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AIU-UCB PBL
Reflection Essay
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Reflection of the PBL

(1) how this course met your initial expectations

This course met my initial expectations in a sense that I could study a lot about Asian Americans and migration issues regarding Japan. In many parts of the U.S., Asian Americans are underrepresented very much compared to other ethnic and racial minorities in Japan. In addition, very few Japanese universities provide courses specifically on migrants in Japan. Therefore, this PBL course was very precious experience for me.

I was also interested in gendered issues regarding immigration. It is true that we grasped the information on it. In particular, the book “Asian American Women and Men” provide very interesting perspectives on gender of Asian Americans. Also our interviews with Filipina women in Yokote were very interesting, because they gave us gendered narratives as women, wives and mothers. However, other than those two, there were no aspects of gender, in my opinion. If I could have more knowledge on theories of gendered migrants, I may have been able to come up with interesting perspectives on the Filipina wives in Akita. I would like to have more connection between theories and field work with the professors’ remarks etc.

(2) how it enhanced your knowledge and perspectives on the main themes on the one hand, and your practical skills in research, presentation and writing on the other;

The intensive reading assignments definitely gave me a lot of knowledge and information on immigration. However, it was difficult for me to understand them fully and apply them to my research, because I did not have time to think through all of them.

I had many findings in practical skills in my research and interviews. First, I had problems to decide what I would want to study on. As I kept changed, modified and expanded my research question, my interview became less effective. I would like to make good use of this experience for my thesis at AIU in the next semester. Second, I could know limitations of interviews in the short-term intensive program and also the lots amount of the information collected in such short time. I believe this experience will encourage me to interview many people for my thesis while knowing and understanding limitations, too.

(3) How you would be able to use them in your academic, personal and career life after the course ends.

As I mentioned, the experiences I had in this PBL gave me and will give a good guidance for my thesis in the next semester. Being unable to decide my research question, I would like to use my experience of not deciding it so long and difficulties happened after that.

Not only about my thesis, but also my long-term future has been affected by the course. However, I am still figuring out what kind of academic interest I have, which is crucial to seek education in graduation school. I would like to continue my study on gender, sexuality and ethnicity in Japan by myself, and to find my academic interest soon.