
Bibliographic instruction for study abroad programs

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Preparing the exchange student for bibliographic culture shock.

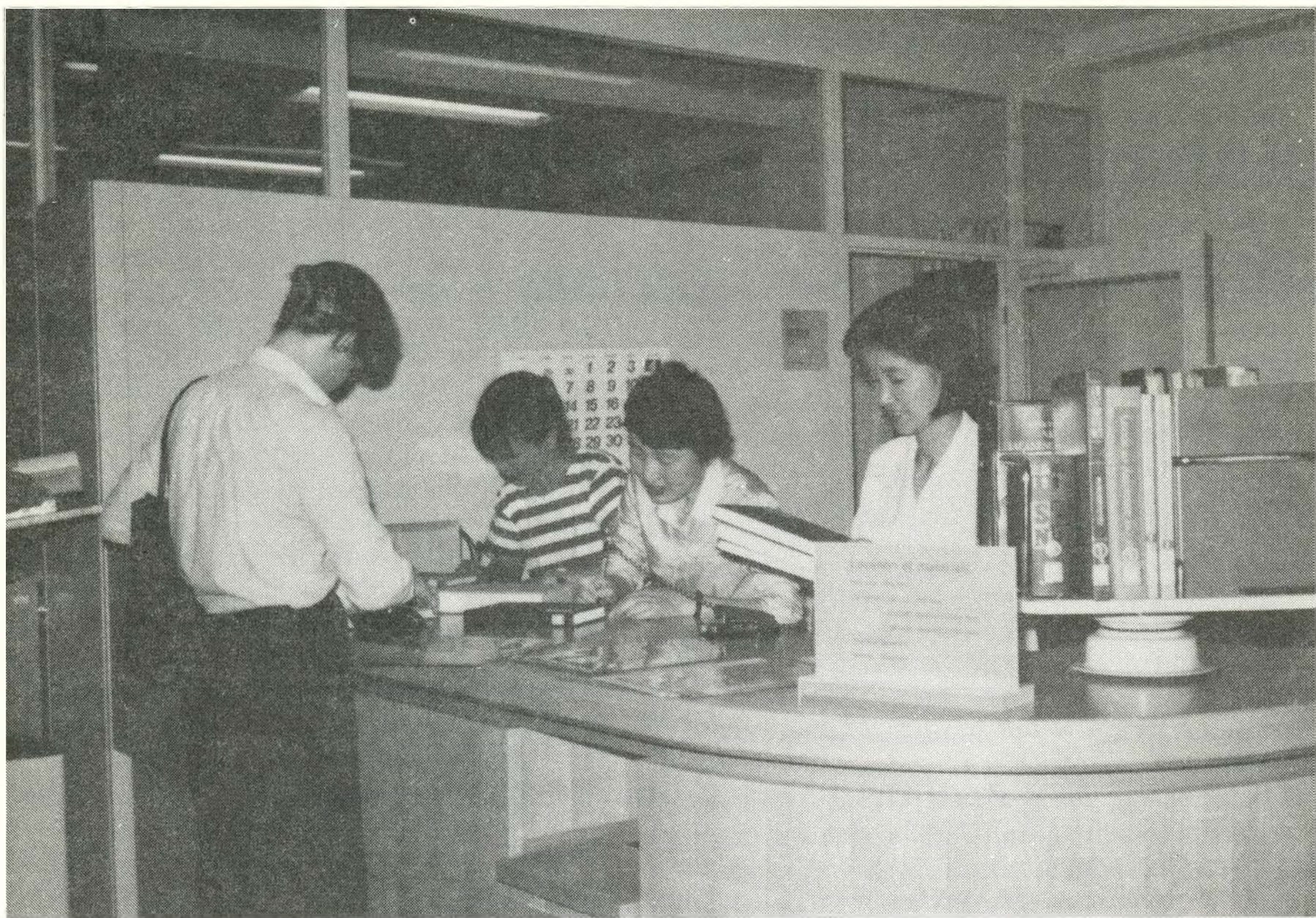
I recently had the opportunity to spend a semester in Tokyo as faculty adviser to our students participating in the Sophia University Year-in-Japan Program. It is the practice at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, to allow one faculty member to accompany the student contingent each semester, and I was selected for Fall 1984. During my visit I was able to make a number of observations and arrive at conclusions which seem worthy of consideration by other American public service librarians.

In addition to advising students, the faculty member is expected either to teach a class, engage in research, or pursue an academic project of some type. I have observed innumerable frustrated students in our library over the years, and it seemed to me that in a foreign country, faced with a strange and unfamiliar culture, our students must be even more frustrated. I further reasoned that since their Japanese language skills are not strong, use of a foreign library to satisfy classroom assignments must be nearly impossible for some students, especially with the preponderance of the resources written in Japanese. I couldn't help wondering how they would find sufficient English language materials. Faced with so many new experiences, students would hardly place discovering the location of English language library resources at the top of their list of priorities. Even if it was a priority, it would

not be an easily accomplished task. It seemed then that a guide to the best English language collections around Tokyo would be a valuable tool for students to have in their possession when they arrived. Collection of information for the compilation of this guide, therefore, became my major project.

In the course of visiting Japanese libraries and interviewing librarians, I would raise the question of library orientation to determine the prevailing attitudes toward bibliographic instruction and how much and what types were being done. I viewed each library through the eyes of the foreigner I was and asked myself how difficult it would be for our students to use the collection. I found that relatively little BI was done for Japanese students and virtually nothing for students from abroad. Thus I realized that a guide such as the one I was contemplating would be useful for some students, but that some form of library orientation at the home university might be in order.

In the midst of pursuing my research, I also came to the realization that although American proponents of bibliographic instruction have expressed concern in the literature for many types of students, one group has been overlooked: American students who go abroad to study. The professional literature is replete with admonitions to see to the needs of domestic students of various levels and dis-



Circulation desk, Ichigaya Campus Library, Sophia University, Tokyo.

Cr: Hide Fujikawa

ciplines and in recent years several articles have appeared regarding the needs of foreign students in American libraries. I am unaware of anything that discusses the needs of American students going abroad and what the role of the home academic librarian should be in the preparation of students for their research in foreign libraries. In fact, I wonder if we librarians have given even passing thought (other than envy) to the students we send abroad.

Many librarians reading this will exclaim, "Jeez, give me a break! I can't even deal with our regular students let alone our foreign students. Now we have to see to our students' needs in foreign libraries. Where will it all end?" While this attitude is one with which I can sympathize, I also believe there is a challenge here that we must address.

The following suggestions will provide a guideline for those interested in pursuing this problem. They are based on my experiences in Japan, particularly Sophia University, but I believe many of the principles are applicable to other countries and cultures. These are questions that should be asked of administrators of the study abroad programs as well as students and faculty who have participated in them. Some information may only be available by contacting librarians and others at the foreign institutions where the study is taking place.

With which countries does your institution have exchange programs and how many students and staff participate in each of them? It would help to know something about education and libraries in these cultures, if you expect to ask the right ques-

tions and hope to give students any real help. If you are unsure of the role of libraries, librarians, and education in these countries, an excellent source for background information is the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* and *The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education*. The number of participants may affect your perception of the need and the type of orientation that would be appropriate. If only a few students are involved, for example, a very informal discussion with them might be sufficient.

How different are the cultures from our own? Libraries in Europe may be more like ours than those of some Asian or Third World countries. To a greater or lesser extent many foreign libraries and educational systems are modeled after Western prototypes. In Japan, for example, American librarians have exerted a definite influence, especially since World War II. Nonetheless, in some particulars, students will find the libraries quite different.

What foreign language skills are expected of students in the program? At the Ichigaya Campus of Sophia University, for example, English is the language of instruction and the library collection is predominantly English. Most of the library staff speak some English and the head librarian is American. This all makes library research similar to that done in the United States. If students attend other universities throughout Tokyo, even the main Sophia University Campus, they would find the collection devoted primarily to Japanese language

books and journals and the English language skills of the staff uneven. During my visits to different universities, I found some reference librarians to have remarkable command of English and others very little. Students and faculty with well-developed language competency will, of course, have fewer problems. U.S. librarians may wish to make their students aware of this potential problem since it may occur in many countries.

What are the academic goals of the program? Some study abroad programs are more culturally oriented, while others are more concerned with academic instruction. Some programs may stress the art, music, language, archaeology, or other aspects of the host country, whereas many concentrate on classroom activities. The Sophia program emphasizes the classroom and many courses are conducted like those in the United States. Some courses require library assignments and others do not. Academically oriented programs would benefit from librarian involvement much more than the culturally oriented study abroad program. Length of the stay abroad should also be considered. Short academic programs that require library use would benefit greatly from preparation by library staff whereas a year long program which emphasized museum touring, archaeological digs, or other such activities might not.

What are the research and library project expectations of the faculty in the foreign institutions? Graduate programs may require more library work than undergraduate programs, whereas certain disciplines, especially in the sciences and social sciences, may be more apt to assume the ability to do research than others.

Educational philosophy must also be considered. In Japanese universities undergraduates are *not* expected to supplement lectures with materials found in libraries. It is assumed that the teacher will tell the student what is to be learned. This is not totally true at Sophia because that institution is more affected by Western ideas of education. Nonetheless, the role of the teacher and the classroom in the host country's view of higher education will affect the amount of library research expected of students.

How extensive are the English language holdings of the libraries? Few, if any, disciplines would have adequate coverage without the inclusion of at least some English materials. The question then is the quality, not just the quantity of the resources. At Sophia University Ichigaya Campus, virtually the entire collection is in English with emphasis in the social sciences and humanities. At least a part of every other collection I visited in Tokyo is in English or another Western language. Elsewhere in Tokyo, one can find many English collections, but that may not be the case in the host cities of other exchange programs.

How are the materials accessed? Most American students will be familiar with card catalogs and computer terminals and this may be the most com-

monly used access to library materials elsewhere. However, in my visits to Japanese libraries, I found no online catalogs but several printouts for the book collection. Many others have computer printouts of their periodical holdings. It is also a common practice to have separate catalogs (card or book) for Western language materials and for Japanese language materials. This practice can make searching for books easier, if students know that sometimes Eastern and Western language materials are classified separately.

Another important access concern is the classification system used. Most students have had experience with the Dewey Decimal and the Library of Congress systems, so if the foreign library uses either of these, adjustment will be easier. In Tokyo, I found the Nippon Decimal Classification (NDC) system to be most widely used. As a variation on Dewey, it should cause few problems unless students attempt to browse it as if it were Dewey. Several important differences between NDC and DDC could cause these browsers some confusion.

Many libraries have unique home-grown schemes which may strike students as peculiar. We all know the difficulty some students have accommodating SuDocs numbers in a library in which the main collection is classified by LC or Dewey. The main library at Sophia University, for example, has used three systems over the years. They are Sophia's own system until 1981, but now Nippon Decimal Classification is used for Japanese language materials and Library of Congress for foreign materials. Using several catalogs and three shelving arrangements all have obvious ramifications for students. However, in this case a strong reference department and a clearly written English language library handbook does much to mitigate problems there. Situations like this are, of course, not insurmountable, but some preparatory orientation at home would be useful.

Another problem with access is the lack of subject catalogs. Most catalogs in Japanese academic and special libraries provide author and title access, but for many the primary subject approach is through a classified catalog which requires a student to know the classification number for that subject. This is about the same as using a shelf list as the subject catalog. The main library at Sophia, for example, provides subject access since 1974, but only a classified catalog for materials acquired before that time. The National Diet Library (Japan's Library of Congress) uses its own subject headings, while the Japan External Trade Organization Library, with its very fine special collection of business related materials has its own marvelously detailed and multifaceted subject approach. Thus, there is little uniformity of subject approach when it does exist. This can be a grave concern about which students might be warned in advance since at home they often have trouble with subject catalogs that show more uniformity between institutions.

What about checkout policies, loan periods, interlibrary loan, open stacks, photocopying and other related aspects of library organization and service that can make the research task easier or more difficult? Students should have materials on these policies before they go. In Japan, I found interlibrary loan available in virtually all libraries, but there did not seem to be the enthusiasm for lending or borrowing in this way that appears to be the case among my American colleagues. Closed stacks are found more frequently in Tokyo than in the U.S. Having books paged and thereby losing one's chance to browse may disturb some students, especially in the libraries with only a classified catalog or otherwise poor subject access.

What about periodical indexes and general reference materials? Will these be familiar tools or will students need to learn new ones? Virtually all the university libraries I visited contained basic En-

glish language reference works that students will have been familiar with including, *Who's Who in America*, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *World Almanac*, *Business Periodicals Index*, *Social Sciences Index*, and many others. Students may be relieved to learn of this.

These are a few of the questions that should be asked by libraries in American colleges with study abroad programs. The results of an investigation will probably show that not all programs need any attention from the library staff. Just as not all university classes are conducive to teaching library skills and bibliographic instruction, neither will it be relevant to the needs of all students going abroad. On the other hand, there may be a program or two in which some preparation of the students by the staff before they leave may save the student considerable frustration. It certainly seems to be a matter worthy of more consideration than it has received to date. ■■

Miriam Dudley Award

At the 1983 ALA Annual Conference in Los Angeles, the ACRL Board of Directors established the Miriam Dudley Bibliographic Instruction Librarian of the Year Award, an annual award of \$900 presented to a librarian who has made an especially significant contribution to the advancement of bibliographic instruction. The award honors Miriam Dudley, whose pioneering efforts in the field of BI led to the formation of the ACRL Bibliographic Instruction Section.

Nominees for the Miriam Dudley Bibliographic Instruction Librarian of the Year Award should have achieved distinction in such areas as planning and implementation of a bibliographic instruction program that has served as a model for other programs; development of courses on bibliographic instruction in ALA-accredited library schools, or development of bibliographic instruction continuing education courses that have served as models for other courses; research and publication that has had a demonstrable impact on the concepts and methods of teaching bibliography; and/or active participation in organizations devoted to the promotion and advancement of bibliographic instruction. Nominees need not necessarily meet all the criteria.

The award has been funded by Mountainside Publishing, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and it will be administered by ACRL. The ACRL/BIS Miriam Dudley Librarian of the Year Award Committee consists of five members, including the chair of BIS and the past chair (who serves as chair of the Award Committee).

The deadline for nominations for the 1986 award is December 1, 1985. Send nominations to: Miriam Dudley Bibliographic Instruction Librarian of the Year Award, Attn: William Miller, Association of College and Research Libraries, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. ■■

Letter

UCB's Bibliography 1 course

To the editor:

On page 352 of your July/August 1985 issue there is a highly inaccurate story about the Bibliography 1 course given in the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of California in Berkeley. I want to correct those inaccuracies.

1. The Board of Regents did not reduce the credits for the Bibliography 1 course at Berkeley. It was not involved in any way.

2. The course was reviewed by the school's faculty who found it to be inadequately related to bibliography and the purpose of the course and who proposed revisions to give it greater bibliographic direction. They concluded that the revised content warranted two units of credit rather than three, an assessment responsibility assigned to members of the faculty senate.

3. The University will give teaching assignment preference first to Ph.D. candidates and campus librarians, and second to others, as it has for the past nine years, contrary to your report that this is new. In fact a number of others usually receive teaching assignments in Bibliography 1 and that will be true again this year in the revised format.

Reform and improvement in education are difficult at best in a profession inherently reluctant to change. The filing of labor practice complaints makes the process of change all the more difficult and costly, increasing the odds against institutional improvement.

The situation with Bibliography 1 at Berkeley, is, therefore, substantially different from the report carried in your journal.—*Richard P. Hafner Jr., Public Affairs Officer, University of California, Berkeley.* ■■