

Professor Piccolo's Seminar

Our rather small 4th-year seminar this year wrote graduation essays on a very diverse selection of topics ranging from education, business, baseball to LGBTQ issues. In his essay, "Comparison of Japanese and American Education Culture," Hayato Tanaka compared American and Japanese education from different perspectives such as historical background, curriculum, school rules, extracurricular activities, the role of teachers, method of teaching students, and the relationship between schools and parents. The purpose of the essay, he writes, is not to argue for the superiority of one over the other, but "to take in the good points and improve the bad points" of each in order to "implement the optimal education system in the future".

Yuki Fujihashi also wrote on the topic of education but with a more specific focus: "Toward More Effective and Efficient Second Language Acquisition in Japan". His motivation for his research was to see how the method of English education in Japan could be improved to provide students with better English ability, especially spoken English. As part of his research, Yuki devised a questionnaire and conducted an online survey to help find out how students themselves felt about their high school English education.

In his essay, "Relation between Downward Communication and Harassment in Business Communication in the U.S." Masaki Makita wrote on the topic of "downward communication"

(information flow from superiors to subordinates) in business. In particular, Masaki focused on how ineffective or inappropriate downward communication can intentionally or unintentionally lead to harassment in the workplace based on race, ethnicity, gender, or physical disability. He concludes with discussing ways to improve downward communication and end workplace harassment.

In "American Baseball and Japanese Baseball: A Historical and Cultural Comparison", Mana Sato discusses cultural differences between the U. S. and Japan by focusing on the sport of baseball in both countries. In her essay, she begins with a history of the development of baseball in the U. S. Japan, followed by a discussion of the differences between American and Japanese baseball and the cultural explanations for these differences, and ends with a look at the particular issues facing baseball in each country today.

Anna Sato also wrote about U. S. and Japanese cultural differences in her essay: "Same-sex Marriage". In her introduction, Anna notes that "both countries have their own peculiar biases and prejudices. However, one area in which they are similar is in having problems with same-sex marriage." In her essay, she begins with a discussion of the current state of same-sex marriage in the U. S. and Japan, followed by the history of same-sex marriage and an examination of the prejudices against same-sex marriage in both countries, and concludes with an argument for the legalization of same-sex marriage in Japan and the United States.

Finally, Anna Sato's graduation essay has been selected due to its in-depth research and well-argued thesis as the best essay in our 4th-year Seminar for 2021.