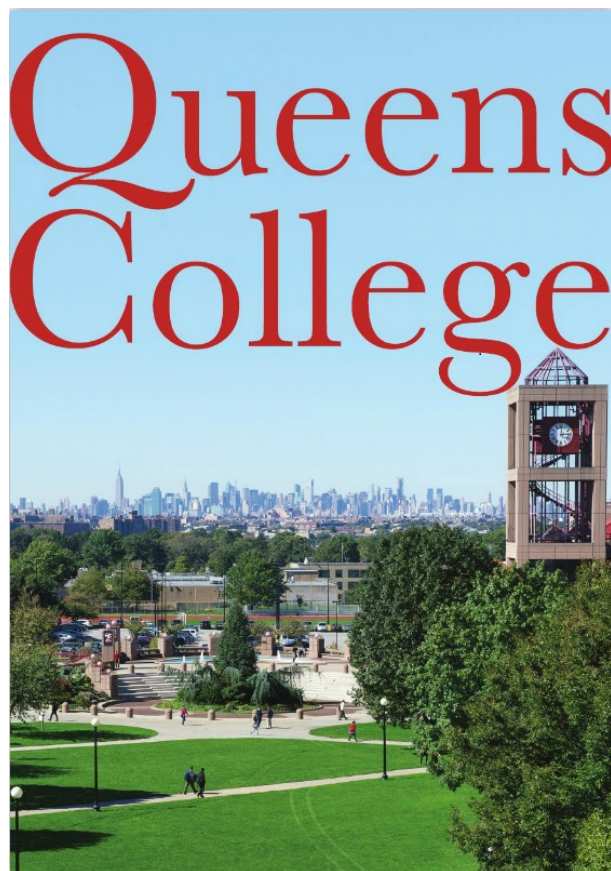


**Toyohashi University of Technology,
Institute for Global Network Innovation in
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News from QC

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■ Reports

Lectures and Academic Support Lab

Hideaki Yanagisawa, National Institute of Technology, Tokuyama College

Three months have already passed since we arrived at New York. And one and a half months have passed since fall semester started. In this report, I'd like to talk about lectures that I take and Queens College Academic Support Lab.

Lectures

I currently take Computer Architecture class (CS343/CS744) for credits. I also take Distributed Computing class (CS344/CS715) and Introduction to Web Programming class (CS081) as an observation class. Totally I take three classes, however the ways of teaching are very different.

In Computer Architecture class, lecture slides are uploaded on the website. Students can see the lecture slide before the class. However, the professor doesn't use the lecture slide in the class. This probably means, the professor assumes students read the lecture slide before the class. In the class, the professor speaks very fast, and often asks questions to students. (Photo1)

In Distributed Computing class, lecture notes and skeleton programs are uploaded on the website before the class. The professor writes down skeleton programs on the blackboard, then the professor asks questions to students for completing the programs. I think this class also assumes students have read lecture slides before the class. (Photo2)

In Introduction to Web Programming class, the professor uses PowerPoint to explain HTML and CSS. This class is an exercise class. Students make websites which the professor explains. (Photo3)

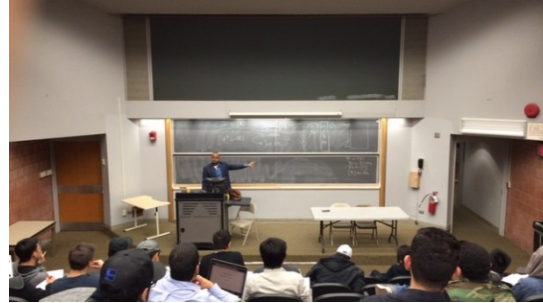


Photo1: Computer Architecture



Photo2: Distributed Computing



Photo 3: Introduction to Web Programming

Academic Support Lab

Queens College Academic Support Lab (Kiely Hall 131) gives foreign students language support class. I have attended Conversation class three times so far. In the Conversation class, we debated "remake movie (Death Note)", "should have gun or not", etc. It was very good English practice for me.

Academic Support Lab also gives foreign students Reading, Pronunciation and Writing

classes respectively. I'm going to attend Reading class next week, but I won't be able to attend Pronunciation class. Because Pronunciation class is popular, I am on the waiting list.

If it is possible, I'm going to talk about Reading class and Pronunciation class in my next report. I recommend you go to Kiely Hall 131 as soon as possible.

Training program in QC and change of my English ability

Mio Kobayashi, National Institute of Technology, Anan College

1. Introduction

It has been three and a half months since we arrived at Queens College, City University of New York. We turned at the halfway point of our whole training in the United State. Fall just started in New York City, and it is cool and very comfortable. In this report, the contents of the training I have taken until now and change of my English ability are described.

2. ELI (English Learning Institute) class

The ELI class at Queens College is the program for people who learn English as a second language. As ELI students, we have learned four skills of English, which consist of reading, writing, listening and speaking, for one and a half months. We studied these skills six hours a day and four days a week from the beginning of July to the middle of August. We were distributed to some classes by the result of the placement test which was conducted before the class started. Our class, "5A," the second high-level class, had international diversity because nationalities of students in the class were China, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Colombia, Iran, and Belarus.

The topic in the class which most left an impression in my mind is debates about the abortion and the minimum legal drinking age in the United States. I remember that I felt

difficulty to express logically my own opinion in English, and realized that I was not used to debating at all. How many times did I have the opportunities of debating in my student-hood and short teaching experiences in my life? During the debates, it became clear to me that ways of education about making students express their own opinion are radically different between the United States and Japan. Also I thought it was understandable that national personalities and mental structures of people in the United States were definitely different from ours because of the difference of education.

3. Classes in Fall semester

Fall semester has started since August 27. I have been taking three subjects, which are Information and Intelligence, College Writing, and Introduction to Algorithm Problem Solving.

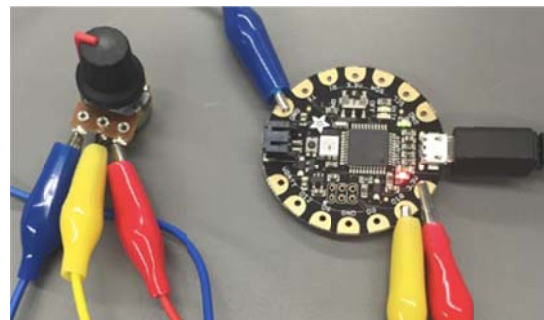


Figure 1 Practice using Arduino

Information and Intelligence, which is a subject of the computer science department for freshman, is my compulsory subject for a credit. In the class, we study basic algorithms by the lecture and how to use Arduino (Fig.1), an open-source electronics platform, in a laboratory. The number of students in the class are about 20. When we study circuits and programming with using Arduino in the laboratory, it is a good opportunity for me to speak English practically. College Writing is a subject for the same class as Information and Intelligence, so the class has same members. In College Writing, we have to obtain skills to write essays about computer science in English, and teacher gives us much homework of reading essays every time. Introduction to Algorithm Problem Solving is about C++ programming language for beginners of programming by the lecture. The number of the students attending the class is about 130, and we have the class in a big tiered classroom.

Although the two subjects except for College Writing are for freshman, and contents are easy to understand, I could learn a lot from the teaching styles of teachers and their speaking English for teaching. In addition, College Writing is my challenge subject because I study the subject with students who are native English speakers. Almost all of the essays of homework, which we have to read a lot every time, are very interesting, and I enjoy reading them.

4. TiE and ALS

In the fall semester, we also have been taking TiE (Teaching in English) and ALS (Academic Language Support Course) every Friday. In TiE, we have been learning the various methods for managing lectures in English, for example, how to expand the lecture effectively with LMS (Learning Management



Figure 2 Language Exchange Study

System) including Black Board, presentation skills with PechaKucha style (5 minutes' presentation with 20 seconds a slide), and so on. In ALS, we learn about pronunciation, intonation, linking etc. in English, which are important to speak English more fluently in lectures. I realized it is necessary to practice pronunciation and intonation in English for improving English ability.

5. Effort to improve English

After fall semester started, what I have mainly worked on studying to improve my English conversation ability are three kinds of activities as follows. First one is studying with language exchange partners shown in Fig. 2. We got to know each other in Japanese Culture Club in QC. They are students in QC, and they would like to study Japanese. Two of the five members are Americans, one is from Germany, and other two including me are Japanese. It is very nice opportunity to practice English. Second activity is talking with staffs in the peer office, which is located in the LL37 room, the basement of Student Union building. We can talk with the QC students working voluntarily there for helping foreign students. Third activity is that I have been taking an English conversation optional class and a part time ELI class (evening class) in QC.

Furthermore, online English practice such as Rarejob, watching dramas online, and writing journals might improve my English ability!

6. Change of English ability

Let me show my scores of the examinations we have taken so far. The score of TOEIC I took in last April was about 600, and the result of TSST test in ALC Press Inc. was Level 4. The result of second TSST test I got right after coming to the United States was Level 5. Table 1 shows my placement and final exam scores in ELI.

Table1 ELI Placement & Final Exam score

	Placement	Final
Aural	62	82
Structure	60	84
Reading CLOZE	50	68
Composition	43	59
Composite	81.75	110.75

7. Summary

In this report, I described the contents of the training in Queens College and the change of my English ability. The results of examinations show that I have improved my English step by step. However, I still have difficulty to listen to details in conversations among native speakers, and also my speaking skill is not enough yet. I will keep up studying, and I hope my English will improve more.

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