Japan, Tokyo- Keio University Exchange

ACADEMIC YEAR PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The Tokyo-Keio, Japan program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in conjunction with Keio University. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbooks or materials you receive from Keio University as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to IAP at UW-Madison.

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Contact Information

ON-SITE PROGRAM INFORMATION

Your primary contact will be:

International Center
Keio University
2-15-45 Mita, Minato-ku
Tokyo 108-8345
Japan
ic-student@adst.keio.ac.jp

UW-MADISON INFORMATION

International Academic Programs (IAP)
University of Wisconsin-Madison
106 Red Gym, 716 Langdon St.
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: 608-265-6329 Fax: 608-262-6998
Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency, contact your on-site staff first using the emergency contact information provided on-site. For IAP emergency contact, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff member on call at (608) 516-9440. If you call the main IAP number after hours, the message will direct you to call the emergency number, so it’s a good place to start if you’re not sure about the time difference.

U.S. EMBASSY REGISTRATION

All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register on-line at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.
Program Dates

**Semester 2 (Autumn)**
- Classes Begin: Early October
- Winter Recess: Late December - Early January
- Final Examinations: Late January - Early February
- Spring Vacation: Early February - Late March

**Semester 1 (Spring)**
- Classes: Early April - Late July
- Final Examinations: Late July

Students will receive more specific dates from Keio University closer to the start of the program.

Preparation Before Leaving

**IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS**

**Passport:** A passport is needed to travel to Japan and to obtain your visa. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one. Passport information and application materials can be found on the U.S. State Department website. If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

**Visa:** In addition to your valid passport, you must have a student visa to enter Japan. A Certificate of Eligibility for the status of resident College Student is required to obtain a student visa and must come directly from the Japanese host university. The Certificate will be mailed to you during the summer prior to the program. You will need to present the Certificate along with your passport and visa application to the nearest Japanese Consulate. More information about this is available in the Travel & Visa section of your MyStudyAbroad account.

**HANDLING MONEY ABROAD**

The official currency of Japan is the yen (JPY or ¥). When you arrive in Japan, be sure to have adequate funds to cover your first month’s rent, pay for transportation expenses, purchase furnishings and other necessities for your room, and any other expenses that may arise. You will want to have approximately $1000 available to you for the first several weeks. You may wish to bring a small amount in cash and the rest in traveler’s checks, which you may cash upon arrival. While you will likely not spend all your arrival funds, keeping your money in traveler’s checks will safeguard against emergencies, and cash flow will be especially important in the first weeks as you get accustomed to the higher costs of living.
Banks: Unlike the United States, personal checks are not used in Japan; it is very common to do all of your banking and money transactions using cash or inter-bank transfers. To facilitate your access to money, it is recommended that you open a bank account as soon as you complete your Alien Registration (gaikokujin toroku) at your residential ward office (kuyakusho) (staff from the International Student Center can assist you).

To fund your new account, consider a wire transfer, cash, traveler’s checks, or international postal money order. International postal money orders may be purchased at certain U.S. post offices for a small fee (approximately $5) and can be cashed at any post office in Japan (cashing at a bank can take up to one month). After you open account, note that your statements and all transactions will most likely be in Japanese (CitiBank offers statements in English and as well as bank employees that speak English).

Banks in Japan are open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Post offices also offer many banking services, including cashing of International Postal Money Orders, access to ATMs, and acceptance of payments for phone, insurance, and utility bills. Post-Banks do not require any initial deposit, and do not have any minimum amount that must remain in your account. There is also no required length of the time and the account can be closed very easily, thus they are a very convenient option.

Postal Savings www.yu-cho.japanpost.jp
UFJ www.bk.mufg.jp
Mizuho www.mizuhobank.co.jp
Sumitomo Mitsui www.smbc.co.jp

Traveler’s Checks: Traveler’s checks in U.S. dollars and other denominations can be exchanged for yen at most banks with exchange services and at major hotels and department stores throughout Japan (a passport is required). CitiBank and American Express traveler’s checks are the most widely accepted.

ATM/Debit cards: If you open a Japanese bank account, a cash card for automatic teller machines will be issued to you by mail free of charge. You may withdraw yen using your cash card at any ATM run by your bank. If you use another bank’s ATM or withdraw outside of peak hours, there is a service charge of approximately ¥105. Most ATMs are open until 9:00 p.m., except on Saturdays and Sundays when many of them are closed after 5:00 p.m. Convenience stores have ATMs which support most major bank cash cards, and many have begun offering 24 hour services. There is a ¥210 service charge for weekends and holidays.

To withdraw yen using your U.S. ATM/debit card, consider visiting a Japanese post office, as ATM machines in Japanese banks accept only cards issued by Japanese banks while post offices will accept foreign bankcards operating on the Cirrus (MasterCard) or PLUS (Visa) systems. Seven Eleven ATMs also accept foreign debit cards. Machines are available only during limited hours (depending on the bank, until 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. weekdays and up to 5:00 p.m. on weekends). Besides post offices, other places with ATMs that may accept foreign-issued cards include Citibank (which usually accepts both Visa and MasterCard and sometimes American Express as well), large department stores, and airports.

Credit cards: Japan is primarily a cash-based society, with most establishments not accepting credit cards for purchases. Credit cards may be used for obtaining cash and paying for accommodations, meals
at expensive restaurants, train or air tickets, and major purchases. The most readily accepted cards are MasterCard (also called Eurocard), Visa, and the Japanese credit card JCB (Japan Credit Bank). Train passes can now be used as payment at many department stores and convenience stores. This is another way to carry money around without having to carry bills and coins.

PACKING
While most things are readily available in Japan, some items may be more expensive, difficult to be mailed internationally, or simply inconvenient to purchase there; hence, you may wish to bring particular items with you from home. Recommendations include:

**Passport-size photos:** 2 extra passport-size photos (for ID cards, forms, and applications)

**Clothes:** Temperatures in Tokyo can range from about 10 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to 100 and humid in the summer. Hence, a wide range of clothing sufficient for the entire year is necessary:

- Comfortable shoes – you will do a lot of walking.
- For men, semi-dress pants like cotton khakis.
- Women should make sure they have at least one dress or skirt.
- Collared long sleeve shirts are useful. You can wear them under sweaters in the winter and roll the sleeves up during autumn and spring.
- Jeans for casual wear.
- Shorts (comfortable to wear at home in the summer, but are seldom worn by Japanese students to school).
- Rain jacket/rain boots – Japan has a rainy season. Some past participants have found these helpful.
- Some club sports and extracurricular organizations may have events where you are required to wear a black suit.

**Personal Items:**

- Deodorant (it is difficult to purchase U.S.-style anti-perspirant in Japan)
- Sheets/pillow (if your dorm does not provide them)
- Any over-the-counter medicines you think you may need. While it is possible to get Japanese brands of over-the-counter medicines, if there is something you are accustomed to using often (pain relievers, cold medication, etc) you may wish to bring it with you.
- Contact lens solutions in Japan differ from American brands and American brands can be difficult to find, so you might want to bring your preferred brand.

**Prescription Medications:** A one-month supply of prescription medication is allowed. Medications must be in their original container with the prescription label. Most prescription drugs are permitted, including drugs that may not be available in Japan, such as birth control pills. Drugs that are hallucinogenic, narcotic, and/or psychotrophic in nature will be confiscated, except in extenuating circumstances where prior approval has been obtained from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. If more than one month's supply is required, prior permission from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare in Japan is required:
Be sure to have a copy of the prescription and/or letter from your prescribing physician explaining the nature of the medication, the purpose of taking it, recommended dosage, and frequency of ingestion.

Past participants have also had prescription medications sent to them via air mail. Check with your local post office and pharmacy for information about regulations.

**Travel and Arrival**

You are responsible for arranging your own transportation to Tokyo. The major airport near Tokyo is Narita International Airport (NRT) [www.narita-airport.jp](http://www.narita-airport.jp).

**Transportation from Narita into Tokyo:**

Narita airport is located about 35 miles outside of Tokyo and there are several options for transportation with ranging costs and times:

**By Taxi:** Taxi rides are quite expensive in Japan. While taxis can be convenient, the ride from Narita airport into Tokyo has costs as high as 20,000 yen and the drive takes between an hour and a half to two hours or longer depending on the traffic situation.

**By Bus:** Buses run regularly from the airport to various stations and hotels in the Tokyo area. The Airport Limousine Bus Service is a popular choice and tickets can be bought at the airport terminals after your arrival. The buses run from every hour to up to 3 or 4 times an hour and the costs is about 3,000 yen. The buses pick passengers and their baggage up outside of terminal one and terminal two and the rides varies from an hour and a half to two hours depending on the destination and on traffic.

**By Train:** There are varying degrees of local and express trains from Narita into Tokyo. Via local train, the ride starts at around 90 minutes and the costs vary depending on the type of train. However, there is no luggage rack on the train and no seat reservations so you may end up standing in a crowded train. To avoid this there are two specialty trains running from Narita into Tokyo;

- **Narita Express (East Japan Railways):** The Narita express train runs from Terminal one and Terminal two of Narita airport and stops in various stations within Tokyo including Tokyo station and Shinjuku station. The cost is about 3,000 yen and the ride takes about an hour. There are luggage racks in each train car and train tickets can be purchased in advance.

  Narita Express: [https://www.jreast.co.jp/e/nex/index.html](https://www.jreast.co.jp/e/nex/index.html)

- **Keisei Skyliner (Keisei Railways):** The Skyliner departs from Terminal one and Terminal two of Narita airport and reaches Ueno Station a short 40 minutes later with one stop at Nippori station. The cost is about 2,000 yen. There is an area on each train car to place luggage bags and tickets can be purchased in advance or after you arrive at the airport.
Baggage Delivery Service (takkyubin): If you are traveling with multiple large suitcases or simply don’t want to have to worry about your luggage, there are many baggage delivery services available. You can bring your bag(s) to one of the baggage service counters in the airport and they will deliver your bag to your destination. The cost per piece of luggage depends on the size and the destination, with costs from 2,000 to 4,000 yen. It is usually next day delivery so you might want to keep some necessities and a change of clothes with you. These same services also do baggage pick-up for when the time come to return to the airport. Baggage can also be dropped off at many convenience stores across Japan and be picked up from a counter in Narita Airport.

The Academic Program

KEIO UNIVERSITY

Keio University has a proud history as Japan's very first private institution of higher learning, which dates back to the formation of a school for Dutch studies in 1858 in Edo (now Tokyo) by founder Yukichi Fukuzawa. It has now grown to include an elementary school, three junior high schools, five senior high schools, the university, one professional school, one junior college, and other research institutions. Keio University has a student body of more than 11,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Keio University boasts numerous renowned alumni including former Prime Ministers Junichiro Koizumi and Ryutaro Hashimoto.

Keio University has five campuses in Tokyo and the neighboring Kanagawa Prefecture. Mita Campus, the main campus, is home to all of the historic buildings of the original university with its rich history. Students in Letters, Business & Commerce, Economics, and Law faculties attend classes at this campus. All Japanese language courses and other courses for international students are also held on Mita Campus. Mita is the location of the annual student-organized Mita Festival in November which is one of the most popular university festivals in Japan. Mita is located in downtown Tokyo a short walk from Tamachi station on the central Yamanote line. The campus is within walking distance of popular destinations such as Tokyo Tower and the Roppongi district.

Keio University  [www.ic.keio.ac.jp](http://www.ic.keio.ac.jp)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The International Center functions as the central international affairs office for the entire university and the administrative office for international-related student affairs. Its main functions involve:

1. Admissions for exchange students and Japanese Language Program students
2. Scholarships for international students and Japanese students studying abroad
3. Student exchange programs and short-term study abroad program
4. Medical insurance for international students
5. Registry for International Studies and Japanese Studies courses
6. Registry for Japanese education in conjunction with the Center for Japanese Studies (Japanese Language Program and Teaching Japanese as a Second Language)
The International Center’s two branch offices are located on Hiyoshi campus and Yagami campus.

Keio University International Center [www.ic.keio.ac.jp](http://www.ic.keio.ac.jp)

**ORIENTATION**
You will attend an orientation hosted by the International Center. At the orientation you will receive information regarding registration, the university libraries, computer access, life in Japan, counseling, housing, immigration procedures, insurance policies and other practical matters.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Courses:** Students will participate in the full-time Japanese Language Program offered through Keio University’s Center for Japanese Studies. Designed for students who wish to study Japanese language intensively, this program offers courses in Japanese Language as well as courses in Japanese Studies taught in English.

The curriculum is designed to assist students in attaining the high level of Japanese proficiency required for research and other academic activities in specialized disciplines. There are three different types of courses offered on the program:

**Japanese Language Subjects:**
The following subjects are offered for the relevant study levels.
Grammar, Composition, Orthography, Modern Text Reading, Newspaper Reading, Conversation, Presentation, Aural Comprehension, Comprehensive Japanese, Applied Composition, and Situational Conversation

Keio University Center for Japanese Studies [http://www.cjs.keio.ac.jp/?page=24](http://www.cjs.keio.ac.jp/?page=24)

**Japanese Studies on Society and Culture:**
These are the subjects to deepen the students’ understanding of Japanese Culture. Classes are conducted solely in Japanese.

Japanese Social Studies (Linguistics, History, Economics, Law & Politics)
Japanese Cultural Studies(Traditional culture, Japanese painting, Japanese animation and TV game)

**Optional Subjects:**
International Center Courses conducted in English by Keio International Center are available as Optional Subjects. The subjects to be offered can be found on the Keio International Center’s web site.

Together, the varied courses are designed to enable students to compose a course of study that suits their particular academic needs and interests.

**Other University Courses:** Students who fulfill the designated requirements may also take up to 2 subjects taught in Japanese (for a total of up to 4 credits) offered under Keio University’s regular undergraduate and graduate programs each semester. However, as it requires a high level of Japanese
language ability to take subjects conducted in Japanese, please decide to register these subjects after careful consideration. The ability to register in regular subjects taught in Japanese will depend on a student’s performance on the Japanese placement examination.

**Equivalents and Course Equivalent Request Form (CER):** Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison “equivalent” course in order for your grades and credits to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit a Course Equivalent Request (CER). Detailed information on the UW course equivalent process is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and in your MyStudyAbroad account.

Please note that every course you take abroad must be awarded an equivalent UW course. There are no exceptions. It is important to start the equivalent process as soon as possible to avoid any delay in posting your study abroad courses to your UW Madison transcript.

For Japanese language courses, you will receive credits for the next course(s) in the UW-Madison Japanese language sequence. Japanese literature classes may be grouped together to form one UW-Madison course equivalent. These course equivalent determinations are made by the Department of East Asian Languages & Literature in consultation with IAP. Courses that are not Japanese language or literature will be reviewed by the appropriate UW-Madison academic department to approve the course equivalent.

**CREDITS**

**Conversions:** The number of credits you receive for a given course at Keio University will convert to the same number of credits at UW-Madison. For example, 8 credits of Japanese Language will convert to 8 credits at UW-Madison.

**Limits and Load:** UW-Madison students are required to be registered for a minimum of 12 credits each semester.

**PASS/FAIL/DROP/AUDIT**

Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for Academic Policies.

**GRADES AND GRADE CONVERSIONS**

Grades will be converted according to the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keio University Grade</th>
<th>UW-Madison Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (80-100 pts)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (70-79 pts)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (60-69 pts)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (0-59 pts)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* no grade reported</td>
<td>F</td>
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Living Abroad

JAPAN
Japan is an archipelago comprised of four main islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu, although thousands of smaller islands occupy the surrounding water. Its climate is temperate, with four seasons, resembling the East Coast. Unlike the East Coast, however, it rains between 40 and 120 inches a year, contributing to Japan's long growing season from early spring to early autumn. Steep hills and mountains cover over 70% of the land which divide the habitable parts of the country. Due to this, Japan is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with a population of over 120 million people.

Japan has few natural resources, apart from some wood, fish and rivers for hydroelectric power. Unlike most industrialized nations, Japan is almost completely dependent on imports for its raw materials and is one of the world's major importers of oil, coal, iron ore, lumber, cotton, wool and even silk. And even though its farms are among the most productive in the world, Japan still imports much of its wheat and other foods. Nevertheless, no other country in the world with so few natural resources has achieved the level of economic success that Japan has. After World War II, the Japanese people built their country from virtual devastation to a leading economic power. Textile manufacturing was its first success, then shipbuilding. Today, the automobile industry is key, as well as its advancements in a variety of technological industries.

The government in Japan is democratic with a constitution that guarantees representation and individual rights. Japan has one of the world's oldest unbroken monarchies with an emperor that, while possessing no governmental power, continues to perform many state functions.

While most Japanese people do not practice religion on a regular basis, Japan has been influenced by two major religions: Shinto and Buddhism. The basic Shinto belief is that people should live in harmony with all living things. Shinto established a set of ethics that guide the relationships between human beings and nature, and between the individual and society. Buddhism taught that salvation was possible by purging oneself of personal desires and attachment to worldly things. In practice, millions of Japanese are both Shinto and Buddhist, for example, using Shinto rites when they marry and Buddhist funeral rites when they die. The two beliefs are not incompatible. In everyday life, also, the Japanese perspective on morality and ethics has been influenced by Confucianism, which is not a religion but a philosophy of personal behavior. Most Japanese do not consider themselves to be Confucianists, but its concepts of a rational approach to life and society strongly influence the culture.

TOKYO
About 10% of Japanese people live in Japan's three major cities: Tokyo, Yokohama and Osaka. Located on the largest island of Honshu, Tokyo has over 30 million people living in and around the metropolitan area. Not surprisingly, Tokyo is densely packed and is broken down into 23 administrative wards, known as ku, which can be difficult for non-natives to understand. You should prepare yourself for life in a large city, with long commutes, extremely crowded conditions, very high costs, and plenty of concrete. Given that land and apartments in the center of Tokyo are so expensive, it is not unusual for commuters to spend 2 to 3 hours a day traveling to and from work on the city's trains and subways. Tokyo enjoys a relatively mild winter with low humidity and occasional snow, in contrast to high temperatures and humidity in the summer months.
HOUSING

The International Center at Keio University assists exchange students with securing housing in Tokyo. As there are no university dormitories at Keio University, students may request accommodation in one of several off-campus housing facilities located within 1 hour commute time from Mita and Hiyoshi campuses.

A number of rooms are allocated exclusively for exchange students on a first-come, first-serve basis in facilities such as Willing Setagaya, Plume IS, Hiyoshi International House, Tokyo International Exchange Center and Sunrise Tode (male only). Rooms are furnished with basic furniture such as a bed and desk, and most rooms have a private kitchen, bath and shower. There is also a washing machine either in the apartment or a laundry room available to residents. A telephone line and internet access is available in each room.

Students will specify housing preferences after receiving their acceptance materials from Keio University. Popular locations go quickly so past participants recommend that students respond to housing preference requests immediately after receipt in order to ensure that they receive their first or second choice. Past participants have commented that subsidized housing is by far the most convenient and easiest form of housing. Students headed to Keio will be prompted at a point in the pre-departure process to apply for housing online. The housing application to Keio must be completed in this window to ensure full consideration for housing.

Meals: Past participants have eaten a great percentage of their meals at campus cafeterias. There are two student cafeterias with meals ranging from ¥500-1000. The cafeterias offer a variety of food whose quality and price is usually preferred over eating off campus. Meals in restaurants typically run from ¥800 for a cheap meal to ¥1500 or more at nicer restaurants.

STUDENT LIFE

Club Activities: For information on clubs you can visit the KOSMIC (Keio Organization of Student Member of the International Center) office. The students there organize events for international students and will also help you find conversation partners. They are a good resource for learning more about Keio University. A past participant has indicated that you may not always receive a very warm welcome when you first attend because foreign students have the reputation of not completely committing to the clubs. Once you show that your interest is genuine, attitudes will change completely. Many clubs meet at the Hiyoshi campus or other off campus locations which may be inconvenient (or expensive for traveling), depending on where you live.

Social Life: Coffee shops, family restaurants, and bars are nice places to meet with friends. The biggest drawback, however, is that they are quite expensive by U.S. standards. Also be careful when you go out for just a drink, because many bars will require you to eat something along with your drink order, and some may ask for a "table charge". Nightclubs are more expensive than regular bars, so they are seldom frequented by college students except for special occasions and dates. Cover charges are around ¥1000 per person, and you are often expected to order a steady stream of drinks and food for as long as you
remain there. At other clubs, you may pay ¥5000 to ¥10,000 to get in the door, but are treated to a gourmet dinner and open bar while the band performs. It is frequently the custom that the bill is divided equally among everyone, regardless of who ordered what. Thus, a person who ordered only an iced tea winds up being socially pressured into paying his or her share of a bill when others were drinking beer. Many people do not like this custom, but it is considered impolite to not pay an equal share of the bill.

SHOPPING
Most stores are open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with most convenience stores open 24 hours. Past participants recommend ¥100 Shops for buying things you may need for your dorm, including cheap snacks and drinks. For clothes, past participants recommend Gap and UNIQLO.

TRANSPORTATION
Students typically use trains or buses. Students can purchase a train pass teikiken for one, three or six month periods, with six-month passes being the most economical. To receive the student discount, be sure to show your Japanese university I.D. card, gakuseisho, when you go to purchase the train pass. Ask your host family or dorm counselors which type of pass is best to buy given your housing location.

Taxis are very expensive. It costs about ¥650-700 just to get into one, and then the meter goes up exponentially as distance is covered. There are also “night rates” so be careful when taking taxis late at night.

SAFETY
Crimes are uncommon, and those that do occur usually involve petty theft or vandalism. However, as in any new situation, it is better to be somewhat conservative until you are more familiar with the city. Common sense is the best way to avoid bad situations. Women should be aware of safety issues, especially on trains, and might want to utilize options such as the women’s-only train car. Report any crimes immediately to the local police box (koban). Students should be sure to carry their residency card on them at all times.

HEALTH
Medical consultation and first aid treatment are available at the Keio University Health Center. A Certificate of Health can be issued at the Health Center if a student receives a regular medical examination. Referrals to the Keio University Hospital or other hospitals will be made when needed. There are fees for medical treatment and drugs prescribed at the Health Center that are not covered by the National Health Insurance.

Insurance: You are required to join the Japanese National Health Insurance. The rate varies by residential ward, but is relatively low (¥1,300-3,000/month). Most ordinary medical treatments (including dental) are covered by the National Health Insurance.

Full-time international students can also apply for Student Medical Care Assistance (provided by the Japan Student Service Organization). You only need to apply for this after receiving medical care. Forms
are available in the International Center. Utilizing these two types of assistance, you can cover a majority of medical fees.

Japanese health facilities will generally not accept foreign insurance policies in lieu of payment. Be prepared to pay all fees for treatment and hospitalization in cash immediately after services are rendered. You will then have to submit the required documents for reimbursement to CISI.

**Student Testimonials**

The quotes below are comments from past participants; they reflect various students' experiences and are included to provide different perspectives. IAP does not endorse any specific view expressed in this section.

**HANDLING MONEY ABROAD**

Japan has a lack of foreign ATMs, so I’d really recommend opening a bank account in Japan. The Post Office ATMs are virtually the only machines that accept foreign cards. On top of that, their hours are very limited on weekends and the ATMs are CLOSED on holidays, the very times you’ll need money the most. Also, be sure to keep a good chunk of cash on you at all times. Most places do not accept credit cards, and you don’t want to find yourself stuck. It’s relatively safe to carry a lot of money on you.

**PACKING**

If you’re intending on leaving during the summer, take those summer clothes you feel you will need, and send your winter clothes later on. Take a fall jacket and some long sleeve shirts just in case, but leave your sweaters and winter coat for a later package. At the same time...for guys at least... you don’t need to take as many clothes as you might otherwise think.

Bring DVDs and English novels. You may not think you need them, but one night when you’re bored and missing home you will be thankful you brought them! I ended up lending out DVDs and books to a lot of my friends. Everyone appreciates the familiar TV shows and movies.

Bring enough shoes and clothes for the whole year, especially if you are not petite. Japanese women’s shoes only go up to size 25 (US 8) so you may not be able to find any. UNIQLO and GAP are the cheapest places to shop and offer a wider range of sizes than some other stores, but be aware that sizes run smaller than in the US.

If you don’t have a suit, you might want to think about getting one. I ended up needing one for several dorm and club events, for job interviews, and at my part time job as an English teacher.

It’s good to have a few small gifts for teachers who help you out a lot, but don’t overload yourself with little trinkets and gifts or you will end up scrambling to find people to give them to before you go home. WI T-shirts make great gifts because they are cheap, light, and American university apparel is popular in Japan.
COURSES
It's a lot easier than at UW. Classes only meet once a week and there is rarely much homework for the electives. There are tests frequently in the Japanese language courses, but if you study and keep up they aren’t too hard.

Take the Japanese Studies courses! They are all in English and give you a break from concentrating in Japanese all the time. You get a chance to relax and discuss things and you will really appreciate getting to write something in English.

If you are eligible to take a regular university course be warned! The registration process is extremely complicated. You must get signatures from the professors, fill out several forms, and then get them approved. Check with the International Center when you are looking for classes. You can only take certain ones and you will be forced to scramble for classes if you find out your choices were not approved. Triple check everything during registration week.

STUDENT LIFE
Joining a student club is a great way to meet Japanese students who share your interests. It's also an excellent opportunity to practice your Japanese. While not all clubs place an emphasis on drinking, many do. Just ask around about clubs' reputations before expressing too strong an interest in joining a particular one. Go to your first club activity saying your study schedule is very hectic and you're worried about being able to participate fully in all social activities. It's always better to be suddenly able to take part in more activities than you thought you could, than to lose face by having to back out of something after you've already committed yourself.

Japan is expensive, but it is easy to live frugally. Family restaurants and the cafeterias at Keio are the cheapest places to eat. You can do a lot of shopping for everyday things in the ¥100 shops (there’s one in Harajuku and smaller ones all over). Shop at used book stores (Book Off, etc).

Clubs are really expensive, and some require you to have a drink in your hand at all times. Izakayas are fun to eat and drink at, and you can find all you can drink, nomihoudai, or all you can eat, tabehoudai, specials at lots of places. Utilize this, it will save you money. Karaoke is really fun, even if you are not a professional singer. They have a wide selection of Western songs, including some of the newest hits, and its fun to sing Japanese songs too.

The best way to meet Japanese students is by taking some of the Japanese Studies courses that are taught in English. The Japanese students in these classes often have international experience and are excited to meet people from other countries.

If you want to join a club, ask about them in KOSMIC. A lot of the clubs meet at Hiyoshi or other locations and may have demanding schedules. Try to find one that works for you and research it thoroughly.

While club activities at Japanese universities can be very exciting and fun and a great way to make friends and meet new people, they take their club activities very, very seriously, and at times this can get in the way of studies. The key is balance!
Don’t shrug off friendships with other international students. They are valuable friends and understand your frustrations. Welcome the new international students second semester – remember how lost you felt!

If you go out with large groups of Japanese people, be aware they often split the bill evenly no matter who got what. Sometimes they will take notice of someone who didn’t really eat or drink much and offer to pay that person’s share. This happened to me a lot because I do not drink and can’t eat seafood.

When you go out to eat, it is easy to get separate checks and you don’t have to tip. Don’t be surprised, however, if there is a ¥300 table/service charge.

Family restaurants (Skylark, Saizeriya, Jonathan’s) are the best places to hang out for very little money. The food may not be great, but you can stay as long as you like and enjoy the cheap (¥200) drink bar.

SHOPPING
School items -- notebooks, folders, paper, pens, etc. -- can be purchased most cheaply at the Keio University Student Co-op located on campus.

TRANSPORTATION
The best way to get around the city is on JR, and make sure to get a PASSMO or SUICA card. These cards will work for all lines, including private ones, and they will deduct from your account every time you ride the train. They are a great convenience, especially if you are running late for a curfew.

SAFETY
Personally, I did not have many issues. Occasionally, I was stared at on the train but it was not overt. Beware of sexual offenders, or “chikan,” on the crowded trains. They have no shame and will get uncomfortably close to you. Position yourself against a wall near the doors and keep a bag in front of you. This will create a buffer between you and any shady characters.

TRAVEL
Utilize your two month Spring break for travel! The shinkansen is pretty expensive, but worth riding at least once. For a cheaper option try the night bus. While the seats are not made for foreign people, it will cost you $100 round trip to Kyoto. Tokyo also has a lot of tourist places, under an hour away. Try to see Kamakura, Hakone, and Nikko. Also, Tokyo is a great location to be if you want to travel around Asia. Airline tickets will be a couple $100 and Tokyo has an STA office. My recommendation is Thailand!

It’s a lot of fun to just get on the trains and see where you end up. Ride to the end of a line you use every day and see what there is to do there.

Climbing Mount Fuji was amazing. There is a limited time frame in which this can be done beginning in late June, so plan ahead. Also, it is very cold at the top, so dress appropriately!
Some people went to China and Australia. You HAVE to get a reentry visa! This is extremely important and takes some time to arrange. Plan ahead!

[www.hyperdia.com](http://www.hyperdia.com). Get travel itineraries to and from anywhere in Japan, great when you want to go somewhere new!

**EMPLOYMENT**

The best part-time job for exchange students is private English teacher. [www.senseisagasu.net](http://www.senseisagasu.net) is a good resource for finding students. Making connections will also help you find a job. NOVA is one other good option that pays well. Personally, I used Japanese a lot when I taught English and afterwards we would converse in Japanese. This is not the case for most students, so don’t expect it.

A student visa includes 20 hours of work. Students are not allowed to work in bars. Working is a great way to make money, and was a positive aspect for me.

The International Center bulletin board often has flyers about other jobs that are available in the area.