

## ヒューマンウェアインターンシップ報告書

3 / 4

## インターンシップ体験記 (海外インターンシップの場合は英語で記入)

For completing my humanware internship, I visited a University in the United States of America and stayed there for 3 months. Here, I write my experience about (1) visa issues, (2) lab culture, (3) communication with supervisors, (4) daily life, and (5) lessons learned from the experience.

**(1) Visa issues**

Briefly speaking, it takes very long time to get visa for the U.S. In my case, it took four months in total. The reason why it takes so long time to get visa is that a visa requester needs to take DS-2019 from the host institution. DS-2019 is a certification issued by the host institution of your visit. In order for the host institution to issue it, the requester should submit a lot of documents including English proficiency test score such as TOEFL or IELTS, your bank account balance certification, and so on (if you don't have scores of TOEFL or IELTS, you will have to take interview tests by the host institution instead of these public tests). The person in charge of my visa process at the office of the University was very communicative (I am really thankful for her), but it still took four months.

After I received DS-2019 from the University, I went to the U.S. consulate in Osaka for taking visa interview test. Contrary to my expectations, it was so easy. The interviewer asked me to take the interview in English or Japanese (of course I chose English!). Moreover, I was asked only four questions: 1. *Why I would go to the U.S.* (I answered "for doing research"), 2. *What kind of research I would do* (I answered "it is related to human-computer interaction"), 3. *Whether I had experience of associate professor or assistant professor to supervise students* (I answered "No, because I am still a Ph.D. student"), and 4. *How long I would stay in the U.S.* (I answered "for three months"). I think this is a rare case, so it might not be useful information for prospective visa requesters.

When I checked in the Itami airport for leaving Osaka, the reception desk once rejected to issue my flight tickets, because my flight schedule for going back to Japan from U.S. is out of the expiration date of my visa (it depends on DS-2019). But, as the U.S. consulate says (as of September 2017), J-1 visa holders can stay 30 days after they finish the program they participated. I knew this but the reception desk did not know this, then I was requested to show the evidence of this information (I showed the webpage). Finally, it took 45 minutes to check in. I'd like to emphasize it is important to check your program schedule and flight schedule carefully.

**(2) Lab culture**

In the U.S., a new semester starts from September. Fortunately, my internship also started from September 1<sup>st</sup>, so I could participate in the Ph.D. student kick-off meeting of the lab. In the meeting, professors introduced the history, culture, and rules of the lab. The most impressive message introduced in the meeting was "students should work productively, honestly, and closely to professors." Certainly, students in the lab discussed with their supervisors frequently and casually. Furthermore, students and professors make decision so quickly, so students work productively.

Also, in the lab, students collaboratively work and aid with together as co-authors. 1<sup>st</sup>-year Ph.D. students join the existing project led by senior (2<sup>nd</sup>-year or more Ph.D.) students or start new projects with senior students. Because of this, new Ph.D. students learn how to design study, conduct experiments, and write papers from senior students. Senior students also gain experience of supervising junior students. I was surprised at that most senior students are reviewers at the leading international conference on human-computer interactions (CHI). They already have one or several papers published in the peer-reviewed conference, so they are selected as its reviewers.

One of the most impressive things during the internship is that some people work while standing at their desks. Several people work while working on the working machine. According to the students, sitting in a seat for long time is not good for health. I think this is innovative, because they do trainings and write papers at the same time.

Most students bring their lunch and take it in the meeting desk together. They exchange their opinions about class selection, discuss research topics, and talk about funny things. The conversation was so interesting, because their backgrounds are so diverse. I also got a lot of advice on my research design and carrier plan.

## ヒューマンウェアインターンシップ報告書

4 / 4

## インターンシップ体験記 (続き)

**(3) Communication with supervisors**

When I firstly visited the office of my supervisor, he asked me to get in touch with him as soon as possible if I have any questions, progress, or strugglings. I talked with him at least one time in face-to-face, and several times via emails or Skype in a week. He is so open, honest, and close to students that I work on my project productively without any stress. As he does, other professors also communicate with their students so friendly. All professors and staffs always greatly help students, but students engage in their studies so actively. In other words, faculty members are supportive especially when students are in troubles, and students are active and independent-minded.

**(4) Daily life**

I lived in a house shared with one undergraduate student from Vietnam, one visiting scholar from Finland, and one worker from the U.S. I found the house on the renting house websites powered by the University. The house was located in a clam and peaceful area, so I don't need special care about my safety unless it is midnight. The area was so rich in nature that I saw a lot of wild animals such as squirrels, rabbits, and turkeys (Figure 2). Also, the Mississippi river (Figure 3) is close to the area.

The location I stayed has no ocean, so I have few times to take seafood. Usually, I ate chicken or beef. They were tasty. In the morning I had serials and fruits, at lunch I had sandwiches that I made in the morning, and I had spaghetti at night. I made all meals by myself every day, so I did not use so much money for daily goods. In every weekend, I went to supermarkets to buy foods for the next week.



Figure 2: Turkeys



Figure 3: The Mississippi river

I had few times to use cash. Credit cards are available everywhere such as restaurants, school shops, supermarkets, and train tickets. It is convenient for me because I did not need carry cash. But, cash or check is basically needed when we pay house rental fee. If we pay it with check, we need to have bank accounts in the U.S., so I use cash only when paying the fee to the owner. In the U.S., we have \$20 bill, \$10 bill, \$5 bill, and \$1 bill, but \$100 bill. I took care when I brought my house rental fee to be paid to the owner, because I need to carry a lot of bills.

The campus was so large. It has an American football stadium, hospitals, and public trains that go across its central area (Figure 4). We had several restaurants such as Chinese, Hongkongese, Vietnamese, or Japanese. In the last week of my internship, I often used one of the Hongkongese restaurants in the campus. Finally, I did not get used to the tip culture. I was always confused how much I should pay for tips.



Figure 4: View from the stations

**(5) Lessons learned from the experience**

I raise three points as lessons learned from the internship.

- To make simple communication with colleagues frequently  
They grasp the status of their colleagues with simple but frequent (face-to-face) conversations. Thus, they can help with each other quickly when someone has troubles.
- To make questions clear  
To make decisions quickly, it is important for us to make our questions clear and ask them first in the meeting. To do this, the first lesson is necessary.
- To keep health  
That's all. I do not need to say any more (eating and taking sleep regularly makes us productive).