

<DP CAS Cat1>

Workshop report

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From Friday, September 30th, to Sunday, October 2nd, I attended the International Baccalaureate Creativity Activity Service (CAS) Coordinator Workshop at Yokohama International High School. Organized by the IB Asia Headquarters in Singapore, the workshop trained IB high school teachers to become CAS Coordinators at their schools.

My reason for attending the workshop was to 1) Learn about CAS (which is not a subject, rather it is one of the three pillars of the IB Program, that also include the Theory of Knowledge or TOK, and the Extended Essay); 2) borrow ideas from the IB and possibly incorporate them into service learning programs at Okayama University; 3) attain more theoretical information on the importance of teaching creativity in schools.

For three days, I learned what is expected of IB students and how they go about fulfilling their CAS requirements, which must be done outside of class. We discussed in detail what activities can be defined as CAS and what cannot. Students are to engage in a balanced amount of projects that promote creativity, physical activity and service to humanity and the environment. Contrary to popular belief there is no longer a 150 hour time requirement. This quantitative approach has been exchanged for a more qualitative approach. Students are given a checklist of outcomes and are required to engage in projects that meet the outcomes. The 7 outcomes of CAS are as follows:

- Undertake new challenges.
- Plan and initiate activities.
- Work collaboratively with others.
- Show perseverance and commitment.
- Engage with issues of global importance.
- Consider ethical implications.
- Develop new skills.

Over the course of two years in the Diploma program, students are expected to prove they have achieved these outcomes via their project reflections and interviews.

From this workshop I was most impressed by how much importance the IB places on CAS and active, extra-curricular, student-centered learning. CAS projects are ideally initiated, organized and executed by the students themselves. Teachers are there to serve as guides and facilitators.

Ultimately CAS experiences should be the students' own, hopefully provide some of their best memories of high school, and help them stand out when applying to university.