



Spring 2013 Language Tables

Public

Name of Assessment Spring 2013 Language Tables

Project:

Name(s) of Person(s)

Responsible for

Assessment Project:

Role
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Department:

Other

Units/Departments

Involved in

Assessment Project:

Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project

This assessment project is linked to the quarterly Language Conversation Tables (LCT) developed and offered by International House and implemented with support from the college coordinators for non-resident students. The purpose and intent of the language tables is to be a campus-wide program open to all students, staff, faculty, scholars, and community members that facilitates social engagement, fosters community, and promotes cultural understanding and language learning. The focus of the Language Conversation Tables is on the natural use of a language rather than the academic, "classroom" formal use of a language. The Language Conversation Table program is an endeavor to share with the rest of the UCSD community a successful program developed by I-House.

We encourage native speakers from our I-House community to facilitate each language conversation table. In collaboration and direction from the I-House Program Coordinator, LCT facilitators determine the weekly schedule, lead conversation topics, and facilitate language learning and cross-cultural understanding through dialogue and interaction. With support from the I-House Program Coordinator, the LCT facilitators are allowed a great deal of creative freedom in structuring and formatting the LCTs. Some facilitators focus exclusively on speaking the language while others incorporate reading and writing the language as well. Each Language Conversation Table meets for 9 weeks each quarter, while many tables also plan a variety of activities, such as movie nights and cooking classes, in addition to the weekly meeting.

In managing the LCT program, the I-House Program Coordinator provides administrative support, leadership and structure by:

- Identifying and assessing learning outcomes for the LCT program
- Creating an assessment tool to measure program goals and learning outcomes
- Developing a training for facilitators based on previous teaching experience and facilitating the English Table
- Recruiting table facilitators
- Facilitating the English Table, preparing materials and discussion topics, planning activities

- Reaching out to student organizations, professors, and academic departments
- Expanding the program to increase the number of languages represented, increase the number of facilitators, and increase the total number of participants
- Visiting different tables throughout the quarter to monitor their progress
- Coordinating quarterly events that bring all of the tables together
- Encouraging table participation in I-House, campus, and community events such as International Affairs Group, International Education Week, and international film festivals
- Communicating with I-Center staff to cross-market LCT and Language Exchange programs
- Compiling information from attendance sheets to calculate total number of table participants

The LCT program also includes the English Conversation Table. The I-House Program Coordinator and one of the College Coordinators for Non-Resident Students co-facilitated the English Table for all 3 quarters. They prepared materials and discussion topics each week, such as how to make new friends, American/English-language idioms, dating, holidays, TV shows, personality types, internet memes, slang, and food. They also led an apple pie making lesson in the Great Hall kitchen.

During the past year, I-House Programs & Marketing Interns reached out to campus departments and student organizations, helped recruit LCT facilitators, promoted the programs at orientations, distributed fliers of the various LCT's schedule, and worked with the I-House Media Intern to market the LCT program to the larger UCSD and San Diego communities through the website and Facebook. Under the Program Coordinator's guidance, Programs and Marketing Interns led an information session during Week 1 of Fall and Winter quarters.

The number of Language Conversation Tables offered during each quarter of the past year ranged from 10-21. In Fall 2012 there were 21 language conversation tables representing 17 distinct languages and attended by approximately 175 participants. In Winter 2013 there were 16 conversation tables representing 12 distinct languages, and approximately 120 participants. In Spring 2013 there were 8 conversation tables and distinct languages represented and approximately 90 participants.

The following languages were represented in the 2012-2013 academic year: Cantonese, English, Farsi, Finnish, French, German, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

Assessment Project Description

The main purpose of the assessment project is to assess the:

- level (frequency) of participation
- reason for participating in the language conversation tables
- benefit of participation (linguistic and cultural)

The I-House Program Coordinator distributed hardcopies of the assessment instrument during a Language Conversation Table session. Participants also had the option of completing the assessment online. Data from all paper assessment were uploaded to the online site. The assessment included both Winter and Spring quarter participants. The results of this assessment will be used to determine the value of the Language Conversation Tables and to make improvements to the program for the coming year.

Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes

It is a goal of I-House staff that as a result of participating in the Language Conversation Tables, participants are able to:

- improve their conversational language skills
- enhance their familiarity and knowledge about other cultures
- connect with other undergraduate students, graduate students, post-docs, and community members

- feel more a part of the UC San Diego community

While International House is primarily an undergraduate population consisting of domestic and international students, we hope to engage graduate students, post-docs, visiting scholars, staff, and community members beyond the International House community to participate in the LCTs.

Relationship to Student Affairs Learning Outcomes: Communicate Effectively, Advance a Plan for Personal, Academic, and Professional Success, Lead in a Diverse Global Society, Promote Social Justice and Community Responsibility

Assessment Project Start: 2/15/2013

Assessment Project End: 6/7/2014

Population/Sample

Total participants in Winter 2013 quarter: 120
 Total participants in Spring 2013 quarter: 90

Total responses: 45
 20 Winter 2013
 25 Spring 2013

it is unknown if the 90 participants in the Spring were all part of the program in the Winter.

Type of Assessment: Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes, Benchmarking

Other Assessment Type(s):

Assessment Methods: Surveys

Other Assessment Method(s):

Data Collection Tools

Google Forms for the online assessment.
 Hard-copies of the survey distributed at the Language Conversation Tables.
 Data from the hard-copies were uploaded to Google forms, which was used to compile the data.
 Google Forms was used because at the time the survey was administered I-House did not yet have an account set up with Campus Labs.

Data Analysis Methods

Data were uploaded and analyzed using Google Forms.
 This was the first time the Language Conversation Tables have been assessed so no previous data exists for comparison.

Presentation of Findings

Results of this assessment will be used by the International House staff Language Conversation Table facilitators to enhance and improve the program.
Results will also be shared with the Non-Resident Student Engagement (NRSE) committee.

Progress:

Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline

Source Name	Project Name
No items to display.	

Summary of Findings

We identified and assessed the following goals and learning outcomes for the Language Conversation Table program:

- Approximately half of survey respondents were undergraduate domestic students, while the rest of the respondents were undergraduate international students, graduate students, post-docs, Extension students, and community members.
- A majority of respondents (79%) were not I-House residents indicating a benefit to the larger campus.
- Most respondents attended the English, Japanese, and German language tables (this might be due to more direct communication between facilitators and the Program Coordinator/Program Intern).
- The most popular reasons for participating in the language tables include:
 - practicing a language (33 respondents)
 - meeting others who speak the language (28 respondents)
 - socializing (28 respondents)

Four of the Student Affairs Learning Outcomes were captured in the quantitative and qualitative data reflected in the assessment:

Student Affairs Learning Outcomes:

2. Communicate Effectively

- 2.4 Confidently approach and engage in meaningful conversation with new people in new settings.
 - 83% of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that their participation in the LCT program helped them to connect and meet with other UCSD students, graduate students, post-docs, etc.
 - "I think it's a rare opportunity where you really get to converse with people whom you may or not be familiar with, and I enjoy learning new things about people and culture."

3. Advance a Plan for Personal, Academic, Professional Success

- 3.5 Engage in experiences that complement their personal, academic, and professional pursuits.
 - 81% of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that their participation in the LCT program helped them to feel more a part of the UCSD community.
 - "I learned a great deal about American culture that are closely related to American social life, which had added to my library of knowledge and are applicable to my personal social life."

4. Lead in a Diverse Global Society

- 4.8 Engage with others comfortably in unfamiliar environments, either abroad or in the U.S.

- 61% of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that their participation in the LCT program helped them to improve their conversational language skills.
- "I enjoyed the chance to get to learn a new language with other students who were also enthusiastic about learning it, and weren't just studying it because a class required it. I was able to engage in learning more actively and I learned a great deal that I am taking away from the conversation table."
- "[I enjoyed] practicing the language and meeting others who also spoke the language, reminiscing about living in the country of that language and discussing that country."

6. Promote Social Justice and Community Responsibility

- 6.3 Demonstrate behaviors that reflect awareness of the UC San Diego Principles of Community
 - 79% of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that they were able to learn more about other cultures through their participation in the LCT program.

Impact of Assessment

In addition to using the findings of the assessment for planning discussions with staff and LCT facilitators, we plan on:

- Enhancing the orientation, training and support provided to the Language Conversation Table facilitators
- Increasing awareness (advertising) of the Language Conversation Tables throughout campus to boost participation
- Increasing the number of languages represented by the LCT program
- Increase and vary the frequency of when the Language Conversation Tables are held in order to facilitate participation

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Lessons Learned

There is great interest among international students to learn about American culture.

There is great interest among current LCT participants to continue participating in the Language Conversation Tables in the future (91%).

We need to advertise and market this program more (many survey responses reflected a lack of publicity and awareness of the LCTs).

Not to overlook the value in providing students with more opportunities to socialize, meet new people, and be part of a community.

Supplemental Information

This successful and promising program is run with a minimum of resources. The I-House Program Coordinator oversees a student intern who recruits the LCT facilitators and organizes the calendar and schedule for the Language Tables each quarter. The Program Coordinator develops and implements the orientation and training for the language table facilitators and works with them throughout the year to help plan the LCTs. All the Language Conversation Table facilitators are volunteers.

If resources were available, we could vary and expand the types of programs offered, such as offering cooking and other activities that would attract more participants and facilitate learning about different topics. It would also be nice to be able to somehow express our appreciation to the facilitators (even if only with a dinner).

The Language Conversation Tables are successful and rewarding opportunities for international students to be more involved with and engaged in university life, be connected to other students and, and as a result, enrich the campus community for everyone as a whole.

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