abroad; however, it offers guidance and opportunities for personnel development within any educational establishment offering study abroad programs, regardless of their scale.

8 Japan Side

While preparing international students is indispensable, it is also vital that the following points form components of best practice with the Japanese side or host institution.

- Chief instructors of the art are given a detailed explanation of the CFP's purpose in advance.
- Potential problem areas are identified and discussed with chief instructors.
- Host club/group members are informed of the purpose of the CFP.
- Regular communication takes place with those responsible for the CFP (i.e., chief instructors, senior students, and club or group managers).
- The CFP facilitator must always be contactable and must have easy access to everyone involved in the logistical aspects of the CFP.

The strength of the Kindai martial arts program is its regular interaction with the Kindai martial arts clubs. These clubs have schedules to follow throughout the year, and it is important to contact the clubs early and decide when the sessions can take place. It is also essential to maintain flexibility. There were occasions when the times and days of some sessions had to change to align with the club's schedule. It is important for the students to benefit as much as possible from these sessions, and it is the responsibility of the facilitator to make this happen. In addition, CFPs may understandably run over time; therefore, it is advisable to position

classes so there is ideally some leeway and students do not have to hurry to their next class. This gives international students more time to communicate with the instructor or club/group members. The Kindai martial arts program was the last class of the week for the ES.

9 Traditional Art Forms

Many of Japan's cultural traditions incorporate rigorous learning pathways that can take many years. Traditional arts of perhaps any culture are not the domain of the *quick fix* or *expressways to mastery*. It is important to explain this to participating international students from the outset. While the underlying tenet of participation in CFPs should be *authenticity*, there are some areas where full authenticity is just not possible.

The time international students have in CFPs is limited, and it is obviously impossible for them to attempt anything close to the content that the students or teachers of these arts undertake. However, far from being deleterious, this is a perfect learning opportunity and allows the visiting students to reflect on the effort required for mastery in the arts. Positive outcomes of international students' participation in CFPs are possibilities of their joining similar groups during their stay or pursuing their favorite arts after returning to their home countries.

In the Kindai martial arts program, the ES had only one CFP with each martial art and one class in calligraphy; therefore, they were permitted to take part in some activities that would be unthinkable for people attending such sessions for the first time. The ES understood this and performed in a fitting manner and, on observation, the veracity of the arts remained and were professionally instructed. While cultural arts teachers will most likely appreciate the concept of the CFP and suitably adjust their teaching, it is a matter of courtesy that the

facilitator discusses apposite issues and fields any requests from the instructor well before the class takes place.

While time constraints on exposure to the arts could not be avoided, it was important for the Kindai martial arts program that the ES were not treated like special guests. As discussed previously (Eckford, 2019b)¹⁰, this would have devalued the program and compromised any possible learning opportunities. I asked the Kindai club instructors and members not to afford the ES any special treatment. For the time they were at Kindai University, they were Kindai University students. The ES were required to do any of the chores required in the different training sessions, and they seemed eager to fulfill their responsibilities.

10 Additional Benefits

For international students, CFPs can include an array of potential benefits, such as culture and language exposure, immersion into authentic environments, and the introduction of new skills. Besides gaining a practical perspective on theory and history, students may gain further insight into their favorite fields of contemporary Japanese culture. Several ES in the Kindai martial arts program were fans of *manga* and *anime*, and it was interesting and enlightening to see how a knowledge of modern facets of Japanese society related to aspects of traditional art forms. While CFPs should definitely not exclude contemporary culture, many institutions will most likely focus on traditional culture in their respective programs. As students experience these traditional forms of culture, they can draw connections to contemporary culture, which may provide a more complete picture of the Japan in which they are living.

The most valuable lessons of the course were all the things that I learnt and experienced

about the Japanese culture that I just knew because of the TV or Japanese animation. (KES)

Another area that was a pleasant surprise to me, as the facilitator, was the relaxation and enjoyment that some students mentioned they experienced in their weekly class. The mind-body approach that is inescapable in these types of experiential classes can mean that students receive the now well-documented positive physiological and psychological effects of physical exercise combined with periods of focused mind states (mindfulness).

As a long-term student of martial arts, I was aware of the health benefits that a *properly* taught martial art can offer the practitioner. However, I was happy to hear and observe that some ES were reaping these benefits even during their short time in the program. Not all cultural practices will have an extensive physical component; however, mindfulness that is manifested in arguably all cultural disciplines can only benefit students. There is no doubt that international students are under varying amounts of stress throughout their time in Japan, and I am now of the firm opinion that some form of organized recreation should be mandatory in international student curricula. This does not have to take the form of a CFP, but it should allow the students some time to refresh. If a strategically placed CFP can fulfill this, then all the better.

This program made me love the student life here. For example, to be able to go doing a martial art just after class in the same place can help one to feel less stressed. It's a good way to have a healthy life. (KES)

11 Program Logistics

Although not an exhaustive list, the items below need to be considered when planning CFPs. The applicability of each item will depend on the scale and intentions of individual institutions. A brief explanation of how Kindai positions itself is presented in each item below.

Administrative Requirements: Will it be an accredited standalone program?

The Kindai martial arts program is a non-credit standalone course, although students may be eligible for credit recognition at other institutions. The program is a part of the Kindai University international exchange student curriculum and all standard protocols, including assessment tasks and monitoring of student attendance, apply.

Language: What language will be used to teach the program or sessions? Is a set language level required?

The Kindai martial arts program is taught predominantly in English, and the level of TOEFL iBT® 61 is required for enrollment. Japanese language ability is not a factor in enrolment, and all levels are eligible.

Language: Will an interpreter be required?

As the facilitator, a lot of my duties in the CFPs were taken up with interpreting. Having an interpreter at every session is strongly recommended for all parties to benefit. It is not imperative that the interpreter possesses specialized knowledge in the art forms.

Personnel: Are qualified personnel present on staff? Is there a need to outsource or approach the surrounding community?

The number of martial arts clubs at Kindai University and the strong sporting tradition Kindai has made it conducive to implementing a martial arts program.

Student Numbers: How many students can safely take part?

Safety is a key concern in the martial arts program. Student numbers are capped at 20 to offer ease of class control in relation to safety and to afford students quality time for instruction. The role safety plays in CFPs cannot be sufficiently emphasized.

Student Type: Will the program or sessions be available to all international students?

The Kindai martial arts program is presently available to incoming ES who can take the program in either the first or second semester.

Format: Will the program actively involve participation by host institution students?

In Kindai's case, this is the pillar of the program. The ES visit a different Kindai dojo 12 weeks out of the semester to learn and practice with the club members and instructors.

Logistics: Are the logistics of running a CFP viable?

While many of the pieces were already in place for the Kindai martial arts program, much work still had to be done. The facilitator had to be a proactive link between the university and the ES. To implement an efficient program, awareness of the requirements of all parties concerned was paramount, as was the continual monitoring of all germane areas.

12 Monitoring the Program

Program monitoring and assessment of all areas is ongoing. After the initial year, I realized that there were factors that I had not even considered. Exposure (albeit *post-factum*) to teaching theories such as the TLT and ELT, and training opportunities to develop cultural mentoring skills have been edifying, and while relieved that many of my practices were in line

with certain components of these theories or practices, I intend to pursue these and other approaches further. I am also presently investigating ways that can offer Kindai students even further benefits and learning opportunities as a result of their interaction with ES. Proven language learning tasks officially integrated into the program for both ES and Kindai club members is yet another area that requires investigation.

Opinions from those aware of or involved in the Kindai program were and are always gratefully accepted. Written feedback was sought from the ES (first and second semesters) and the Kindai club members and instructors (second semester) in the form of anonymous, voluntary questionnaires, and this has been crucial in planning for the improvement of future programs.

13 Conclusion

The 2019 Kindai martial arts program was rewarding in that overall, both the ES and the Kindai club members seemed, on observation and feedback, to enjoy and learn from the experience. The effort, attitude, and interest shown by the ES attempting the different arts created fertile ground for the Kindai students' and instructors' devoted efforts in teaching them. As the facilitator, I only wished that we had more time for all those involved to learn and experience more.

CFPs, such as those in the Kindai University martial arts program, can create a demand for more involvement, more exposure, and more learning to take place. They are *teases* that provide only a small taste. However, this taste can open the door for all those involved—both Japanese and non-Japanese—to further investigate the arts and the culture that enfolds them. Such programs, combined with a theoretical component and appropriate cultural

mentoring, can provide students with a platform for developing intercultural skills. In addition, the human interaction that takes place within CFPs can offer educators avenues for further inquiry, leading to program improvement and professional development.

It could be assumed that the ES would not forget their Kindai martial arts experience in a hurry, and hopefully, they will carry the lessons they learned with them throughout their lives. They invested not only their minds but also their bodies into the learning, and it is this holistic mind-body approach coupled with attentive guidance, that is, in my opinion, the crucial key to success with CFPs.

Footnotes

- [1] This paper is based on data published in Eckford (2019a)¹⁾ and a presentation given at The Japan Association for Global Competency Education (JAGCE) 7th National Conference (Eckford, 2019b)¹⁰⁾.

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