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7/17/15

PBL AIU-UCB

Reflection on AIU-UCB PBL Course

This course met my initial expectations by the course load and the interviews that were set up with the different groups. But I didn't know just how intense it would be until this course started. During the first week, I really improved my reading and skimming skills as I used them to help construct reading responses. This helped later on when I needed to do our response papers. I've gotten better at critiquing the authors we have read and how to come up with my own perspectives while using other course materials to critique the two main texts we read. During the second week of the course, I like that the pace changed to be less reading focus to actual hands-on experience where we get to go on fieldtrips and later do interviews with immigrants to the different regions we have visited. What could have been improved was the length of time we had for this course. I know that funds are tight and the timing is tight, but this course could be better if it was longer even longer than five weeks. It would be great if we could have a semester together before we started our research in Japan so we can develop our teamwork better.

It was different being able to interview the Filipina women in person at Yokote. It brings something that learning through books simply can't accomplish. It puts a very human face in front of you and one you can interact with and even have dinner with. It was because of this that I felt the pressure to do good research. I did feel this way when this course started but felt an increase in the intensity when we got to interview not just the Filipinas at Yokote but other individuals and groups of people such as the Japanese Brazilians youth and young adults. Our

research affects them. I know long after this course that I will be able to use the knowledge, perspectives, and practical skills that I've gained from my course and apply it in my academic, personal, and career life. I am still thinking of going to grad school and eventually being a professor. But this goal is always nerve-racking. It also feels so distant and a goal that is especially hard to accomplish. But this course was different from other courses on campus where I get to focus specifically on what I'm interested in. I just wish that this course allowed time for us to pursue interviewing other groups on our own or in a group. As someone in class said, we could benefit if the professors assisted us with pursuing specific groups of people we want to interview that hasn't been set up yet. Other than that, there were some aspects of the course where it seemed that burnt out happened a lot easier. As Craig says, the amount of Filipinas we ended up interviewing was a lot and it took a lot out of us as we kept interviewing them one after another. Also, some trips while nice wasn't so connected to the course material such as going to the church in the Mission where the guide talked about how there are still very holy people in San Francisco. He made some remarks that condemned people who are LGBTQ. I felt uncomfortable and didn't try to stay too close to him.

Also despite how intense this course got, I've got a chance to enjoy many non-academic aspects such as becoming better friends with Benny. We got to have deep talks together. We even got to go to an onsen together. It was funny but relieving that he was willing to shield me if I felt uncomfortable and needed to escape the onsen. I got to be better friends with Craig and Jordan when I finally opened up about my disabilities and being a queer trans person of color. It was already really relieving when Craig and Emily asked me about my pronouns and how they should best address me. I was able to be as out as I mostly wanted to be. It was too bad that Kody didn't like my personality since I saw that we could have done research together. Other than that,

I enjoyed Louella's presence despite that she pretty much blunted asked me in a loud voice if I was gay. I don't sense any bad intentions from her though. Other than that, I enjoyed the places we stayed in. The bed in this dorm reminds me of my parents in the sense that they believe everything should be hard such as tables, chairs, and the like. But I'm fonder of softer cushions and the like. Other than that, I got to bond with my interviewees even the ones from Diversity-LGBT so that was nice. I even found the Chinese and Taiwanese students here at AIU. I miss speaking Mandarin especially Cantonese. So that was good for me.