Honors Self- Designed Proposal

Complete this proposal **prior** to your experience’s start date and upload it in the UHP Database (<https://webapps.uc.edu/uchonorsstudent>). Create an experience (“Add a new record”) in the “Tracking Project” tab and upload your proposal document as an attachment. The deadline for [submitting proposals](http://www.uc.edu/honors/experiences/experiencesubmission.html) is the 5th of each month (excluding July).

Proposals are intended to be well developed plans for your experience. However, experiences are exploratory in nature, and we are flexible with changes throughout the experience. If your experience changes after receiving approval on your proposal, contact your honors advisor to verify the changes still satisfy the requirements of an honors experience.

**Basic Information**  
Full Name: Jessica Smith

Title of Project: Gender and Sexuality in Edo Literature and Art in Japan

Thematic Area(s): Global Studies, Research

Expected Start Date: June 8th, 2016

Expected End Date: June 23rd, 2016

**Guidelines**

1. Proposal submission timeline: Proposals should be submitted at least one month prior to the expected start date of the experience. International experiences require at least two months’ notice. Contact your honors advisor immediately for any exceptions.
2. Proposal length: While the quality of the proposal is most important, strong proposals are typically 3-4 pages single-spaced.
3. Proposal format: Please maintain the proposal format (e.g. headers, layout)
4. Time commitment: Experiences should consist of at least 75-90 hours of preparation, execution, and reflection. This is approximately equivalent to the commitment of honors seminars and pre-approved experiences.

**Requirements for International Travel**

All self-designed international travel experiences require two months’ notice and must be at least one week in length. You will need to provide a detailed itinerary (dates, locations and activities). If participating in independent travel (not with UC faculty, staff or student group), you must also fill out a [Worldwide: Honors Experience application](http://studyabroad.uc.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgram&Program_ID=10217) via UC International.

Additionally, the [Student Travel Policy](http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/about/docs/university_policies/student_travel_policy.pdf) restricts UC-sponsored travel to countries under a [U.S. Department of State Travel Warning](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html). Those who wish to visit a country with a travel warning must seek an [exemption](http://www.uc.edu/international/study-abroad/applying-to-study-abroad/travel-restrictions---exemptions.html) through UC International. Students traveling without a faculty or staff leader must individually request an exemption. ***We cannot allow you to count this travel as an honors experience nor can we give you a grant without an approved exemption.***

1. **Abstract**

*Briefly describe the experience.*

Over the month of June, I will be traveling to Japan through University of Cincinnati International and the Asian Studies department. During this time, I will be taking a course on Gender and Sexuality in Art and Literature in Edo Japan at Chiba University. The course will be taught by the university’s very own Gergana Ivanova, and during the trip, we will be experiencing many different aspects of Japanese culture of both the past and present. Some of these themes include learning about geisha and homoerotic tendencies among samurai. We will also be examining other facets of Japanese culture through viewing and analyzing Japanese art and architecture from the Edo Period, which was the period of Japanese history which spanned from about 1603-1868 when the country was under the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate.

In addition to attending the Study Abroad experience, I will also be conducting research of my own. My hope is to gather information regarding mental health in college students, specifically Japanese college students, while I am in Japan. With my access to college students seeing as I will be on a university campus, I am hoping that this experience will be very beneficial to me. I would like to focus on levels of stress and the ideologies surrounding stress, success, and how students are able to handle stress in order to obtain success. I would like to look deeper into stress among college students in general, with research conducted at the University here as well. With information from both UC and Chiba University, I will compare and contrast the results obtained and see what kind of conclusions could possibly be made and more questions to be asked about mental health in college students as a whole.

*What makes this experience personally meaningful?*

There are really two main reasons that the experience is personally meaningful. One of these reasons is the location of the experience. Ever since I was a child, I have dreamed of going to Japan. Just this year in an ice-breaker game, I was asked to consider some things that I would put on my “Bucket List” of things to do before I die. One of the things that I came up with to put on this list was to travel to Japan, an experience that I never thought I would get to partake in. This experience will include my first time getting a passport, going on a plane, and even being out of the country. Going to Japan always seemed like a pipe dream, not an obtainable reality, and not this early in my life.

The other prominent reason why the experience is personally meaningful is because I have a genuine interest in not only the topic that I would like to pursue for research, but also the topic of the course that I will be taking. Mental health has always interested me as it has affected me on a personal level, through both my family and myself. Being in college is an experience that brings many new stressors, and for some people, it is just another hurdle that they are able to jump with grace. For others, college and all of the newfound challenges can pose a threat to a student’s mental health. Mental health is a topic that has been at the forefront of much research in recent years, and I would love to learn more. The course theme is one that I have taken personal interest in, as well. Human Sexuality in and of itself has always been fascinating to me, and this past Fall Semester (2015), I took a course in Human Sexuality. To be able to expand upon this knowledge in addition to gaining new knowledge of Japanese history (another topic I have always had elevated interest in) is an opportunity that I can not let get away from me.

*What goals do you have for this experience?*

My goals for this experience are centered mostly around learning. As a significant portion of my trip will be spent learning material for the course, I hope to further my knowledge of Japanese culture during the Edo Period. I have taken courses that teach Japanese history, but I have never taken a course that is centered completely around Japan. A majority of my knowledge on the Edo Period is regarding geisha, and I am looking forward to actually seeing where the Pleasure Quarter used to be and having the opportunity to go to a party where I have to opportunity to see a geisha entertain guests with conversation, singing, dancing, and playing instruments traditional to the geisha trade. More than learning about just geisha, I am looking forward to increasing my knowledge of samurai and daimyo during the period. Perhaps the subject that I have the least knowledge of is art and literature during the Edo Period. It is this topic that I am also looking forward to learning more about, and being able to see the examples and works in “real time” will be incredible.

The second facet of my goals is to conduct research that I can continue to build on even after my experience in Japan. The topic of mental health is so diverse and ever-changing, and there is always more information to look into. My goal is to leave the experience with real, quantitative and qualitative data that I can keep working with and turning into something helpful. I hope to find ways to better help college students, myself included, deal with stress, and also to inform more people about the potential stressors that college students face in addition to possible results and reactions. With my overall college goal of graduating in three years rather than four, beginning to look into Masters research is imperative, and I hope that this can start me in the right direction.

*What is your timeline for this experience?*

*\*If you are proposing an international experience, provide an itinerary.*

Because the itinerary is not yet set in stone, I do not have a day to day itinerary to provide. There are some changes to the course that are being made, and not all of our activities and outings have been finalized by the advisor for the trip. With this in mind, I do know that we will be arriving in Tokyo, Japan in the afternoon on the 9th of June after leaving from Cincinnati on the 8th of June. The first few days are set to give us (the students in the program) some time to rest and acclimate to our new environment. The rest of the course will be spent with a semi-equal division between free time and class time. I hope to use my free time to gather information for my research in addition to learning more about the culture and environment surrounding me. With Tokyo being approximately an hour train ride away, we have access to the city in our free time, and we are encouraged to explore and broaden our horizons. In addition to scheduled class time and free time, we will also be attending outings with the advisor for the trip, Professor Ivanova. These outings include a tour of Chiba and the surrounding area, visiting the Nagoya Castle (constructed during the Edo Period), and attending a geisha dinner party. One of the more unique aspects of the trip will be our staying with a family from the area to better immerse us in the Japanese culture. Upon leaving Japan, we are set to return on the 23rd of June in the evening with only one stop between Toyko and Cincinnati, which is in Chicago.

*\*\*If you are developing this experience from an existing opportunity (class with a study tour, campus organization, co-op, etc.) that is not already an honors seminar or pre-approved experience, how will you differentiate your experience from what is already required of other students?*

I hope to differentiate my experience from what is already required of other students with my research. I will be using this experience to learn about the culture, but also to collect information that I can use to help me in my studies beyond just Japanese history. My research will center around the contemporary topic of mental health, and this could be applied continuously. The experience is different for me because it does not top at our return to the United States on the 23rd of June, it will continue beyond then and likely through my college years.

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  Brief description of the experience  Personal connection to the experience  Identified goals for the experience  Timeline from start to finish  \*Itinerary (international experiences only)  \*\*Explanation of differentiated experience from what is required of other students | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **Experience Advisor**

*Identify an experience advisor and provide their contact information.*

Note: Advisor(s) should have knowledge or expertise in an area related to the experience. Honors advisors, undergraduate students, and family members cannot be experience advisors.

Experience Advisor: *Professor Gergana Ivanova*

Department of German Studies- Asian Studies Program

University of Cincinnati

Old Chemistry Building, 728E

Telephone: (513) 556-2752

Email: [gergana.ivanova@uc.edu](mailto:gergana.ivanova@uc.edu)

*Explain why you chose this person and how you plan to utilize your advisor for this experience.*

I chose Professor Ivanova as my advisor for the experience because she is the perfect candidate. In addition to having ties with her through taking her course on Asian Women and Representation during the Fall Semester of 2015, she is also the professor of introductory level Japanese culture, and she is an expert in both Japanese language and literature. She will be an invaluable resource throughout the experience, but she will also be an extreme help prior to the trip and following our return. Her knowledge of Japanese culture and language could help to aid me in my research because being able to communicate with Japanese students is crucial to gaining knowledge of their experiences and reflections. In addition to aiding with research, this period in time is also her area of expertise in Japanese literature and history, so she will be a very knowledgeable teacher for the course.

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  Experience advisor name and contact information  Description of why advisor was selected  Specific plans to engage with advisor | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **Connection to Learning Outcomes**

*List 3* [*learning outcomes*](#ThematicAreas) *from any thematic area(s). Provide specific activities you plan to engage in to help you make progress towards the chosen learning outcomes. Describe how you expect each activity to help your progress. Include an estimated time commitment for those activities.*

* Global Studies- “Develop practical travel skills that promote safe, stimulating, and productive travel throughout your life.”
  1. Because this is my first experience traveling abroad, there is a significant amount of preparation that I will need to do in order to make sure that I am ready for the trip. The first thing that I will need to do is obtain a passport, and this includes getting a passport photo taken, applying for a passport, and waiting to receive my passport. This will help my progress by getting me past the first necessary legal hurdle. I will also read traveling tips for Japan and do research on the Chiba and Tokyo area to help me to stay safe while in Japan. One of the most challenging preparation activities that I will be doing is learning Japanese. This skill is not entirely crucial to my survival in Japan because of how many English speakers there will be to help me, but I would like to be more prepared and not have to rely on someone else to make sure that I do not get lost. Learning Japanese and safe traveling tips could help me in future traveling endeavors and in future travel to Japan specifically.
  2. Estimated time commitment: 2+ months
* Research- “Identify and apply appropriate methods to collect and organize data for analysis.”
  1. One aspect of this experience that will be most beneficial to me will be figuring out how to best conduct research and collect information. There is so much information to be taken from experience, but determining what data to analyze will be a challenge. Finding data that is useful could also pose a challenge. Just collecting data will help my progress because it will give me information to analyze and reflect upon. The other possible challenge is determining how to best conduct, organize, and analyze the data. There are many different methods to conducting research and gathering information, and I predict that there will be a system of trial and error to discover what method(s) work best. This will help me in future endeavors because being able to assess how to best collect, organize, and analyze data will be a skill that I will continue to use throughout college and my career.
  2. Estimated time commitment: 45 hours
* Research- “Articulate the broader significance of the research project and its relationship to other fields, research and ideas.”
  1. Beyond just making a research project for an Honors Experience, the research that I will be doing has a bigger significance. The topic of mental health and how it affects our daily lives and interactions on a local, cultural, and global scale is one that is both important and influential. This subject is influential on a personal level as a college student as well as someone who has suffered from mental illness both directly and indirectly in my college career so far. I believe that by looking more into the topic of mental health in college students, we will be able to come up with better methods of coping and battling negative stressors that come with pursuing higher education, and we will also be able to bring more awareness to a topic that affects us all as people.
  2. Estimated time commitment: 40 hours

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  3 learning outcomes explicitly identified from any thematic area(s)  Examples of activities and explanation of how each will assist the progress towards the chosen learning outcome  Estimated time commitment for each activity | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **Academic Resources Connected to the Learning Outcomes**

*List 1-2 academic resources you plan to use to enhance your understanding of the learning outcomes. Explain how each resource connects to your learning outcome(s) and helps you execute your experience. Please include the title and author/creator for each resource.*

Note: Academic resources are professional works that can be used to assist your understanding of the topic. Some examples are books, documentaries, videos, or research journals.

* “Mental Health Issues and the University Student”- Dr. Doris Iarovici
  + Dr. Iarovici’s book on mental health and its relation to college students will be extremely informative of the issue that I will be researching. The book provides information on stressors that college students might face, mental health challenges that result from said stressors, and steps that we can actively participate in to help with negative aspects of mental health that result from the stressors. Gaining this knowledge will help me to conduct research by helping me to better streamline my goals for my research and provide guidance on what factors to look for within the information that I am presented.
* University of Cincinnati’s University Health Services website
  + UC’s Health Services website provides much insight on what the university is doing to give help and support in the facet of mental health on campus. Policies regarding mental health and services that are offered by the university can be found on this website, and looking closer can help reveal cause for potential action. By analyzing the site and possibly investigating the resources offered by campus, my learning outcome of articulating the broader significance of my research can be helped because I can analyze and propose possible changes to university policy and resources regarding mental health of students.

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  1-2 academic resources connected to the learning outcomes  Title and author of each resource  Description of how resources will help make progress towards learning outcomes and execution of experience | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **On-going Reflection**

*The on-going reflection should help you process the experience and progress toward your chosen learning outcomes. Describe your method for reflecting throughout the experience. Indicate specific reflection questions/topics you plan to use to guide your reflective process.*

Note: A variety of methods can be used for on-going reflection. Some examples are videos, drawings, blogs, songs, and journals. Reflection topics to consider include your ideas/insights about the experience, connection to other areas of involvement, and your progress towards the learning outcomes.

My preferred method of reflection will be to journal through keeping a blog. I plan to add these blog posts to my Learning Portfolio on Weebly, or to simply put the link to the website that I will be creating. I plan to add in pictures of my experiences and travels as they happen, and to continue to update them daily. The reflections would be regarding things that I learned that day, activities or events that I participated in, progress reports, and anything that could pose as personal insight that could help with my progress forward. Specific questions/topics that I hope to reflect on include:

* Was there anything that I learned that I found particularly interesting or useful?
* Is there anything that I can do to improve the quality of my experience/research?
* How can I overcome any negative aspects of my day and turn them into positives moving forward?
* Did anything that I encountered that day change my perspectives?

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  Method for ongoing reflection  Reflection questions/topics clearly specified | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **Sharing Your Learning**

*Describe how you plan to actively share what you’ve taken away from this experience with a targeted audience. Explain why you chose this specific audience.*

Note: While social media can be an effective platform for sharing, only posting on your personal learning portfolio or social media account(s) does not reach a targeted audience.

Because my personal learning portfolio does not reach as large of a target audience, I plan to present my experience and results to my scholarship program (Darwin T. Turner Scholars) and possibly the Mental Health Service Coordinator for the university. The Turner Scholars are always an engaged group of peers, and there is a large amount of people who have connections all over campus. With the addition of the information being applicable seeing as the Turner Scholars are college students with the high expectations that come with the name Turner, they understand stress and the information could be of use to them. By presenting my findings to the Mental Health Service Coordinator for the university, I could work with her (Christine Muller-Held) to determine which aspects of UC’s mental health services are effective and which aspects could use some improvement.

In addition to my personal learning portfolio, I plan to organize my research and results into an PowerPoint presentation and/or essay.

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Must Include:  At least one method to actively share take-aways/learning from the experience  A specific audience and why the audience was selected | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

1. **Budget (if applicable)**

*Provide an itemized budget and indicate your source for cost information.*

*\*If you are engaged in an unpaid internship or research, please indicate the number of weeks and hours per week you plan to participate.*

As of right now, I do not have a very specific cost estimate, with the exception of the plane ticket cost. According to a Provident Travel (the travel agency that my group is flying with) consultant, the total cost per person including all fees and taxes is **$1,715.50**. This price also includes the price of a pass for the train that we will be using for transportation while we are in Japan. I will be able to update the budget with estimated cost for food as I receive more information.

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| **Advisor Feedback** | | |
| Notes:  Detailed budget of expenditures with sources to justify budget estimates  \*Indicates the number of hours per week and number of weeks of participation | Required Revisions: | Effective: |

**Thematic Area Learning Outcomes**

**Learning Outcomes for the Community Engagement Thematic Area:**

By engaging in this thematic area, you will make progress towards learning how to…

* Identify and differentiate multiple ways to contribute towards the development or achievement of the community’s goals.
* Develop a thorough understanding of the world view, beliefs, experiences, self-consciousness, or history of community members through collaboration.
* Articulate the purpose of service on a social issue or public policy and how service mutually enhances individual growth and the common good.
* Explain how education, advocacy, mobilization, or public policy can influence social issues and transform communities.

**Learning Outcomes for the Creativity Thematic Area:**

By engaging in this thematic area, you will make progress towards learning how to…

* Discover new techniques to gain knowledge, consider options, make new connections, and ask questions.
* Explore a new creative competency/medium or seek new ways to engage an existing competency/medium.
* Understand and optimize the use of people, technology, physical resources or community in a creative process.
* Articulate the broader significance of a creative project and the value of its contributions.

**Learning Outcomes for the Global Studies Thematic Area:**

By engaging in this thematic area, you will make progress towards learning how to…

* Develop practical travel skills that promote safe, stimulating, and productive travel throughout your life.
* Summarize the interconnectedness of geography, history, cultural traits and world issues.
* Articulate the interdependence of professional fields to address current and impending global issues such as technology, the environment, human rights, or politics.
* Demonstrate an understanding of cultural diversity by acknowledging the impact of their own identity and the experience of social norms, customs, or beliefs that are different from their own.
* Demonstrate a sense of empathy, respect, and appreciation for others to build meaningful cross-cultural collaborations toward mutual growth and prosperity.

**Learning Outcomes for the Leadership Thematic Area:**

By engaging in this thematic area, you will make progress towards learning how to…

* Formulate and manage a shared vision and develop goals towards its achievement.
* Motivate and collaborate effectively with others towards completion of shared projects or goals.
* Develop strategies to identify and respond to challenges and obstacles.
* Identify personal strengths and areas of growth and evaluate opportunities to maximize skills and abilities.
* Synthesize the current trends related to a specific issue or field and evaluate how thought-leaders are currently addressing them.

**Learning Outcomes for the Research Thematic Area:**

By engaging in this thematic area, you will make progress towards learning how to…

* Demonstrate the ability to locate, interpret, and critically evaluate primary sources appropriate to field.
* Identify and apply appropriate methods to collect and organize data for analysis.
* Analyze and interpret the meaning of results.
* Produce dissemination appropriate to the field in order to share the results or impact of the research.
* Articulate the broader significance of the research project and its relationship to other fields, research and ideas.