

Student Engagement in an English-Taught Political Science Program at an American University Campus in Japan¹

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1. Introduction

The number of Japanese universities teaching political science courses in English is increasing so that students now have more opportunity than ever before to “learn in English” rather than “learn English.” Along with educational leaders, many people in politics and business hope that this can contribute to a more globally-minded labour force (Asakura 2014). Political Science, an area of study that emphasizes power relations, is well-placed to contribute to this trend. However, instructors teaching such classes in English in Japan face the age-old problem common to instructors in all disciplines - how to make sure that students who take these classes are *engaged*. This means that students learn inside and outside class; they feel positive towards the subject matter and their classes, and they are committed to understanding a difficult subject. The main finding of the academic literature on student engagement is that academic performance is affected by intrinsic motivation (Deci et al. 1991, p. 331). Education scholars divide engagement into three types - *behavioral engagement*, *emotional engagement*, and *cognitive engagement*. Motivating students in an English-taught program in Japan is of particular importance since many of the students will be studying in their second language in a classroom that is far more heterogeneous than what they may be accustomed to.

Until now, however, as suggested by the popularity of faculty development programs at Japanese universi-

ties, departments have tended to focus on improving student engagement by promoting the skills of instructors. By introducing active learning in the Japanese classroom, many believe, students will learn more. However, by focusing solely on the instructor and the curriculum, we may be ignoring the different ways that students accept new information and integrate it into existing knowledge. Understanding how those students who make the conscious decision to take political science courses in English are engaged and motivated may also help us to design a curriculum that is less about how we think our pupils should learn and more about how they do (Fox, Ronkowski 1997, p. 732). Motivated students take an interest in their learning, can improve their problem-solving skills, tend to do better at increasing their knowledge, and are also more likely to develop a sense of confidence and social responsibility (Deci et al. 1991). It is especially relevant for English-taught political science courses in Japan. Students come from an educational system that emphasizes exams (an external incentive) and must suddenly adapt to a system emphasizing self-study and the ability to analyze the arguments of others critically. The central premise behind my study is that by learning more about the motivations of people who decide to study political science in English in Japan, we can design better classes using internal incentives to motivate students rather than relying exclusively on external rewards and punishments.

¹ This paper was originally presented at the Japan Association of International Relations (JAIR) Meeting in November 2014.

2. Method

For this study, I focus on understanding the engagement of graduates from an English-taught political science program and examine the differences between those with, and those without, Japanese nationality. The only expectations are that first, graduates from an English-taught program should have preferred styles of academic engagement, and second, this should differ between Japanese and non-Japanese students. To examine these two questions, I emailed an Internet questionnaire to 31 graduates from the Political Science and International Affairs majors of a single American university campus in Tokyo. Its entire curriculum is taught in English. In addition to questions asking for demographic information (gender, nationality, English language reading and speaking ability), I asked questions measuring behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. The sample included 19 Japanese, ten non-Japanese, and two dual nationals. Women were represented more than men with female respondents making up 58% of the sample. Participants had a relatively high level of academic success, with 45% self-reporting an A average in their political science courses, 38.7% reporting a B, and only 16% reporting a C². Japanese students reported lower levels of speaking and reading ability in English than non-Japanese students. On a self-reported scale for English-speaking ability of 1-5, the mean score for Japanese respondents was 3.7 while for non-Japanese it was 4.8. Using a similar scale, Japanese respondents reported an average English-reading ability score of 3.7 while non-Japanese reported 4.9. The above characteristics suggest that the sample was probably stronger academically than the average students enrolled in the political science program and that the Japanese respondents were, on average, weaker in English than non-Japanese.

Given the difficulty of tracking down graduates from this program due to privacy concerns, I used a non-

random sampling technique for data collection. I was an instructor in the political science program at this university from 2008 to 2013, as well as the major coordinator and adviser for the International Affairs major from 2010 to 2014, I continue to maintain contact with some former students. I used these contacts to send an English language questionnaire via email and Facebook Messenger to ten former Political Science and International Affairs majors in September 2014 asking them to fill out the survey and then send it on to former classmates³.

This method of data collection has one significant advantage but several disadvantages. The main benefit is, of course, that distributing the survey is inexpensive (it cost me nothing). However, the numerous problems lead me to be cautious with any generalizations. For one thing, the sample is small and not representative of graduates from Japanese universities with English-taught political science programs. The use of former students that I remain in personal contact with as an essential element of the data collection process also means that there is probably a selection bias in favor of motivated individuals - the types of people that would remain in contact with a former professor and their former classmates. Former students who did not engage with the subject matter are impossible to track down using this method. Furthermore, relying on a small number of students' contacts also increases the likelihood of homogeneity among respondents. One last caveat is that since all participants knew me personally and that I would be evaluating the survey, this may have led them to give more positive responses than normal, I tried to get around this problem by ensuring anonymity in all responses. Given the various weaknesses of the sample, I do not suggest, therefore, that I would find the same range in a more heterogeneous student group within the university, much less at other Japanese universities. Rather the limited purpose here is exploratory. I only seek to identify possible patterns of student engagement and to offer some preliminary empirical evidence

² The sample did not include any students who reported an average of D or F.

³ I emphasized that the survey was only to be sent to graduates so as not to confuse current students with former students and to avoid any ethical issues. I contacted the current research director of the university and received written approval that I would not require ethics clearance so long as I did not contact current students.

about the effects of nationality.

3. Background - Student Engagement

Although the number of models examining student engagement in the academic literature is significant, this study will focus primarily on three particular definitions.

Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement in this study is concerned with the action and participation of former students both inside and outside the classroom (Finn 1989). This commitment can range from simply finishing assigned work to campaigning for a political candidate. This definition proposes that people who take an active role in their classes, asking well-thought-out questions and contributing to discussions, are more likely to achieve high academic results and are less liable to quit their major. Think of the difference, for instance, between the student who consistently joins group discussions and asks many questions and the student who sits sullenly at the back of the room scrolling up and down their mobile phone. Outside the classroom, those who take an interest in political causes or who play some role in civil society may also be more engaged with the material than their less active colleagues. One of my most enthusiastic pupils was a former student who volunteered at a local prison. According to the behavioral engagement definition, motivation is about actions.

Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement refers to the affective response of students to their professors, their classes, and their colleagues. Students might dislike a class or love it. Positive attitudes towards the material covered in class and the way that instructors teach it can create ties to the subject matter. On the other hand, students may dislike a particular professor because they are “tough graders” or are “boring” causing them to disengage. I experienced student complaints about one particular political science professor that I supervised and saw that many of the students suffered deep anxiety just attending his class. Negative feelings may lead stu-

dents to avoid such classes or to just “get by” through memorization. Students may also disengage from a class due to a dislike of particular students. I also taught a small seminar in which a single student was notorious for monopolizing discussions. In addition to the sighs and eye rolls of other students whenever he spoke, on one occasion I was concerned that violence would break out when another student lost his temper. Emotional engagement, in sum, is about getting students actually to like what they are studying.

Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement, lastly, is about committing the time and energy required for a person to learn a subject that is difficult (Fredricks et al. 2004, p. 60). It occurs when students are motivated to learn when they have an internal desire to master a subject, when they want to understand something, and when they are enthusiastic about fulfilling a challenge. The literature on learning strategies calls this a *deep learning approach* (Newble, Entwistle 1986, p. 167). Such motivation usually involves a flexibility in problem-solving, a desire to work hard, and a means to cope with setbacks. Studying political science can be difficult, but it also involves questions that should be of general interest. Why are wars fought? Why are some countries wealthier than others? Students who find their interests stimulated by the subject matter and who go beyond what the professor teaches in class to satisfy their curiosity experience pleasure and satisfaction from the process.

We can contrast a student experiencing deep learning with the student who simply does the work assigned to them in class with no passion or thought as to how it might be relevant to them personally. Scholars call this a *surface learning approach* (Fox et al. 2001, p. 512). Students just identify and memorize those facts and ideas they think are necessary to pass the course. They attend classes, not due to any interest in the material but rather to reproduce the expected answers for a test or essay. Rather than critical thinking, they are more likely to rely on rote learning. While all people use a combination of these two approaches depending on context, the consensus among education scholars is that

students who are cognitively engaged tend to do better over the long-term. Next, I proceed to the survey results using these three types of engagement as the framework for the analysis.

4. Results

The questionnaire sent to students asked a series of questions measuring various aspects of respondents' behavioral engagement, affective engagement, and cognitive engagement at the time they were a student in the English-taught political science program. In each section below, I explain how each type of engagement was measured and display the results.

Behavioral Engagement

As stated above, behavioral engagement is about the participation of students both inside and outside the classroom. This includes a person's effort, persistence, concentration, asking questions, and class discussion. Below I examine the overall pattern of student participation in class discussions and then examine participants' interest in political and social activities outside the classroom. In both cases, I compare behavioral engagement of Japanese and non-Japanese students.

Class Discussions

Behavioral engagement as a willingness to participate in class discussions was measured using the item in the questionnaire asking how easy or difficult subjects found such participation. Responses were on a scale of 1-5, with 1="very difficult" and 5="very easy." Table 1 presents the means of responses for my sample as a whole and then by nationality.

Table 1: Ease of Participating in Class Discussions by Nationality

Nationality	Mean (1-5)	Std. Dev.	Freq.
Total	3.50	1.22	30
Japanese	2.72	0.89	18
Non-Japanese	4.70	0.48	10
Dual	4.50	0.71	2
Difference J/NJ	-1.98		

N=30

Though not unexpected, the mean score of 3.5 suggests that the average respondent did not find it "very easy" or even "easy" to participate in class discussions. The overall behavioral engagement was not high, but neither was it "very difficult." A considerable gap, however, did exist between Japanese and non-Japanese subjects. The mean for Japanese respondents of 2.72, as compared to 4.7 for non-Japanese, suggests a relatively lower level of behavioral engagement regarding class participation than for non-Japanese students. Japanese students may be at a disadvantage in the classroom, especially in upper-year seminars where students are evaluated on their contribution to discussions. It is possible that faculty members may also develop a bias towards Japanese students because they perceive them as possessing lower cognitive ability not because of their academic performance, but due to a lack of participation.

Interest in Political and Social Behaviour Outside the Classroom

To measure an individual's behavioral engagement in politics outside the classroom, I used a series of items asking respondents to state the importance of goals related to political influence, political information, community action, community leadership and social assistance⁴. Higher ranked responses should correlate with the desire to engage in particular behaviors. Responses were scored on a 1-5 point scale, with 1="Not important" and 5="Essential." Table 2 shows the averages of replies to the six items in the questionnaire measuring the importance of each behavior for the sample as a whole and then broken down by nationality.

Overall, the top three mean scores for all respondents were associated more with obtaining information and a general social concern than participation in politics. The most important goals for respondents were improving understanding of other countries and cultures (4.57), helping others in difficulty (4.33), and keeping up to date with political affairs (4.17). Meanwhile, the goals associated with active participation were ranked relatively lower in importance. Respondents were less

⁴ These are taken from Mann (1999, p. 264).

Table 2: Importance of Political and Social Goals by Nationality

Ranking	Importance of:	Category of Goal	Mean (1-5)	SD	Japanese (1-5)	Non-Japanese (1-5)	Dual (1-5)	Difference between Japanese and Non-Japanese (1-5)
1	Improving understanding of other countries and cultures	Political information	4.57	0.73	4.72	4.3	4.5	0.42
2	Helping others who are in difficulty	Social assistance	4.33	0.92	4.50	3.9	5	0.60
3	Keeping up to date with political affairs	Political information	4.17	0.75	4.17	4.4	3	-0.23
4	Influencing your country's political structure	Political influence	3.79	0.90	3.82	3.7	4	0.12
5	Participating in a community action program	Community action	3.37	1.27	3.22	3.5	4	-0.28
6	Becoming a community leader	Community leadership	2.97	1.35	2.83	2.9	4.5	-0.07

N=31

interested in influencing politics (3.79), participating in community action (3.37) and becoming a community leader (2.97). Behavioral engagement with politics outside the classroom among the sample was likely not particularly high. Differences between Japanese and non-Japanese participants appears to be minimal. Despite the frequent talk of how English-taught classes may create a new class of “global leaders,” these admittedly limited results suggest that graduates may not be as interested in affecting political or social change as some optimists think.

Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement is the affective response of students to their political science courses manifested in interest, boredom, happiness, sadness, and anxiety. In the following section, I look at patterns of emotional engagement for all respondents about the study of political science in general, the study of subjects, and types of classes before comparing the responses of Japanese and non-Japanese participants.

Learning about Political Science

Attitudes of respondents to political science, in general, was measured by the item asking “how much did you enjoy studying political science?” The range of responses was on a scale of 1-5, where 5=“Enjoyed very much and would recommend the major to others” and 1=“Did not enjoy at all, wish I had picked another

major.” Table 3 shows the overall mean and then by nationality.

Table 3: Enjoyment of Studying Political Science by Nationality

Nationality	Mean (1-5)	Std. Dev.	Freq.
Total	4.55	0.77	31
Japanese	4.37	0.90	19
Non-Japanese	4.90	0.32	10
Dual	4.50	0.71	2
Difference between Japanese and Non-Japanese Respondents	-0.53 points		

N=31

The mean of 4.55 for all respondents suggests a high level of emotional engagement with the subject matter and major. No noticeable difference could be seen comparing the mean scores for Japanese and non-Japanese respondents. This result should not be too surprising since all respondents freely chose their major and so, we might assume, had a genuine interest in the subject.

Favorite Subjects

To measure positive feelings about particular topics within political science, participants were asked to give a single answer to the item “what was your favorite political science subject.” Table 4 displays the ranking and percentage of respondents who named each political science subject as their favorite and then presents the rates for Japanese, non-Japanese, and dual citizens.

The favorite subject among most respondents

Table 4: Favorite Political Science Subject by Nationality

Favorite Subject	Responses %	Japanese %	Non-Japanese %	Dual %	Difference %
International Relations	41.94	31.58	60.00	50.00	-28.42
Political Economy	22.58	31.58	0.00	50.00	31.58
Comparative Politics	12.90	10.53	20.00	0.00	-9.47
Political Communication	6.45	10.53	0.00	0.00	10.53
Political Theory	6.45	5.26	10.00	0.00	-4.74
International Security	3.23	0.00	10.00	0.00	-10.00
Other	6.46	10.52	0.00	0.00	10.52

N=31

was International Relations (41.94%) while the second favorite was Political Economy (22.58%). More non-Japanese respondents (60%) than Japanese respondents (31.58%) named IR as their favorite subject while more Japanese (31.58%) than non-Japanese (0%) preferred Political Economy. These results may indicate that while most international students drawn to study political science in Japan are interested in studying foreign affairs, the interests of Japanese students could be more heterogeneous. Faculties offering English-taught classes may want to focus on specializing in courses like International Relations, International Political Economy, and Security Studies. Although it is logical to assume

that the positive attitudes of respondents were due to the subject matter, the data cannot tell us whether this was due to subject matter, a particular instructor, or the class dynamic.

Least Favorite Subject

To measure negative feelings towards particular subjects within political science, participants were asked to give a single answer to the item “what was your least favorite political science subject.” Table 5 shows the percentage of all respondents who named each topic as their least favorite subject and then for Japanese, non-Japanese, and dual citizen participants.

Table 5: Least Favorite Political Science Subject by Nationality

Least Favorite	Respondents %	Japanese %	Non-Japanese %	Dual %	Difference %
Political Theory	41.94	42.11	40.00	50.00	2.11
Political Communication	19.35	21.05	20.00	0.00	1.05
Political Economy	19.35	10.53	30.00	50.00	-19.47
Comparative Politics	6.45	10.53	0.00	0.00	10.53
International Relations	3.23	5.26	0.00	0.00	5.26
Other	6.26	10.52	0.00	0.00	10.52
Specific type of political theory	3.23	0.00	10.00	0.00	-10.00

N=31

The least favorite subject of respondents as suggested by the ranking was Political Theory (41.94%). The second least favorite classes were Political Communication (19.35%) and Political Economy (19.35%). This negative disposition toward Political Theory was the same for Japanese (42.11%) and non-Japanese respondents (42.11%). Though this is only a small sample from a single university, it would not be surprising to learn that more may have to be done to engage students

in what is a foundational course for the discipline. The fact that nationality did not seem to matter may indicate that language difficulties are not what lead many Japanese students to be turned off by the subject. Since Political Theory is a requirement for anyone majoring in political science, faculties offering English-taught classes may want to channel resources on improving how they teach such courses.

Preferred Type of Class

To measure emotional engagement with a particular type of class, I asked respondents what style would

be the best to raise their interest in learning. Table 6 shows the preferred type of class for all participants and then by nationality.

Table 6: Preferred Type of Class by Nationality

Type of Class	Responses %	Japanese %	Non-Japanese %	Dual %	Difference %
Seminars, instructor-led	86.67	84.21	88.89	100	-4.68
Seminars, students-led	10	15.79	0	0	15.79
Traditional lecture	3.33	0	11.11	0	-11.11

N=31

The preferred type of class, by far, was instructor-led seminars (86.76%). The traditional lecture format, in contrast, was not as well-liked (rated the favorite type of class by only 3.33% of respondents). We do not see large differences in the percentage of Japanese and non-Japanese who replied that they preferred instructor-led seminars. Students may prefer the opportunity to learn in small groups with the opportunity to interact directly with the professor. A preference for instructor-led seminars has significant implications for student engagement because the preferred format for most faculties is the traditional lecture. Students who decide to study political science in English in Japan may have high levels of self-motivation and so be less satisfied with classes where they are not able to participate in discussions (though this interpretation runs counter to the previous finding that Japanese students feel anxious about participating in class discussions). Political Science programs that rely too much on large classes may find it harder to engage students than those with smaller

teacher-to-student ratios.

Cognitive Engagement

In this final section, I examine whether a general pattern of cognitive engagement existed among my subjects - specifically whether they preferred a deep or surface approach to learning. I then compare Japanese and non-Japanese respondents. The questions are adapted from the study process questionnaire used to measure student approaches to learning (Fox et al. 2001).

Learning Approaches

I measured patterns of cognitive engagement by ranking responses to a series of items in the survey asking about learning strategies. A respondent's preference for a particular approach was measured on a 1-5 point scale, with 1="Rarely true" and 5="Usually true". Table 7 displays a ranking of the means of responses for each item and then compares them by nationality.

Regarding preferences for learning styles among

Table 7: Learning Approaches to Political Science Courses by Nationality

Ranking	Question	Strategy	Mean (1-5)	SD	Japanese (1-5)	Non-Japanese (1-5)	Dual (1-5)	Difference (1-5)
1	I tried to relate new material, as I was reading it, to what I already knew on the topic.	Deep	4.20	0.96	4.06	4.4	4.5	-0.34
2	I found that studying academic topics in Political Science and International Relations could at times be as exciting as a good novel or film	Deep	4.07	0.98	4.00	4.2	4	-0.20
3	I found that at times studying and reading about topics in Political Science gave me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction.	Deep	4.00	0.98	3.94	4	4.5	-0.06

4	While I was studying, I often thought of real life situations to which the material that I learned about in my Political Science courses would be useful.	Deep	4.00	1.23	3.89	4.4	3	-0.51
5	I found that I had to do enough work on a topic so that I could form my point of view before I was satisfied	Deep	3.97	0.85	4.00	3.9	4	0.10
6	I usually became increasingly absorbed in my Political Science work (i.e. essay writing, studying for tests, reading) the more I did.	Deep	3.77	1.04	3.61	4	4	-0.39
7	I wanted top grades in most or all of my Political Science courses so that I would be able to select from among the best jobs/graduate schools available when I graduated.	Surface	3.53	1.57	3.44	3.4	5	0.04
8	Whether I like it or not, I saw that further studies in Political Science was a good way for me to get a well-paid or secure job.	Surface	3.07	1.11	3.28	2.9	2	0.38
9	I generally restricted my study to what was specifically set by the Professor in my Political Science courses as I thought it was unnecessary to do anything extra.	Surface	2.77	1.10	2.61	3.3	1.5	-0.69
10	I found it best to accept the statements and ideas of my lecturers and question them only under special circumstances.	Surface	2.67	1.03	3.00	2.1	2.5	0.90
11	I chose to take Political Science and International Affairs courses largely with a view to the job situation when I graduated rather than their intrinsic interest to me.	Surface	1.93	1.05	2.11	1.6	2	0.51
12	I thought browsing around topics in Political Science was a waste of time, so I only studied seriously what was given out in class or in course outlines.	Surface	1.90	1.08	2.18	1.5	1.5	0.68

N=31

the sample, we can see a clear pattern for an in-depth learning approach. Out of the twelve items, the mean of the highest ranked strategy was to relate new material to what a respondent already knew (4.20). It also appears that respondents experienced pleasure from the study of political science since the second-highest average score was for the belief that academic topics could be as exciting as a novel or film (4.07) while third was the idea that studies could lead to deep personal satisfaction (mean of 4). Respondents also tried to relate what they learned in their classes to actual situations in the world around them (mean of 4).

The scores for surface strategies, in contrast, were comparatively lower. Externally motivated strategies

associated with getting good grades (mean of 3.53) and getting a job (3.07 and 1.93) were ranked 7th, eighth and 11th respectively, while just accepting what the professor taught (mean of 2.77) was ranked 10th. The lowest score of all was for a preference for learning what was necessary only for class (mean of 1.90).

The differences in learning strategies between Japanese and non-Japanese participants was minimal. Both groups preferred deep learning over surface learning, suggesting that most of the subjects in the sample were cognitively engaged students (or at least remember themselves to have been). One possibly interesting finding was that Japanese respondents scored, on average, 0.90 points higher than non-Japanese respondents

when asked whether they thought it would be best to accept what their professor told them in class. Although the data is not sufficient to reach a firm conclusion, this may indicate that Japanese students are less likely to question what the instructor tells them.

Overall, the results above suggest that students who decide to study political science in English, no matter their nationality, may be cognitively engaged with the subject. The most important implication for faculty is that we should be presenting material in a way that it relates to what students are already familiar. It is of particular importance to have a coordinated curriculum where knowledge is cumulative. In many Japanese universities, individual faculty members teach upper-year classes based on their particular interests, sometimes with little regard for what students know coming into the classroom. If students prefer deep learning to surface learning, then such an approach may be suboptimal if our aim is cognitive engagement.

Furthermore, Japanese students may not, as some of my former colleagues believed, need to be as coddled. A common belief was that making things too difficult would discourage them from their studies. However, the above findings, tentative as they are, suggest that such students may engage with the material as much as their classmates of different nationalities. If learning new material gives students a sense of pleasure and satisfaction then the best teaching approach should be to provide more challenging material, so long as it relates to what students already know.

Discussion and Conclusion

With the number of English-taught courses in Political Science increasing in Japan, the time is right to ask about how Japanese and non-Japanese students who decide to take such classes engage with the subject matter. The more motivated a student is, the more likely they are to do well academically and complete the course. This study showed that among a non-representative sample of graduates from a single English-taught political science program at one American university campus in Japan, the behavioral engagement in the classroom of Japanese respondents was lower than that of non-Jap-

anese students. Outside the classroom, however, both groups appeared to be similar with higher levels of interest in political information than in actual political action. Emotional engagement for the sample as a whole was relatively high, with positive attitudes towards political science in general, and International Relations in particular, and a preference for seminar-style classes led by the professor. Cognitive engagement was also relatively high, with preferences for a deep learning style in which respondents reported relating new material to current knowledge, as well as the experience of pleasure in the learning process. Except for behavioral engagement in the classroom, Japanese and non-Japanese respondents were quite similar.

These findings show a potential need to adapt the pedagogical approach to political science in English-taught classes in Japan. Perhaps most importantly, faculty teaching such courses should be aware that a self-selection process may be occurring in which they will be working with students who are engaged and, therefore, quite demanding regarding how and what they are taught. Professors who fail to challenge their charges with interesting and relevant material able to stimulate their curiosity may find themselves suffering when it comes to student evaluations. Smaller classes using an active learning approach, rather than the large traditional lectures found in most universities, is probably the best means of stimulating motivation. One important point related to behavioral engagement - although Japanese students may be reluctant to participate in class discussions, they may still be emotionally or cognitively engaged with the material.

Another key takeaway is that faculties may have to work harder to increase attention to their courses in Political Theory. Instructors who teach Plato and John Stuart Mill in English should work hard to engage students by linking the ideas of the great thinkers to student experiences.

As discussed in the Method section, these results should not be generalized without serious caveats. Most importantly, the sample is small, thus limiting the power of any statistical analysis. It also does not represent the target population of students enrolled in an English-

taught political science program. Participants also were only graduates who not only made the decision to major in political science or international affairs but who also completed it. Importantly, it does not include students from other majors who may have no choice but to take such classes for required credit nor does it include those students who dropped out or changed their major. Due to sampling bias, students likely to be the most engaged are overrepresented.

Perhaps the most important note of caution to Japanese audiences looking to draw conclusions is that while the university from which I drew the the sample was in Japan, its curriculum was American. It is possible that Japanese students who decided to study there were different in many ways (like the level of engagement) than Japanese students enrolled at a Japanese university. Faculty members may also be different due to cultural and educational backgrounds. For the purpose of generalizing to other Japanese universities, it would also be better to conduct a survey such as this among students when they first enter an English-taught political science program rather than those who have graduated.

Despite these differences, however, this study should still be of some use to anyone interested in English-taught programs in Japan. It provides some empirical evidence that should spread some doubt among those people who question the benefit of teaching political science in English to Japanese undergraduate students. It may be that students who willingly enroll in such courses are engaged before they begin their studies and, therefore, may be likely graduate and then look back on their experiences as an important part of their life-long learning.

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