

SEP 23 2013

IP&E Program Evaluation

Name:

Program location: Tokyo, Japan; Keio University Fall Semester (Sept. 2012-Jan 2013)

Phone:

E-mail:

1. Arrival Overseas/On-site Orientation: I was able to move directly into the dorms after getting off of my flight. The arrival was fairly straightforward, and transportation options (trains, etc.) were very easy to access. My program had an orientation, one for all exchange students during fall quarter, and a separate one for my specific program (KIP). It covered everything from tuition to housing to registration. The orientation was very thorough, although somewhat long.
2. Academics: I took regular classes in Japanese with regular Keio students. Although I had heard the Japanese university system is a joke, it was much more drastic than I had expected. Most students never attend class, and one even had 600 students registered, held in a classroom that fit only 100 students, but less than 50 students showed up to each class. Instruction for the classes was purely lecture, and exams were a one-shot deal. No textbooks were involved, and no homework was assigned. The grading was too easy, I received six A's and one B. Most of the students are only motivated to pass the class with a C, so getting a high score on the curve is not difficult. Classrooms were somewhat old, as well as the computer facilities but the library was very nice and easy to study in. I was not too impressed by the cafeteria, and opted to bring my own lunch instead but the prices were very reasonable.

I feel the content of instruction was good, but not so much the effort to make students learn. The Japanese system lacks opportunities to test your knowledge, and this was somewhat of a culture shock. Although I cannot specifically take it upon myself to recommend courses, I found that depending on what your goal is it is best to ask the locals as to what would be the best schedule for you. I asked most of my friends I had made at UW that went to Keio what classes would be best for my marketing major back at UW, and they gave me many recommendations. I believe my study abroad coursework was valuable to my UW education because I was able to study a lot about business, but from a Japanese perspective and in the Japanese market (since I will be working in Japan in the future).

Were I to recommend one thing, it would be to join a seminar. These are study group type of classes, and you can use your independent study course to register for this if you find a teacher willing to take you. These can cover from economics to law. I joined a marketing consumer behavior seminar, and made some of the best friends I met in Japan. They gave me the best class advice, helped me when it came down to studying for tests, and best of all it kept me from sticking to hanging out with only English-speakers or people who wanted to be around English speakers (such as Japanese people studying English). Being in an all-Japanese environment is necessary to improve your language skills.

3. Housing: The housing situation was a joke as well. You are basically given no choice but to live in the old and super-overpriced dorms, which are far from Mita Campus. If you are going to live in Japan for a year I would recommend finding your own housing. Even if you don't plan to be there for a year, find a share-house for foreigners, because it will save you money, allow you to be closer to school, and keep you away from other foreigners. I was deceived into thinking dorms were the only option, so I signed up for the apartment-style dorm called Plume IS (costing about \$800 per month at the time, not including processing fees).
4. Program/Exchange Site: The campus was beautiful but old, and apparently they had a disaster in financing which caused the school to lose lots of money and thus cause the inability to remodel. However it does what it needs to, and is located in a very convenient part of Tokyo. I had no complaints about the campus.
5. Health and safety: I honestly had no medical fiascos, nor did I find any problem with safety. Japan is a very safe country, and I had absolutely no worries about my safety.
6. Cultural Aspects: As I mentioned before, if you stick to the English-speaking community (as most people do) you will not be able to integrate into the culture and waste your time in Japan. My seminar was the thing that saved me from this. I know many others joined a club called KOSMOS, which is the next best thing to getting out of the English-speaking community because it encourages Japanese students to mingle with the international students. As for cultural differences, I did not experience any challenges aside from the shock that nobody went to class.
7. Financial: My access to money was through withdrawing from the Japanese postal service. They have an ATM service which I used to take money out of my American debit card. I know others used methods such as CitiBank and even direct transfers to their Japanese bank account but I find postal service rates are the best. I spend about \$2000 per month on average, including housing/cellphone/food/etc. I did not

expect transportation costs to be so high so this is something to look out for. I did not use Financial Aid for funding.

8. Program/Exchange Administration: The IP&E services were perfect, and I did not run into any troubles. The entire process was very easy and somewhat painless.
9. Program/Student Type: I know that there are two types of students that join this program: one is the type who wants to take regular classes, and the other is to take Japanese language classes/classes in English. Although I did not do the latter, I was very happy with taking regular classes to get to know the real side of Japanese Universities. I would recommend this to someone which has a high level of independence and is willing to make mistakes. This is not an easy path to take, so to make the best of your experience you must take a lot of initiative. Also, I would recommend a medium to high level of Japanese proficiency (although they do test you anyway).
10. Overall Experience: My expectations were very realistic. I was specifically looking to create an experience that would allow me to interact with real Japanese students in a regular environment. I did this academically and personally, first by taking only regular classes, and secondly by being very involved in the Japanese community. I expected this to be somewhat difficult because most foreign students are unable to enter into the society, but with lots of effort and being very driven, I was able to make this happen. The most important thing was to give myself chances to push myself to make new friends, and by joining a seminar I was able to do this. The academic experience was just as fulfilling as the personal one, and I believe were I to study abroad again I would participate in as many extra-curricular activities as possible.

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IPF Program Evaluation

Direct Exchange with Keio University (Tokyo, Japan)
UW 2009-2010 School Year (Year-long Program)
Keio Autumn Semester 2009 and Spring Semester 2010

1. Arrival Overseas/On-site Orientation

- A. **Arrival:** There are a couple of options for accommodations upon arrival, as the date for move-in in your residence may not always match up with your arrival date. Staying with friends is an option if you know people (although due to the limited space of Japanese apartments and many other possible factors, this may not always be available). If not, I would actually recommend a youth hostel because most of them have staff that speak English; hostels are also very economical, accommodating and helpful. Wherever your first destination is into Tokyo, I would recommend getting very clear directions because streets in Tokyo are often unnamed, unlabeled, and hard to navigate (try google maps street view). Also, if you know the station names of your departure and arrival locations, use www.yahoo.co.jp to look up train routes.
- B. **Orientation:** Keio's orientation included information on the placement test, scholarships, course selection (requirements, minimums, etc.), visa information (if you plan on leaving the country during the year, how to get a re-entry permit; work permit), common cultural differences, tips for making most of you time, introductions to local clubs/organizations dedicated to helping foreign students, self-introductions, etc. It was helpful to know about the visa information because many people travel outside the country during the study abroad as well as get part-time jobs.

2. Academics

- A. **Classroom structure:** The classes at Keio are about 20 to a classroom for language classes and increase for lecture courses. Schedules and the types of classes are different depending what program you are in.

Instruction: Japanese Language Program (JLP): There are two course routes a student can take in JLP: the Comprehensive Course and the Alternative Course. The only difference between the courses is whether or not you are enrolled in the "core classes" for your level. Core classes meet 3 times a week (since Saturday is a school day in Japan, this might include Saturday) for 2 periods at a time (one period is 1.5 hours; crossing time is 15 minutes, but Mita campus is very small). You are enrolled into core classes as a part of the Comprehensive Course and the core classes develop the essentials: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Some levels involve a good portion of listening to an audio recording of the text, analyzing the structure, then reciting the portion from memory. It is not the most enjoyable way to study language, but it is very effective in learning correct ways to use grammar and structure. The rest of your schedule is made up of other language classes (focused on developing specific skills), courses taught in English, and a small selection of subject classes taught in Japanese. The option to enroll/audit classes for local students is also available for students in level 8 or above (but recommended for students in level 10 or

above). If you choose the Alternative Course, you are not enrolled in the core classes and must take enough other courses to fill your schedule.

Keio International Program (KIP): KIP students have the same access to courses as JLP students, except they do not have the option to take the core classes, although the majority of their classes are usually made up of subject/content courses taught in English. The teaching style in English classes is similar to UW in that they are lectures with discussions and sometimes group projects.

Teacher/student relations: Like at any school, there are teachers that are easy to get along with and teachers that are not. The teachers I met were really nice, experienced in helping students from abroad, and are really dedicated to helping you improve your Japanese skills.

Grading/exams: It is easy to be successful in the program in the sense that if you follow the curriculum and do the work, you will gain the skills they test you for. In most language classes there are daily assignments and regular quizzes. The grading is firm but fair, and in some cases pretty strict, but for your final grade they really look at effort and improvement so there is no need to fret if your grades are not perfect. Same thing goes with tests/exams-again, they only test for what they prepare you for. Non-core classes only meet once a week, which means you have to take a considerable amount more classes than at UW. In exchange, the work load for each class is of course significantly smaller. Because of your student visa, you are required by law to fulfill a certain amount of credits per semester to stay in the country. Core classes take up a big portion of credits; the selection of other classes is sufficient, but it is difficult doing 2 non-core class semesters without running out of other language classes. Also, if you are going to Keio with a desire to improve your language skills, enrollment in the comprehensive course is strongly recommended.

Administration: The office staff are helpful and there is always someone who speaks English. However, if you want to explore anything outside of the set curriculum (i.e. courses with local students not in English), they will give you all the necessary paper work but you will have to do your own research.

Library, computer, and classroom facilities: The libraries are much smaller than UW and there are less of them. Computer labs also fill up very quickly and there are often lines during the school day. Some computers are standing only. That said, your computer usage at school will probably be significantly less than at UW.

- B. **Quality and content of instruction:** see above
 - C. **Recommended courses/instructors:** I recommend the Japanese Tea Ceremony class with Professor Kudeira because you really get a taste of Japanese culture that is hard to come by anywhere else, even in Japan.
 - D. **Related coursework:** Because I am a Japanese major, all language classes were directly applicable and all other classes supplemented relevant knowledge.
3. Housing
- A. **Housing options:** There are dorms, homestays, share houses, and apartments.

- B. **My housing:** Due to various circumstances, I did 2 homestays, an apartment, and a share house. I first did homestays because I wanted to be fully immersed in Japanese at all times. But when it proved to be too financially taxing, I moved into an apartment managed by a company that specifically serves foreigners. I then moved into a share house because my roommate left and I could not afford the apartment on my own.
 - C. **Recommendations:** If you want to stay out late or go out a lot I would not recommend a homestay because they often have curfews and are often further away from the city. If you want to really get a look inside the Japanese family I would recommend a homestay, just do not do it through JTB because they charge ridiculous fees that are unfair to both the student and the host family. I would recommend dorms if you want to hang out in all the popular places and want to be with people with the same interests. Share houses and apartments are nice if you can navigate Japanese sites and want to be a little more separated from the school scene.
4. Program/Exchange Site
- A. **Campus and surroundings:** Mita campus is in the middle of a business district so you will be riding the train with a lot of salary men. As a result, there are many many awesome restaurants across the street that students and workers alike go after classes or work. The campus itself is very small compared to UW but is a relaxing patch of green and an escape from the skyscrapers that surround the school. Mita campus is also within walking distance of Tokyo Tower, which is in clear view on your commute to school. Hiyoshi and Yagami campus are further away from central Tokyo and are thus bigger and more vegetated but just as urban.
5. Health and Safety
- A. **Concerns:** I had no concerns whatsoever during my program. I visited a dermatologist, 2 general doctors and a dentist and they were all very effective practitioners. The medicine they gave me for breakouts (my skin did not react very well to Tokyo), colds, and gum pain all worked very well and acted fast. The insurance is also great! The copays were a lot cheaper than I had expected. As for safety and theft, I had no concerns. I think Japan is a lot safer than Seattle in general, so whatever common sense you would use here would be enough for Japan.
6. Cultural Aspects
- A. **Integration:** school clubs (circles) are a really great way to meet new people. There are also sports groups (also called circles) that can be good for making friends. I recommend attending KOSMIC activities- they are the equivalent of FIUTS here at UW and the members are great people who are fun to hang out with and can help you out if you do not know something. I was also lucky enough to be able to join Mita no Ie and Shiba no Ie, which are two community centers in the neighborhood right across from Mita Campus, and met many very hospitable people there who I became very close with.
 - B. **Cultural differences/challenges:** I think you have to be aware of the different gender roles that people follow. Keep an open mind and follow suit. Even if you disagree you are a guest in the culture and must respect the customs. If you are Caucasian be prepared to be looked at, which evidently is not that bad in the city but gets worse in more rural areas. If you are Asian you will not stand out as much but that also means they will expect that you know

more customs, social etiquette and whatnot. Japanese people are very aware of other people and put a lot of effort to make sure that whatever they do is not of a bother to others in any way, shape or form. It is not hard to pick up- just do not do it if no one else is doing it.

7. Financial Concerns

- A. **Best way to transfer money:** I would, bring as much money as possible in the form of traveler's checks because wire transfers are hard to set up because of language issues unless someone from home can send it to you. Even then there are pretty big fees probably from both ends. Debit cards are also not a bad idea depending on the fees associated with your bank. Wire transfers can work but recommended for large amounts only.
- B. **Spending money:** Including everything except tuition (rent, food, transportation, entertainment, medical, electronics, shopping, traveling, etc.) I probably spend about 100,000 yen a month. That's roughly \$1000 but more so due to the exchange rate.
- C. **Unexpected expenses:** There was a large cancellation fee for my cell phone contract that I knew existed but turn out more than expected (\$200+). If you do a homestay through JTB the fee itself is more than \$1000 month (which is why I decided to withdrawal) so prepare accordingly if you plan on doing a homestay.
- D. **Financial Aid:** I had no problems with financial aid on my exchange.

8. Program Exchange/ Administration

- A. **IPE administration:** IPE was very helpful during the whole process. There were times where responses were slow but that was fixed with personal visits to the office.

9. Program/Student Type

- A. **Type of student:** I would recommend this program to any student who is interested in intense language training as well as seeing Japan's popular culture. It is definitely better if you are more independent and not afraid to try new things, otherwise you will not get as much out of the experience. Being open-minded is also very important.

10. Overall Experience

- A. **Academic and personal expectations:** I think my academic expectation of being able to take regular classes with local students was a gross over-estimated of my own abilities. I was able to try it out but discovered very quickly that it is not as easy as our own international students here at UW make it look. I was able to exceed my expectations on the personal side because I think I was able to participate in a lot of activities that locals participate in and I did not particularly think I would have those opportunities, for which I am very grateful.

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Keio University: Direct Exchange: Keio International Program 2010-2011

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

- a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

I would recommend you to be registered in dorm or home stay upon your arrival. If you do not have any families abroad, then I would recommend arriving on the date of entrance.

- b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?

My program had a week long orientation that covered the basic course scheduling and also turned in the information of your resident status, as well as registration for your dorm payment. Since you get to meet most of the study abroad students here, I would recommend attending just to get in touch with everyone and make new friends! (or I think it was mandatory). You will also have an interview with the advisor.

2. ACADEMICS:

- a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system:

Classroom structure: *I was able to take Keio International Program courses and Keio Undergraduate Courses. KIP courses had class size of about 30 people, obviously diverse set of students, and also get to meet with Keio Students who are interested in studying with international students. If you pass the Japanese Placement Test (scoring 8 or above), you will be able to register for Keio Undergraduate Courses. These are all instructed in Japanese, mainly for Keio students, where you get to experience the actual Japanese University atmosphere.*

Instruction: *Most KIP professors were great like the ones in UW, but some professors were not fluent in English, which sometimes hindered me from comprehending their lecture. Keio Undergraduate Courses were hard since it was instructed in Japanese and professors expect you to be at the same level as the Keio Undergrads.*

Teacher/student relations: *Professors were friendly and supportive than I thought. They will appreciate questions and also encourages you to stop by at their office if you need any extra help.*

Grading/exams: *Grading and exams were fair. If you have experienced the UW's 400-500 level courses, then it will be no problem. Participation and attendance policy varied between professors. Many courses that I took were based*

on essays and participation, and some courses only depended on final exam so be sure to attend class and take notes even if attendance is not mandatory.

Administration: They gave me hard time at the beginning of the semester where they could not clearly explain the course registration. They will tell you the “no no’s” after you have made a mistake(s) on something. My Keio friends and dorm assistant helped me out whenever I had trouble though.

Library, computer, and classroom facilities: *They were very similar to Odegarrd or Allen or other libraries we have here. But you will need your Student ID to enter.*

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The quality and content of instruction were similar to UW. However, do not expect Japanese professors to be humorous. Most of the Keio Undergraduate professors do not put any effort to make the class entertaining. They are usually strict and focused on the study, but encourages you to ask questions.

c. Are there any courses or instructors you would recommend to future students?

I would recommend taking Intercultural Communication instructed by Professor Tezuka.

d. How did your study abroad coursework relate to your UW education?

I am communication major, further interested in intercultural communication. Even more, I also plan to work in Japan so this experience was a great start to see myself how well I will be handling things in a new environment.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

I lived in a guys dorm called Sunrise Tode at Kawasaki, which is about 45 minutes away from Mita campus and 20 minutes from Hiyoshi campus.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose Sunrise Tode and Hiyoshi International Dorm because they were the cheapest. It does cost A LOT to live in Japan.

c. What would you recommend?

I would definitely recommend living in a dorm, at least for the first three months. At first I was not motivated to live in a dorm, but I made a lot of friends and priceless memories there. However, some dorms do have strict rules so make sure read careful on the description and be careful on those.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

Mita campus is quiet, chilled, and somewhat similar to UW. Hiyoshi is livelier because it is packed with students, mostly freshman and sophomores. You will find a lot of good food stands and restaurants in both campuses, but less places to hangout. I usually went to Shibuya, Shinjuku, Harajaku, which is about 10-20minutes away from Mita campus. There you'll find many clubs, bars, izakayas, karaoke, etc.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please describe any health or safety concerns (e.g., quality of medical facilities, unsafe districts, theft, etc.) associated with your study abroad experience.

Honestly, please be careful on what you will be eating. Some foods you will eat might be something your immune system is not used to. I suffered with food poisoning after eating at McDonalds so even the foods you are familiar may cause health risks. I would also recommend you to make friends around your community in case you need someone to buy you stuff while you are sick. Also, make sure to bring some medicines with you. Japanese medicines were not effective enough for me. I did not have any problems with safety. I think most of the places were safe. There will be some weirdoes or drunk people throwing up in middle of the street in main cities like Shibuya, but don't worry they won't harm you. But just be prepared for some culture shocks too. Also, be careful for natural disasters. Be prepared for something like what happened on March 11th, 2011.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS:

- a. How did you integrate into the culture and meet members of the community?
(e.g., clubs, sports, extracurricular activities, pubs, etc.)

I joined the "circle" at Keio, which is their word for "clubs". I joined the dance circle called "Revolve". I made most of my Japanese friends there. I also joined the international circle called "PLURIO". It is the circle where you get to meet with other abroad students. I would recommend you to join circles that interest you because I had so much fun, and spent most of the time there. You will get to make new friends and there will be events going on every week, and prepare to drink a lot of alcohol (Japanese students are very obsessed with drinking).

- b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.
(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

The only challenge I had was the hierarchical relationship, also known as the "senapi-kouhai relationship" with Japanese students. Make sure to be confident on your "keigo". Some people are strict even if you are just one year younger. Do not forget that you will be entering as freshman at Keio, so some students who are younger than you might also expect you to show respect, especially in the circles.

7. FINANCIAL:

- a. What is the best way to access/transfer money from the U.S.?

I used my "bank of America" card, and seven eleven ATM accepts international withdraws, but no deposits. There will be international charges though. Make sure to make bank account in Japan too, so that you parents can wire transfer money.

- b. How much spending money do you recommend per month? Please include rent, food, transportation, etc.

Including everything: about 100,000-150,000yen. It really depends on what you will be getting.

- c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

As I said earlier, Japanese students loves drinking at bars and izakayas, and they will invite you to come so be sure to save some money for that.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

- a. If the IP&E administered your program/exchange, please comment on the effectiveness of the office's services. What service could be improved?

Eric Baldwin helped me out A LOT! He is a great advisor. Other advisors were also great, but some I had trouble contacting, and was unclear answering my questions. It would be better if advisors prepare to answer questions 24/7 including weekends while we are abroad, especially during emergency, in such case like when the earthquake happened on March 11th.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

Please describe the type of student for whom this program is best suited.

I would recommend for student who is interested in Japanese culture and diverse student environment. Also, it will be great experience if student is planning to work in Japan.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I had really great time meeting with new people, made lots of friends across the globe. I had so much fun than I expected. I had earned many priceless memories and also my experience and studies gave me confidence to interact and engage with different cultures. However, the earthquake just had to ruin everything, got me back to UW in such a short time, and was not able to say goodbye to most of my friends. So I would definitely go back to Keio for my future studies.

Keio University, Tokyo, Japan
September 2009 – July 2010

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①Arrival Overseas/On-site Orientation:

Once I arrived to Narita International Airport, I took a Limousine Bus (one type of bus running from the airport) to Yokohama City Air Terminal (YCAT). Yokohama was the city that I lived in during the duration of my study abroad. From YCAT, I took the JR train to the place where I would be living. Since my family and I had lived in Japan during my senior year of high school, I ended up living in the condominium that my parents had left before moving back to the states. I was born in Japan and have lived there for about a total of five years and my family tries to go back once a year so I did not have a hard time adapting to a lifestyle in Japan. For those who have never been to Japan, you might experience some culture shock, but everything will be new and exciting. Once you start going to school and get a routine going, you will be able to adapt to your new life in Japan.

Before the orientation, we took a placement test for the Japanese Language Program (JLP) to test our level of Japanese. At the orientation, we were given an explanation of how the levels determined what courses we could take and how to register for them. The orientation also covered how to adapt to our new lifestyles in Japan and who we could talk to if we were having difficulties adjusting. Some of the teaching staff of the JLP was introduced as well.

②Academics:

The structure of the classrooms were much like classes at the UW, where all the students are facing forward and the teacher is in front of the blackboard at the front of the room. When textbooks were used, we would read them in class, going over grammar, vocabulary, style, pronunciation, and etc. I started in level 11 for fall semester and then was placed in level 12 for spring semester. Although classes only met once a week, the core subject classes were quite demanding. I felt that the level of learning in levels 11 and 12 were higher than that of the fourth year Japanese classes provided at the UW. We had kanji and grammar quizzes every week. Most midterm and final exams were given in short essay form. Some classes had a final paper rather than a final exam. Grading was fair, which was based off of homework, quizzes, participation, and exams, not much different from the UW.

The quality and content of instruction was much more than I had expected. Having grown up speaking Japanese at home, I had a head start with studying Japanese, but the Keio's Japanese Language Program proved to be a bigger challenge than I had anticipated. Before deciding to study abroad, I was worried about whether my Japanese would improve or not, but I believe that through the courses that I took in the JLP, my Japanese was able to grow and improve greatly. My study abroad coursework was incorporated into my major, Japanese Linguistics. I needed to fulfill my language credits and thought that studying abroad would be a good way to do so.

③Housing:

As mentioned earlier, I chose to live in a condominium by myself in Yokohama. This was the most inexpensive and most convenient option for me and that is why I chose it. I heard from other exchange students that they were doing home-stays, living in the dorms, or living in a share-house. Most students that I knew lived in the Keio dorms and they seemed to enjoy living there. By living in the dorms, it might be easier to make friends with your classmates.

④Program/Exchange Site:

Keio University's Mita Campus was right in the middle of an urban area of Tokyo, within walking distance of the Tokyo Tower. Mita Campus is a much smaller than the UW's; it would take about 3-4 minutes to walk from one end of the campus to the other. It is a fairly old campus so there is a mixture of old and new buildings. Office buildings, apartments, small shops, and convenience stores surround the campus. The campus is in a convenient location and is fairly close to the train station (about a 10-15 minute walk).

⑤Health and Safety:

I did not have any health or safety concerns associated with my study abroad experience. Like any other city or community, if you were going out at night, it would be better if you were not by yourself.

⑥Cultural Aspects:

I integrated into the culture and met members of the community through students that had studied abroad to the UW and through friends at other universities, such as Waseda and Sophia University. Growing up in a Japanese household and having lived in Japan, I did not encounter any cultural differences. However, it was interesting to meet other exchange students that came to study at Keio from around the world.

⑦Financial:

One of the ways to access money from the US would be to open up an account at Mitsui Sumitomo Bank and have money wired into that account. There are Citi Banks in Japan – you could open up an account in the US at a Citi Bank and access that account in Japan. Many exchange students opened an account at Mitsui Sumitomo Bank, which is what I did as well.

A commuter pass can cost anywhere from 15,000 yen to over 25,000 yen depending on where you live and the type of train you take. I would recommend setting aside 30,000 yen per month for food and another 30,000 yen for other expenses such as shopping or going out for the night with some friends. It is always good to have at least 30,000 yen in your wallet. Japanese use cash much more often than credit cards.

⑧Program/Exchange Administration:

The IPE office's service was effective, but I would have liked the process after I came back from Japan to go faster. There might not be anything that can be done, especially when waiting for the transcripts from the universities abroad, but I would have liked more information.

⑨Program/Student Type:

This program is suited for students who want to challenge themselves and want to improve their Japanese. Since this is a program in Japan, the student should be open to new experiences, new people, and a new culture.

⑩Overall Experience:

The goal I had set for myself during my study abroad was to improve my Japanese, and I believe that I was able to achieve this goal. There is of course still more room for improvement, but I was able to achieve what I had set for myself. By spending a year studying at Keio, I was able to picture a future for myself working in Japan.

International Program/Exchange Evaluation Report

1. Arrival Overseas/On-Site Orientation:

a. My recommendation regarding this subject is to simply seek out a hotel close to either Narita or Hareda (particularly whichever airport the student arrives in). I remember that the hotel I stayed in, during my first night in Tokyo, was the Royal Park Hotel, which is conveniently attached to Hareda Airport itself, but if they are arriving in Narita there are many hotels that one can choose from all of which are serviced by their own shuttle network. Also I have to tell them to keep in mind that these hotels are almost always fully booked so plan ahead by finding out which of these two airports you are going to land in and book your hotel room accordingly three to two months before arriving. On another side note I have to say that landing in Hareda is much simpler than Narita because Hareda is very much within the Tokyo city limits and one only has to use the Tokyo transit system while as for Narita things are a bit more complicated because of its distance away from Tokyo and hence one has to use either the Narita express or the airport skyliner.

b. Yes there was a joint orientation program for Keio International Program (KIP) and Japanese Language Program (JLP) students in the University hosting my exchange. As for the material the assembly covered; it only encompassed how one is supposed to register for classes, the mandatory number of classes an international student has to take, to sign up with the Japanese national medical insurance system (which is located in every city ward office around the many districts that surround metropolitan Tokyo), and lastly that international students are encouraged to enroll in the many student clubs Keio University has to offer (stressing, of course, the existence of the two international student clubs Plurio and Welcome Tokyo and their irreplaceable service of helping KIP and JLP students through the adaptation process). Other than that they did talk about the science surrounding culture shock and reverse culture shock as well as the emotional problems we would have to endure adapting to Japanese culture but other than telling us the philosophical underpinnings of molding into a foreign society they only shared that attending clubs can help us adapt. As for what I obtained from the orientation, I have to say that it helped me meet other international students in different dorms and thanks to that I was able to socialize in a larger network of people in place of only the students in my dorm. Also I took what the presenters said about clubs to heart and attended a number of Plurio and Welcome Tokyo events.

2. Academics:

a. classroom structure: I have to say that the structure very much depends on whether the class in question is a JLP course or a KIP course. The reason why I say this is because through experience I found the JLP courses to be more a combination of lecture and rigid aural repetition and act of conversing with one's classmates is strongly forbidden while the KIP courses are very

much just like an American University classroom: since the instructors seek to engage the students in a more creative manner and the class atmosphere is fairly lax.

Instruction: Just like the classroom structure, I found the JLP courses to be more strict and rigid in their style of instructing while the KIP courses more or less mirrored what I've come to expect from level 100 University of Washington classes. The reason why I say this is because during my four month program I was enrolled in three JLP classes and through the months I found that the curriculum mirrored question by question the text book itself and in place of having us learn to use the grammatical structure and vocab in a creative manner all they had us do is recite word for word a set statement until we memorized it. Also one thing that was kind of challenging for me to get used to was the fact that kanji, grammar, and even conversation were split into three independent classes taught by different instructors and that each class regardless of being KIP or JLP was only taught once a week in one hour and thirty minute slots. And so I noticed that if a student really wanted to excel in their studies they had to study on their own without any guidance of their instructor since class only meets once a week. Through my experience of taking four international center classes I can say with confidence that the instruction style for KIP classes are very similar to University of Washington's level 100 Humanities, Scandinavian Studies, Earth Sciences, and American Ethnic Studies courses for the curriculum is structured around a formal lecture followed by sessions of group led discussion about the material at hand.

Teacher/student relations: Personally I can say that in JLP classes the teacher/student relation varied considerably between the level one elementary and the higher level elementary Japanese courses. I noticed this first hand because I took two level one elementary Japanese classes and one level two elementary Japanese class and my impression was that my instructor in level one was more understanding and lax than my instructor in level two, who was very strict and very hard to approach. But even with that said, my classmates, who were learning Japanese for the first time, in level one found the instructor to be strict and unapproachable. With that said, I can surmise that my unfavorable experience in level two was brought about by cultural and linguistic barriers. Despite that fact though I found a number of instances where the two instructors were frustrated by the fact that I wasn't understanding a concept and as a result they openly showed anger. I believe the main reason for this is simply the university is not hiring Japanese language instructors who are well versed in other cultures or languages and because of that they are unable to comprehend how they should go about treating students from other countries. As for the KIP courses again since the teachers are all from different countries altogether I had no problem approaching them.

Grading/exams: For JLP the grading is primarily point oriented and is mathematically well weighted between attendance (usually amounting to 5%), assignments (15%), a midterm and final (50%), assignments (10%), and quizzes (20%). The exams can be described as mirroring the problems in the text book and because of that I can say that they are not at all tricky. As for the KIP, using the international course that I took as a measure, usually only had three components in which one's grade was based and they were a final, a presentation, and a final paper.

Administration: I can't really say anything about the administration as a whole since the international program is very much disconnected from the institution. But if I had to say anything about the administration for the international program I would say that the employees in the international student center were easy to approach and they were extremely helpful.

Library, computers, and classroom facilities: To begin, I can say that the facilities as a whole (from the classrooms to the libraries) at the campus I took all of my classes at, the Mita campus, were all very new, well kept, and accessible. As for the computers, I have to say that the Keio computer system was counterintuitive since students need completely different passwords to access their online transcripts, look at their class information, log onto the campus wifi, and even print out assignments in the computer labs. Other than that I can say future UW exchange students will find the facilities to be similar to those at their own campus.

b. My evaluation of the quality and content of instruction again needs to be described through the separation of the two course types JLP and KIP. Hence to begin, through my experience I have to say that the quality of instruction for the JLP classes was a little lower than average at best because I found the instruction style to mainly revolve around memorization and aural repetition. As for my experience with the KIP courses, I can say that the content and instruction style are on par with University of Washington.

c. The professor's I would recommend for KIP are Jonathar Watts and Jeffery Kurashige. And for JLP I would recommend Yuriko Ishino. The classes I would recommend are "An Introduction to Japanese History Pre-Modern" and "Buddhism and Social Suffering".

d. I can say that the only course that correlated with my major, American Ethnic Studies, was Japan in the Foreign Imagination, though the theories the professor described in his lectures were about ten years out of date, but other than that most of the other courses did quenched my curiosity about Japanese history and Buddhism.

3. Housing:

a. The housing options varied from typical dormitories that had meal plans, shared rooms, and communal baths to large apartments with private bathrooms and kitchenettes but provide no meal plans.

b. For my study abroad program I stayed in Motosumiyoshi International House because the rooms are similar to that of a studio apartment where you have your own private bathroom and kitchenette.

c. I would recommend Motosumiyoshi International House but for a second choice I would recommend Shimoda.

4. Program/Exchange Site:

The surrounding environment of the Mita campus is metropolitan in nature because of the district's proximity to Ginza while the surrounding environment at the Eiyoshi campus (which is where the Motosumiyoshi and Shimoda dormitories are located) is more residential and has a

small town feel to it. The campuses at Mita and Hiyoshi can be described as small compared to that of University of Washington.

5. Health and Safety:

Foremost I can say that Tokyo is the cleanest and safest place I have ever been. In comparison Seattle can be described as more dangerous than all of metro Tokyo.

6. Cultural Aspects:

a. My integration into Japanese culture was relatively shallow because I didn't really have linguistic knowledge to carry deep conversations with the locals I came in contact with on a daily basis. Though that didn't stop me from trying to communicate with random salary men in night clubs after midnight (missing the last train) and Keio students in club parties. From these instances I did make some good friends in the university social scene but I believe I would have had a deeper experience from attending more club activities and interestingly enough staying out late on Fridays and Saturdays.

b. I found the largest cultural differences in the classroom setting (where the teacher has more authority over the students in Japan than in the United States) and public transportation (where regardless of how long I stayed in Japan I couldn't keep quiet when I was with friends). The largest issue I had in Japan were stereotypes, primarily being labeled by one's appearance in the University setting. The way I addressed this particular challenge was to simply ignore it, since this issue was being perpetuated by the instructors, and talk with other students who are experiencing the same problems.

7. Financial:

a. The best way to transfer money from the U.S. is to use the ATMs in any 7/11 you come across since they don't charge any money for international transfers. Also make sure to use an American bank that has a low international transfer charge on their checking accounts, specifically stay away from Chase and Bank of America and instead use US bank and Wells Fargo).

b. I don't really have a recommended spending limit.

c. For me transportation was the most unexpected expense I incurred.

d. My problem with financial aid was the fact that in the middle of my exchange they refused to give me the rest of my grant because believing, that I was still under a quarter system and not a semester system, they required a transcript for spring quarter. This complication was fixed after two weeks by my academic advisor who sent a letter to financial aid saying that I was in a study abroad program and that my host university's academic system was by the semester.

8. Program/Exchange Administration:

a. The IPE administration was fairly effective but the things that I would like to see improved is more communication between the IPE and financial aid regarding the academic

status of the students studying abroad and a system in which the student's international credits are transferred without the need for them to go to each individual department.

b. The administration of the IPE in America and abroad were fairly effective.

9. Program/student type:

The type of student who would thrive in this program is a person with a laid back outlook on life, fairly fluent in Japanese or is extremely motivated in learning the language, and who is comfortable with his identity.

10. Overall Experience:

I came to Japan with no expectations so I can't really answer this question.