

## 報告

## A Report on Nursing Students' Studies in Los Angeles in 2010

2010年度看護学部ロサンゼルス研修報告

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Since 2007, School of Nursing, Jobu University, has been offering short-term overseas studies to nursing students. In 2007 and 2008, study tours were held in Seattle, Washington, visiting University of Washington, and in 2009 and 2010 in Los Angeles, California, visiting University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Major visiting institutions and facilities were a school of nursing, a medical center, children's hospital and a nursing home. Students have had lectures and experienced a part of practical training. Direct contacts with American nursing students, nurses, and staffs of facilities and people they met in shops and towns have promoted understanding and deepened what they had learned in Japan. The author accompanied the students for the first time in 2010, experienced all programs with them and observed their learning, questions at facilities and reaction to what they saw and experienced. The following is descriptions to report what the students saw, listened to, observed, experienced and learned. The programs are also evaluated to clarify how they have been significant for nursing students.

## II. GENERAL OUTLINES OF THE PROGRAM

## 1. International Relations and Overseas Study Programs

From the students of Class of 2013, one credit is given to those who register for "International Relations" and participate in a study tour. In ad-

vance, they study about the places and facilities they visit, an outline of medical and nursing systems and English technical terms. They prepare for the tour such as passport by themselves. The tour consists of six nights and eight days, followed by a briefing and reviewing session as ex post facto evaluation. Participants are supposed to submit a record of daily visits and learning in order to complete a course work.

## 2. Participants and Schedule

The party consisted of ten participants in total; four sophomores from Class of 2013, four juniors, and two faculty members : one was the author and another voluntarily participated intending to visit a certain clinic for her own research on optional activity days. The tour was held in Los Angeles from September 6 to 13, 2010. The first four days were allocated for visiting facilities and the last two days for optional activities as shown in Table 1.

## III. RECORDS OF ACTIVITIES

## 1. September 6

The party left Narita International Airport on September 6, on which it was terribly hot day of 35°C. The flight took 9 hours and a half from Narita to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). During flight, students enjoyed meals, snacks and movies, and seemed to have only a short sleep. It arrived at LAX around 13:00, on September 6 on local time. A guide and interpreter Mr. K.

Table 1. Time Schedule of Nursing Students' Studies in Los Angeles in 2010

	Date	Place	Local Time	Programs
1	Sept. 6	Narita Int'l Airport	16:45	Meeting at South wing of Terminal 1
		Departure from. Tokyo	18:45	Flight : SQ012
-----International Date Line -----				
		Arrival at LA Int'l Airport	12:55	City sightseeing tour : Marina del Rey, Venice Beach, Santa Monica, and Beverly Hills
2	Sept. 7	Los Angeles	A. M.	UCLA guided campus tour
			P. M.	Visit to Keiro Nursing Home
3	Sept. 8	Los Angeles	A. M.	Visits to drugstore & Wal-Mart
			P. M.	Visits to Ronald Reagan Medical Center & Children's Hospital (lecture, tour and Q & A)
4	Sept. 9	Los Angeles	A. M.	Visit to UCLA School of Nursing (lecture, tour, practice using a dummy patient and Q & A)
			Lunch time	Lunch party with nursing students and staffs of School of Nursing
			P. M.	Free time on UCLA campus
5	Sept. 10	Los Angeles	All day	Optional activities
6	Sept. 11	Los Angeles	All day	Optional activities
7	Sept. 12	Departure from. LA	14:45	Flight : SQ011
-----International Date Line -----				
8	Sept. 13	Arrival at Narita Int'l Airport	18:10	Dismissal at the airport

met the party at LAX. He took them for a city sightseeing such places as Marina del Rey, Venice Beach, Santa Monica, and Beverly Hills which has luxurious houses and beautiful streets. The most famous one is Rodeo Drive, on which many quality shops and boutiques can be found.

Checked in a hotel near LAX, Mr. K. took the party to Walgreen, a drugstore, and Ralphs, a supermarket, to buy bottled water and snacks. The students were surprised at seeing vast floors, a plenty of product lineups, large packages of food and cheaper prices in comparison with those in Japanese supermarkets. The utterance of a junior was much to the point : she learned the reason of Americans' obesity then and there. It is exactly seeing is believing. This is a real educa-

tion in the field.

While preparing for the tour in Japan, the author repeatedly recommended students to study or work in foreign countries in future. The above junior never showed any positive concern and in-



terest. She even said decisively that this tour would be the first and last in her life, however, she seemed to be attracted by a foreign life and to be changing her opinion from the very first day of the tour. This was just what the author expected for the tour. She anticipated its great effect for the participating students on the first day.

## 2. September 7

The party had UCLA campus tour in the morning. It was rainy and rather cold. A voluntary male guide named Gabriel met them in front of the statue Bruing the bear, a symbol of UCLA. He was a funny guy walking backward while showing around the campus. He explained the history, educational systems and their campus life, which seems to be rich academically and culturally with 995 students' clubs. The campus is vast and spacious with green lawn. The color, height and design of buildings are beautifully unified. According to Gabriel, 98% of freshmen live in dormitories since the University recommends them to make friends with foreign students from all over the world, however, only a quarter of seniors live there.



In the afternoon, the party visited Keiro Nursing Home which was established for the Japanese-Americans in 1975. It consists of Retirement Home, Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) and Nursing Home. Seven hundred people have registered as volunteers. The director of Nursing of ICF, an RN named Sachiko, gave a lecture on

American nursing systems. At ICF, 1.8 hour-nursing care per 24 hours is provided each patient according to the rules. Quality of nursing care is evaluated in terms of hours not the number of nurses for one patient. Whenever an incident happens, a report must be made in order to distinguish accurately between an incident and abuse against a lawsuit. As for daily documentation of nursing care, RNs shouldn't write "no change" as they do in Japan. What they have done, what they have said and what has happened should be documented clearly.



A staff named Fumi guided around Nursing Home, which was established in 1990 with 300 beds and in which expense of people with dementia is 185 dollars a day and others' daily expense is 175 dollars. She explained American care systems: people who are 65 years and older get Day-care from the States, they can get free hospital care for 20 days, and for next 80 days they pay 20% of costs, and 80% is covered by the States. Medicare provides care with the elderly of 65 years and older, and 10% of expense is paid by residents and 90% by Medicare. The low income class elderly receive approximately 100,000 yen on average from social security. After all expense is deducted, money left in their pocket is about 4,000 yen.

A Japanese RN who has been working there also talked about her job and answered the students' questions. Nine nurses take care of 71 residents, which is full capacity, during day, sev-

en nurses during evening and four nurses at night. They have dress code but no uniforms and are supposed to wear sneakers. Their dietician is trying to serve variety of food in buffet style so that residents can eat what they like as much as they want. As a positive result, decrease of weight has been reduced since adopting buffet style.



### 3. September 8

In the morning, the party visited Pharmacy of Wal-Mart, which is one of the three biggest drug-stores along with CVS and Walgreen. The students checked the volume of containers and the amount of ingredients in one tablet, and have learned they are larger and contain more. For example, one softgel of dietary supplement coenzyme Q-10 sold in Wal-Mart contains 100 mg, while it contains 30 mg in one sold in Japan. The students just observed the drug lineups and the prescription counter. Although there was no time of questions and answers with a pharmacist, they seemed to be satisfied and soon became busy buying chocolates and clothes.

In the afternoon, the party visited Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center and Mattel Children's Hospital (Pediatrics), which opened its doors in June 2008. It is eight stories high with a basement floor. It has 520 beds and a helipad of two-helicopter space. The programs for the party consisted of four parts; Overview of UCLA Health System, Pediatrics, Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Questions and Answers.

Ms. Salpy Akaragian, Director of International Programs, gave them a brief lecture on UCLA health system. She introduced their mission of delivering leading edge patient care, education and research. Their values are compassion, respect, excellence, discovery, integrity and teamwork. The students showed high level of interest especially in the following four topics : 1) burns are not accepted but transferred to other contracted hospitals since treatment and care takes a long time; 2) nurses wear dark blue uniforms although they once used to have no regulations on uniforms; 3) operation rooms are located on the second floor so that surgeons and nurses can bathe natural light which is good for healing; and 4) they have lift teams exclusively in charge of changing patients' positions and as a result the number of work-related on-the-job lower-back pains have been reduced these seven or eight years.

At Pediatrics, an RN Chai Chih explained the system there and she answered the students' questions. They take care of patients from newly born babies who occupy most of beds to twenty-one-year-old in all clinical fields including organ transplantation. The color inside rooms is white and dark blue and smiley faces are printed on furniture fabric. They have no hospital classrooms but school teachers, and two or three children have lessons in the hospital presently upon their request and with a physician's certificate that treatment would be long.

A CNS (clinical nurse specialist) called Gigi showed around ICU with 24 beds. She is a charge nurse who has no charge of patients but supervises nurses in charge of patients. The students were impressed not only by ICU designed with high-level technology but also by Gigi herself, who was smart and explained about ICU and talked vividly about her work. She showed the students a role model as a nurse. A sophomore later expressed that she wanted to be a nurse like Gigi. The students were also impressed by Californian criteria of a patient-nurses ratio, which is



1-4, and a regulation that nurses can only take care of their patients in charge so that they have a relief nurse from 11:00 to 16:00 everyday who covers their lunch time recess. In ICU 16 nurses, 1 relief nurse and 1 charge nurse are working during daytime.



After the tour of Medical Center, Salpy gave a supplementary lecture on American health system, health insurance, ICU expenses per day, and such. She extended the scheduled time for one hour and a half, and gave the students advice and messages. Her advice was five-fold; to learn and read a lot since evidence-based practice requires more learning and reading, to learn genetics since nurses will be like DNP (doctor nurse practitioner) in ten years, to be a specialist with specialization, and to be familiar with computer since recording will be paperless. Her messages were that finishing school is not the end but a start of nursing, that nursing is a life-long learning process, and that nursing is not a job, which is a work to earn

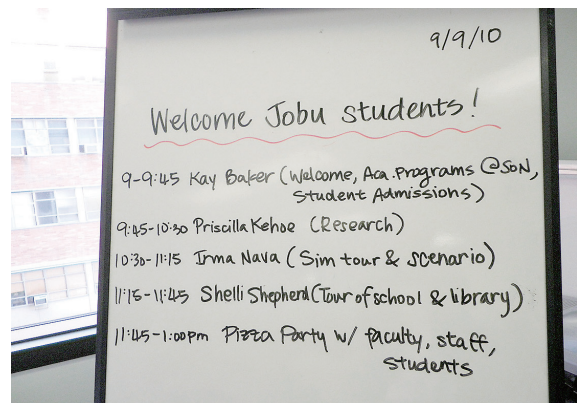


money, but a career, which is a work to be continued with pride. These words penetrated into the students' mind as almost all the participating students later recalled.

#### 4. September 9

The party visited School of Nursing, UCLA, in the morning. Professor K. Baker welcomed them and gave an outline of admission policy and nursing education. There are four programs of nursing; undergraduate and graduate school programs, pre-licensing program, advance program (post licensed program), and Ph.D. program. They had 1,700 applications for only 50 positions last year. Thus, students who enroll in School of Nursing has very high score of GPA (grade point average), which is 4.35 points. Since straight A students' GPA score is just 4.0 points, 4.35 means that they completed several optional subjects in addition to required ones. Freshmen and sophomores study basic sciences such as biochemistry and psychology. Juniors and seniors study nursing specialist subjects. They also study social sciences in order to cope with cultural diversity. Education puts emphasis on how to look at scientific research. Students are strongly recommended and urged to read a lot of research in order to do evidence-based practice.

They have many foreign students' enrollments. They are required English ability which is sufficient to communicate with patients in English, that is, 560 and more in TOEFL paper test, or 87 and more in computer based test by internet.



Answering a participant's question, Professor Baker recommended Japanese students to graduate Japanese school of nursing and to have clinical experience for several years first, and then to enroll into advanced study program so that they can easily get US license in two-year course.

Professor Priscill Kehoe, Director of Research, introduced researches by faculty members. Research topics vary from molecule to environment, which sounds unlike nursing but more like medicine. The author was strongly impressed that most of the faculty members have Ph. D.



A CNS Irma S. Nava showed the students a practical training lesson with an American nursing student. A high technology dummy patient which costs 55 to 65 thousand dollars is used for training. She showed a simulation of a scenario of a patient and an above mentioned student. Numerical values such as heartbeats and respiration are changeable in accordance with a patient



condition as stated in a scenario. The participating students also experienced to stethoscope heartbeats of a dummy patient. According to Irma, she spends eight hours in a day to supervise all fifty students' training with a dummy patient.

A pizza party was held at lunch time with faculty members, nursing students and staffs. Jobu students had difficulty in speaking English, however, they managed to communicate anyhow and shared enjoyable time with American students although the scheduled time was rather short. One of the students reflected later that she wished to have more opportunities to talk with American students.

## 5. September 10 and 11

The students enjoyed optional activities on the last two days. Some visited Disneyland and the others visited museums and enjoyed shopping and walking around downtown of Los Angeles.

## 6. Evaluation

During the tour Mr. K., the guide and interpreter, wished the students to see real America and to know American's daily life. He took the party to downtown streets and shops as often as possible. The author agrees with his view and appreciates his efforts and service in addition to his required job since she also experienced and learned American goodness and generosity during her stay as a graduate student a long time ago. One of the juniors showed changing her attitude on the very first day of the tour. She now wishes visiting foreign countries again in future either as a nurse or a student.

### 1) Students' evaluation

The students' impression and evaluation about the study tour in Los Angeles have been positive and very high. Eight students' evaluation can be summarized mainly on five aspects; a) learning at Medical Center, School of Nursing and Keiro Nursing Home, b) Salpy's advice and messages, c) spirit and hard work of American students, d) Gigi as a model nurse, and e) necessity

of learning English.

They have learned health and nursing system in California. They have been most impressed that very many nurses are allocated to one patient in California. Their observation that nurses were working with full of life and didn't look tired made them interested in working as a nurse in the U.S. or engaging in voluntary work. Salpy's advice and words and the spirit of American nursing students moved the students deeply. All the students were stimulated and made reflect their unconcerned attitude. They were attracted by Gigi as a model nurse and they determined to study harder for better nursing career.

In order to fulfill what they thought, learned and determined to do during visits and studies in Los Angeles, they have realized that their English ability is so poor. Many of them have reflected that they could learn more if they could speak English by themselves, since they have learned a lot during their stay even though their poor English hindered to communicate freely. A student has realized that her hearing ability improved steadily even during one-week stay in Los Angeles. She has regretted that she didn't study English hard during past years. Other students have also felt strongly the necessity of English competency.

## 2) Author's evaluation

The programs at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center were well organized as an introduction to UCLA health system. Since the author believes that it is important and essential to see and know quality facilities so that they can have a criteria to compare and assess what should be improved in future career. In this sense, facilities of UCLA are excellent for the students to get inspired a great deal. The students had sufficient time for questions positively, made clear of them, and learned a lot. The author deeply appreciate that Director Salpy Akaragian spent much longer time than scheduled in order to explain American health systems and gave heartfelt messages for future nurses. On the whole, the program of the

2010 studies in Los Angeles was substantial and significant for the students. Only insufficiency of the program was that there was no opportunity to learn about midwifery in which some students were interested.

According to Mr. K. who was also an interpreter and guide in the 2009 program, the persons in charge of accepting the party showed more understanding, kindness and positive than the previous year. Visiting the same facilities and getting involved with them are essential to establish close and good relations. It will be the first step for future international exchange activities. Four-day program of visiting those facilities seemed to be rather short, however, during limited period of time and with limited budget it left the participating students two days of optional activities, which is educative to promote initiative of students.

## 7. Discussion

International Exchange Committee surveyed nursing students' opinions on overseas studies in December 2009 (Yamamoto, 2010). The questionnaire consisted of questions such as willingness of future participation, countries and facilities to visit, affordable travel expense and so on. The number of subjects were 197 students (40 male and 157 female students) from freshmen to juniors and 193 responded (response rate; 98.0%). The survey clarified that a little more than half the subjects (50.8%) were positive with participating in future programs. As a result of multiple responses, they showed preference of visiting a university hospital (medical center) (74.7%), a school of nursing (67.4%), children's hospital (51.6%) and a nursing home (28.4%). Their preference of talking with nursing students was 55.8%, and learning about urban and local areas and culture 64.2%. The survey also showed that their first preference of visiting country was the U. S. (60.0%) followed by Germany (57.9%) and England (53.7%). As for affordable expense, less than 150 thousand yen occupied 45.3% and 200

thousand yen 28.4%.

Considering these results, the 2010 program fulfilled students' preference. Thus, it has been quite a success as a first study tour abroad. A future task will be that a plan should cost less and make more students' participation possible.

#### Acknowledgements

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#### Reference

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