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Notes about the Project

I have a three-stage plan to integrate Japan into my professional communication (PC) curriculum: immediate-, short-, and long-term.

The short-term plan involves an assignment for my technical communication students, created using my learning experience at the Origami workshop. The assignment (attached), to be used in my summer class this year and thereafter, asks students to design an Origami instruction manual on how to fold a jumping frog out of a sheet of paper.

The assignment is the last of a homework series, given to enhance students' learning about the basic structure and strategies of writing instructions. Through working on the assignment, students are also expected to have a better understanding of some of the fundamental principles practiced in technical communication such as audience analysis, usability and document testing.

The rationale for this particular assignment was fully explained during my project presentation, but its relevance to the theme of Japan is also obvious, especially since the art of Origami is closely associated with Japanese culture.

I already have a section on intercultural communication in my PC curriculum, but what I have learned at the Japan Studies Seminar will greatly help enhance and enrich the teachings of this section. My short-term plan will involve a substantial integration of the material collected at the seminar into the section, which will be put to practice in the fall this semester and thereafter.

The theme of Japan will be given prominence to discuss Eastern-Western differences in communication with focus on collectivism, relationship, and high context. Because the Japanese notion of "harmony," as opposed to Western "personal striving," holds key to explaining the cultural uniqueness of Japan, a mini-section of Conceptualizing Harmony will be added, with points illustrated through Japanese arts, calligraphy, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and *obento*.

The long-term plan will be the designing of an all-Japan unit, along with units of North America, Mexico, China, Arabic cultures, and others, in the new course titled Intercultural Communication, which will be offered in the fall of 2007 or later. The unit is still at its brainstorming stage.