

AUG 18 2015

UW Study Abroad • 459 Schmitz Hall • Box 355815 • Seattle, WA 98195
Tel: (206) 221.4404 <http://studyabroad.washington.edu/> Email: ipe@uw.edu

STUDY ABROAD EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad Program: Waseda Summer 6 weeks Intensive course

Quarter(s) of Participation: Summer Level 3 (3rd year level)

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

For me personally, I arrived one week in advance with my family just so that I can get used to the city faster. Also because I was doing homestay, I had to spend time to find my host parent's place (I didn't want to get lost on the first day of my school).

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

I had two orientations: the general and homestay orientations. The general orientation was an hour of regulations that we should follow explained in Japanese, and a one day trip to the famous Tokyo Sky-Tree with everyone who is doing the summer course. I would say this is a really great opportunity to meet new people. The host family orientation was nothing special. It happened one week after we started living with our host parents. They asked us how are we doing and give us advice if we have trouble understanding the culture or the way Japanese people behave.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure
- instruction
- teacher/student relations
- grading/exams
- administration
- library, computer, and classroom facilities

It's a language program so I will compare it with our language program. It was about 10 to 15 people per classroom and they taught everything in Japanese but the pace of the lecture was really flexible. By flexible I meant the teachers were really nice and they would speak slower if you asked them to. Or they would even adjust the schedule a little if there was need to do it. The test was not as complicated as the ones in University of Washington; actually most of the questions were directly from the homework assignment.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

Their textbook this year focused not on giving us a bunch of new grammar or vocabulary, but on the unspoken Japanese culture. We discussed a lot of troubles that overseas student experienced in Japan in Japanese and the textbook would let us understand why these things happened. And again, the teachers were really friendly to the point that the whole class would be laughing in the middle of the lecture.

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

I finished the second year Japanese course in UW, and I would recommend 3rd year level in Waseda University. It's really good practice on speaking and understanding Japanese culture. Although I would say the grammar and vocabulary taught there is not really that much.

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

I am planning to minor in Japanese so this would transfer back to my third year Japanese courses.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

There were homestay and renting apartments.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose homestay because this way I would definitely be speaking Japanese everyday. And if I couldn't find Japanese friend in school, I would at least have a Japanese mom or dad to speak with.

c. What would you recommend?

Living outside on your own is more flexible whereas homestay allows you to utilize your Japanese skill.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

There's convenient store in most school buildings. There are two different train systems near the campus and you can go anywhere with the train system. About ten minutes walk from campus is Takadanobaba, and there are really good foods over there.

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.

Summer here is hot so drink water. I have a friend who went to the beach and got heat fever. He had to skip class for three days.

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 found a church nearby and this allowed me to meet some local Japanese people.

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

It's hard to make friends if you don't join a community. By join I mean sticking with it and making memories with the same group often. Otherwise it is going to be hard to make friends there.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

Bring enough cash.

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

60,000 en per month if you are doing summer course. Because you will be going everywhere and spending money during the weekends.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

My family asked me to get them the newest hair dryer which cost a lot.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

No financial aid.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

Please comment on the effectiveness of the UW Study Abroad Office's services. What service could be improved?

It will be nice if more instructions are given. For example, where to go upon arrival and where to send the transcript at the end of the program. (The transcript instruction was given after the deadline)

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

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

People who want to experience life in Japan. People who want to utilize Japanese. People who want to transfer credit into UW Japanese courses.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

The academic challenge was not as high as what I was expecting, but the social challenge was higher. It was frustrating when I figured out I probably won't become close friends with any of the Japanese people.

AUG 29 2014

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Japanese Short-Term Language Program Level 4

Quarter(s) of Participation: Summer 2014

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

I joined the shared house called "DK House Nerima", located in Fujimidai. It was about 45 minutes commute from Waseda University and good to get to make some friends who are also in the same school and other nearby schools and is one of the closer places to the school compared to other shared houses. I found a list of accommodations that was suggested from Waseda. I took the bus from the Narita airport to Ikebukuro Hotel, and the ticket booth was right by baggage claim when I got out. From there, I took the metro from Ikebukuro to Fujimidai.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt? The orientation at Waseda covered the rules of the school and program and provided information on joining clubs and events to meet with other Waseda students, and also gave us maps and procedural information, and student ID card information. I think it helped me adapt on the layout of classes and how to get around to some buildings.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure
- instruction
- teacher/student relations
- grading/exams
- administration
- library, computer, and classroom facilities

The classroom structure was somewhat similar to the Japanese classes I took at UW, however the tests were a lot more difficult than the tests I took in UW. The only thing I thought was majorly different was that instead of having quizzes and an exam for each chapter like I did in the classes in UW, in Japan, we only had one big exam at the end which put a lot of pressure on the one exam which was worth 40% of the grade and the exam structure didn't seem to cover most of the bulk of what we covered in class but just the material of some of the homework. The instruction was pretty well, although it varied because each day there would be a different teacher for each class, so you would have to get used to different teacher's teaching styles. The teacher/student relations overall were pretty good. The administration at Waseda was a bit unorganized compared to UW, and there

were a lot of other people lost when it came to what to do sometimes. I never used the libraries there, though there were some good study rooms in some buildings that were easy to study in.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

It varied depending on the teacher, but overall it was quite well and effective. Instruction completely in Japanese, and I liked how the full immersion for all day long helped further Japanese use and learning.

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

I recommend Iriyama-sensei.

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

It furthered my Japanese language development, which I studied at UW as well. However, I felt the study abroad made it improve by much more compared to UW because at UW you only got one hour of practice everyday, whereas in Japan you can get the full immersion, plus there were also those elective Japanese courses besides the comprehensive one that is similar to the regular Japanese series at UW such as the Japanese presentations class and the Japanese conversation & listening class that I felt helped a lot since it helped in my weaker areas like conversation and listening besides just learning grammar and reading/writing and not so much textbook but more interacting with others.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

I looked at Waseda's housing accommodations link here <http://www.w-as.jp/japan-exp/>. They had shared housing and homestay options available.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

I chose to stay at the shared house called DK House Nerima, located in Fujimidai. I chose it because the environment was marked as one of the safest, as well as it's one of the closest of the safest shared houses. Also the shared houses compared to the smaller shared places had more people and was like a dorm-setting and had some native Japanese people there as well rather than just international students and also had quite a big portion of people also going to Waseda staying there so I wanted to stay somewhere not too far of a commute, safe, and easy to make many friends both international and Japanese there.

c. What would you recommend?

I would recommend the DK House Nerima. However, if you do the short term language program, Waseda said that you cannot get the metro student discount for only the short term since it's too short, so commuting can be quite expensive, about 1000 yen (10\$ per day), but worth it if you want to make many friends at home. If you live here, you also get free membership to the gym which is next door to it, where you can use the swimming pool and machines plus you can print and use the wifi there too without having to worry about getting yourself internet access. Walkable distance from the subway station (5-10 minutes) and quite a number of convenient stores and a few big supermarkets all walkable distance from it.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus is a lot smaller than UW, but quite pretty and in a good area. Around it you can find some small cafes and shops, and not too far from Takadanobaba (20-30 min walk away) which is on the Yamanote line, so if you want to explore the nice areas of Tokyo after school, it is easy to do that riding the Yamanote. Pretty safe environment and everyone seems to be really friendly on campus. Many places that sell bentos and convenient store food on campus, though if you go during lunch hour it may take a long time since it gets super crowded.

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.

I didn't encounter any health and safety problems

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 met a lot of Japanese people living in the same shared house as me and we would often chat in the common room/ kitchen. I think because my classes were all other study abroad students, most of the people I talked with were not Japanese as well, but from around the world and that brought a lot of other cultures awareness to me.

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

I don't think I encountered any

7. FINANCIAL:

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

The best way to get money with the highest transfer rate is getting travelers checks from the local bank in US and exchanging them at the airport (because the banks were pretty hard to find in Japan)

that have the person booths working there, and the ones that do have very few hours that usually are only open 9 am-3 pm which is pretty hard when you're in school until 4:30 pm and have to leave before 9 to get to school for most people that commute an hour or so. If you run out of money, the most convenient and easiest way to get money are the ATMs. I usually went to the ones inside the subway stations since a lot of foreigners go there so the ATM machines are able to accept foreign ATM cards as well and they are quite abundant, though some other ATMS do not accept foreign ATM cards so if you go to the subway ones, chances are pretty high it will take your ATM card. Some banks will charge an extra cost to withdraw money from foreign card, so it is best to check with your local bank on the charge, though usually they're small, about 5\$ or less.

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

Transportation was about 1000 yen per day, $\times 5 = 5000$ yen (50\$ US) for one school week Mon-Friday. However depending on whether you go out on weekends, transportation prices can go up. I usually spent about 200-600 yen one way going to various places in Tokyo when the time commuting is one hour or less. Rent at the shared house was about 600\$ US per month. Food costs depends on whether you cook, go to convenient stores, or eat at restaurants a lot. For me, I went to convenient stores a lot and went to the 100 yen (1\$) grocery store and spent about 12-14\$/day on food, though I don't eat much usually. Some of my friends who went to eat out at restaurants spent anywhere from 20\$-50\$/day for food. If you eat lunch at school, most lunches there cost from 300-500 yen, convenient store food were usually 500 yen or less, restaurant food typically 600 yen for ramen, over 1500 per dish if you get sushi.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

When I went to the Waseda orientation, they told me that I had to pay an extra 3000 yen and I had to go to a bank to deposit the 3000 yen because of tuition shortage on how there was "unexpected bank fees" that got deducted out of the amount they told me to pay for tuition, so myself as well as a number of other people had to go to a bank to get the form and money to turn in.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

N/A

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?

N/A

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

The school's administration was a bit unorganized, and during orientation the website wasn't working so we had to wait an extra 45 minutes there, and a lot of students were confused from unclear instructions dealing with transcripts. However it was also pretty good as the program made a field trip for students on the first Saturday which was a lot of fun and we got to meet Japanese students and other students from our program exploring Hakone.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

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

I think this is best suited for someone who has at least completed level 113 at UW, although the amount of people in this program in level 1 is really big, I had a large number of friends who were in level 1 living in my dorm that said it was really challenging for them as the classes were taught completely in Japanese and they were really lost. I think it'd help to have a little bit of background in learning Japanese first before taking this program.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

Academically it was just as I expected, challenging but fun and I learned a ton of material just as I was hoping to. The exams were the only thing that was way more difficult than expected, and it was confusing having different classrooms and different teachers everyday for each class. Personally though, I'd say this was the best summer I ever had. I felt it made me more confident, both as a person and also in speaking the language. I made so many new friends, got to meet people from so many different countries and cultures, and got to meet many Japanese people as well, be like a tourist during parts of the weekends and explore the fun areas, and I felt it improved my language much more than having studied in the US. Living in a foreign country was both scary and exciting, so after having handled that and adjusting to that, I think I became more confident through this experience.

SEP 30 2014

1) Arrival Overseas/On-Site Orientation

For future students who are going to this program, I would highly recommend that you arrive at least two days in advance. The orientation takes place early in the morning, and it would be good to both sleep off jetlag and get to know how to get to Waseda, as several of the entrances into campus are down side-alleys and are hard to spot for a first-timer. I would also recommend having your accommodations ahead of date, when either it is staying in a hotel for the first couple of nights or going straight to your dorm/share-house/homestay. Waseda University's program did indeed have an orientation, and it covered a good chunk of what was going to happen during the stay. They provided the student ID cards for access into Waseda's library among other items, as well as large packet handouts with papers detailing everything that you might need or need to know, including your schedules and what you should expect (as well as they have current Waseda students give an introduction into the clubs aspect of Waseda). They provide lunch and get you to meet everyone, which really in all helps you adapt to the change in scenario that you will experience at Waseda. They also go out of the way to schedule a completely free trip for you to different areas around Tokyo (mostly around Hakone-en) to get to know a little more about Japan.

2) Academics

The academic system at Waseda university was pretty similar in many ways to the instruction received here at the University of Washington. The class sizes are similar, as Waseda tends to employ both small class and lecture class sizes depending on the class availability. The instruction is mostly the same as well, as the Waseda instructors that I had tend to teach very similar if not the same as University of Washington professors that I have had during my time. They take a very close eye on how you are doing and are perfectly happy to assist you in any way that they can, from answering questions to providing help. One thing that is different however, is that quite often you will have different instructors each day of the week despite it being the same class, so you can have anywhere between three and five different instructors for one of your classes. The exams are at or around the same level as Washington's exams, and are generally done in multiple-choice and short answer format. The grading scale is a little different (they tend to grade a little harsher in terms of GPA -> letter grade). The library there is brilliant, as it is very large and provides facilities to use in any situation, from study rooms to just overall computer use. Computer rooms in buildings are open for Waseda students to use at any time that the campus is open and classroom facilities are the same style as Washington facilities, albeit they sometimes lack an air-conditioner. The quality of the instruction received was on-par to what you would receive here at Washington, and to be completely honest, I can't recommend just one instructor or class to students, as they all were very

good and I would recommend them all if it was possible. It also helped that my study abroad coursework was within my major here at the University of Washington.

3) Housing

In terms of Housing, Waseda generally gives three options for study abroad students to choose from: Sharehouses, which are contracted out to different companies; a dorm operated by Waseda themselves; and the option to homestay with a Japanese family to experience what it's like to live there and experience culture as well. I chose the share house because I wanted to live in an area of Japan that I had visited frequently before (and thus knew the area around and how to get to the college from) as well as the fact that it was closer to Akihabara and the central part of downtown Tokyo for weekend trips (as well as being on the main subway line in Japan). However, to students who study abroad at Waseda, I would highly recommend to homestay because it allows you to experience the culture of living with a Japanese family and seeing how it is to live in Japan rather than in an apartment or dorm-like experience (which is easy to gain at UW).

4) Program/Exchange Site

If I had to name a single flaw with Waseda's campus, it would have to be the slightly difficulty of finding the Northern gates of Waseda, as they're tucked into back alleys and are hard to find on the first attempt (it took me three on the first day to find it). However, other than that slight inconvenience, Waseda's campus is beautiful. There are many buildings around the campus and the size of it will remind you of being back in UW (although Waseda is noticeably smaller), as well as the fact that they have their own garden and several other spots where you can simply hang out or do something with friends. The community surrounding Waseda is very friendly as well, and a good deal of shops and stores speak English due to the large number of foreign student (relative to other universities in Japan) who attend Waseda. In addition, I found the prices of the area around Waseda to actually be less on average than American counterparts around campus.

5) Health and Safety

From my experiences at Waseda, the entire campus was very health-and safety oriented. There was no complaints from me or anyone else that I went to the study abroad with (classmates, teachers, etc) about anything related to health and safety.

6) Cultural Aspects

Waseda, during the orientation and during the entire time there, went out of their way to try and make all of us study abroad students feel welcome. There were clubs, talks, and many other events organized that we were very welcome to participate in, which allowed us to meet the actual Waseda students for a good integration of their culture among other items. The main culture difference that I had to deal with at Waseda was mainly language, and even then from the Japanese students that I talked to, they tried their very best to make a bridge between us even if it meant they had to try and use English that they were shy to try and use.

7) Financial

From my experiences, the best way to transfer money from the US to Japan is via an ATM at any post office in Japan (of which there are MANY). Although there is a small fee for the international item, the ATM accepts debit cards from the US and will get you money even in Japan directly from your or your parents' bank account. In all, I would honestly recommend an allowance of about 800-1000 dollars a month for all spending expenses, taking into account Japan is an expensive place to live in as well as having enough left over in case of an emergency. In my time there, there were no unexpected expenses (they even refunded a part of tuition that I paid too much of), and I did not go with financial aid, so I cannot say anything about that.

8) Program/Exchange Administration

I didn't pay too much attention to how the program was administered, but from what I can see there were no hitches or unexpected surprises, so I can say that the program's administration was very good.

9) Program/Student Type

I would honestly recommend this program for those students who intend to or are majoring in Japanese or Japan Studies (International Studies with a focus in Japan), no matter what year of Japanese that you are taking.

10) Overall Experience

I cannot stress this enough. I had an AWESOME time at Waseda and would gladly go again if I got the chance to do so. ☺

OCT 03 2014

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM/EXCHANGE EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad/Exchange Program: Nakeda University Short-Term Program

Quarter(s) of Participation: Summer 2014

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

DO NOT STAY in Ostuka rest area in Nantai Airport

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

The orientation covered activities and clubs that you can participate in, and also encouraged students to visit the center of Japanese language if there were any questions or concerns that you had.

2. ACADEMICS:

a. Please evaluate the instruction you received abroad. Compare the following to the University of Washington's system: out of a 10 point system—

- classroom structure 10/10
- instruction 10/10
- teacher/student relations 10/10
- grading/exams N/A (did not receive any tests back)
- administration N/A (had no contact with administration)
- library, computer, and classroom facilities 7/10 (have to provide your own paper to print reports)

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The quality was excellent, however, there was a different teacher everyday for some classes.

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

Learning Japanese through Speaking & Listening 4

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

Enhanced my fluency and supported my Japanese ~~my~~ major.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

Four options through Waseda
Three of which were dorm-style, far from campus, but ~~other~~ ^{many} students lived in them.

b. Which did you choose, and why?

Otsuka Sharehouse Via TOKYO STAY.

Staff is very friendly, accomodation has a kitchen, and roommates were very helpful and kind. Also very near the Yamanote Line.

c. What would you recommend?

Otsuka Sharehouse.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

Campus had many convenience stores which were very convenient. Regular Waseda students were very respectful if you ever had to ask where a building was. Lots of cheap options for food as well during lunch hours.

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.

Did not experience any health or safety concerns.

Japan was very safe!

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.)

Since class ~~from~~ was from 10:10~4:15, it was hard making friends with the Japanese students. However, instructors were glad to answer any cultural questions that you had.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

In restaurants, some of them may permit customers to smoke during a meal. It was easy to request a different table if I was sitting near a party of smokers.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

I accessed money through Wells Fargo's American Express services since American Express does not charge foreign transaction fees.

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

\$700 ~ \$800

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

Buying an umbrella when a random rain storm would occur.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program/exchange, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

No problems occurred.

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?

b. If the IP&E did not administer your program, please evaluate the program's administration, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Always communicate via e-mail. It is crucial!

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

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

Students who do well in fast-paced learning environments
Who likes very hot weather!

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

I came to learn about culture, communication styles, and various aspects of daily Japanese life, as well as passing my courses at Waseda, which was very successful!

FEB 03 2008

Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
Summer 2008
Email:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION

The hotel we stayed at upon our arrival in Japan was the Marroad International Hotel adjacent to Narita Airport. I found the hotel to be very clean and well maintained and surprisingly spacious inside, with large banquet areas and gift shops. The rooms were comfortable and the bathroom small but very adequate. One of the highlights was the superb buffet style breakfast offered, which included any number of European, Asian, and American style foods. I would definitely choose to stay here if I were in-country again.

The on-site orientation at the UW was most useful as a forum to raise any last minute questions and discuss lingering issues. As with most orientations in my experience, all of the most important information and materials are available on the primary websites, so there's not really anything particularly vital or new that's being disclosed.

2. ACADEMICS

The classroom structure and method of instruction did not differ significantly from classes I have attended at the UW. The one thing I did notice was that most teachers seemed to speak to all students, in general, at a higher level of Japanese than teachers at the UW. This was both surprising and somewhat intimidating, but ultimately I found it to be challenging and important to my improving in my listening and speaking abilities. I did, however, find the actual coursework and exams to be, on the whole, much easier and less rigorous than most coursework at the UW.

Administrative staff were extremely helpful and pleasant, and the facilities at all location were quite superb.

While all staff and instructors were quite excellent, I would like to especially recommend the following people (in no particular order):

- Naomi Hoka (program coordinator)
- Atsuko Kobayashi (instructor)
- Atsumi Harada (instructor)

The coursework I took here was not required nor especially vital to my degree, per se, but the experience was, I think, very important to my deeper understanding of the language and the culture.

3. HOUSING

All students in the program spent 2 weeks at the Kamogawa Seminar House, one weekend at a designated homestay, and the remaining 4 week at the newly built International Student Dorms. Both locations (Kamogawa and the dorms) were exceptionally clean, modern, and pleasant. I would only recommend the dorms over the Seminar House because of the private bath in each individual room.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE

The Kamogawa Seminar House is located on the top of a hill in the small seaside village of Kamogawa. The rural, seaside environment is very pristine and quiet, and there were many opportunities for outdoor activities.

The International Student Dorms are located near downtown Tokyo, just a short walk from the Takadanobaba JR and Metro Stations, which conveniently connects you to virtually all of urban Tokyo. Tokyo, of course, has all of the shopping and nightlife and activities that one would expect in a booming metropolis.

I would like to note that I felt much "safer" by far in Tokyo than in Seattle or any town I've ever visited in the US. While I believe it is never the best option to be out alone at night no matter where you are, I never once felt uneasy or threatened walking around by myself in the city, nor even going out for a jog alone early in the morning. The city grid is just as difficult to navigate on foot as almost anyone will tell you, and even though I got lost almost every other day at some point, people were always friendly and helpful, and I did not feel the least bit perturbed beyond the fear that I might not find a Starbucks before I passed out from the crazy summer heat ☺

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

As noted above, the greatest danger that I perceived was the potential for heat stroke because of the high temperature and humidity of the season. While I did not get sick or require medical attention myself, I had no doubt that the medical facilities in the country were just as good as those at home. Over-the-counter medication, personal hygiene products and so on were cheaper and of a higher quality than at home, though you have to know how to ask for certain things.

6. CULTURAL ASPECTS

From the standpoint of America's cultural norm, Japan is almost its antithesis in a lot of key ways, most of which are not as overt as you might expect. I also think that many people go to Japan with a lot of exaggerated expectations that range from some kind of *anime* paradise to a quiet, peaceful society of people who bow instead of shake hands. The best thing to do is go into Japan with an open mind and a determination to take everything in stride. Read-up as much as you can on Japanese culture, but take everything you hear, particularly stereotypes and obvious generalizations, with a small grain of salt, and you'll probably be *underwhelmed* by how strangely familiar and quirky it all seems. A lot of the stereotypes are, in my opinion, useful in giving you an idea about what to expect, and you can bet Japanese people have a few less than flattering stereotypes about Americans that aren't that far out in left field, so just take people one at a time, and give them the benefit of the doubt. Having said that, I can't stress enough the need to have at least a rudimentary grasp of the Japanese language. Yes, most people speak English well enough for you to make do with a few words and a lot of pointing and hand gestures, but you miss out on so much, and, in my personal opinion, its rather disrespectful to come bumbling into the country without understanding what's going on around you, or even trying. Also, if you want to make a good impression on people and make friends, no better way than to learn the language.

7. FINANCIAL

My primary method of payment was credit card, and while most places in the greater metropolitan areas accept them pretty universally, you should always keep 5,000 yen (\$50) or so on your person. I managed to buy things with my credit card for most of the trip, but I also exchanged and brought with me 20,000 yen (\$200), which lasted me until the last couple weeks of the program (which was 6 weeks long). I was able to withdraw amounts from the ATMs at Seven Elevens without issue, but be sure to clear with your bank and make sure that it is possible, and that your account will not be frozen because you're trying to access it overseas.

I really didn't keep track of my purchases, but I think I probably spent around \$3000 on food, transportation (*note: SUICA cards are great if you're in Tokyo!), and souvenirs.

I had personal finances at my disposal that covered my expenses, so I did not use Financial Aid.

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION

I had no trouble getting my questions answered and my application materials put together – overall, I'd say the administration system was very effective.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE

Students looking for a first glimpse of Japanese culture that will give them a well-rounded experience without the need to arrange the whole thing themselves, who want a very supplementary academic experience in conjunction with the opportunity to see Japan firsthand without being overwhelmed, and who have at least one year's worth of formal language training, are ideal candidates. In no way shape or form will you be left to fend for yourself, but you will still have the freedom to experience Japanese culture in your own way.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE

My academic experience, based purely on the content of the courses, was a little underwhelming. Most of this has to do with the time constraint – you can't realistically expect a well-formed curriculum when teachers get at most a few days of class time each. Given that, I was impressed with the quality of the teachers, all of whom seemed genuinely interested in teaching and sharing with their students, and, at least in my classes, most students were of high caliber and actively interested in participating.

Personally, after having studied Japanese for 3 ½ years without ever once travelling to the country, I was glad to come home loving Japan as much as I once loved merely the idea of Japan. Having had so much contact with Japanese people in the US and learning about certain aspects of the culture over and over again, I felt oddly at home, and even the struggle to understand people was more pleasantly challenging than frustrating or demoralizing. As I mentioned before, I went into the experience trying to be as open-minded as possible and not let myself be overwhelmed or too surprised by anything, and in fact, I was rather underwhelmed by the so-called "intensity" of the cultural gap I had been expecting. Sure, it was different, but it was also familiar because I had taken the time to familiarize myself, both actively and passively in learning the language, and it was new and exciting but I didn't feel like some kind of square peg.

JUL 30 2015

STUDY ABROAD EVALUATION REPORT

Your Name:

Name of Study Abroad Program: Waseda Summer Session

Quarter(s) of Participation: Summer Quarter

E-mail Address:

1. ARRIVAL OVERSEAS/ON-SITE ORIENTATION:

a. Please recommend accommodations for future students upon arrival.

b. If your program/exchange had an orientation, what did it cover and how did it help you adapt?
Introduction of professors and student interns, campus map, upcoming field trip information, cell phone, student portal-log in information and such, visa status, information regarding stay in Japan such as transportation rules about drinking and smoking and dormitory. Campus information helped me find my classes and places to eat during lunch while information about Japan in general helped when I went out on the weekends.

2. ACADEMICS:

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

- classroom structure Classroom size was a lot smaller with 50 people max.
- instruction Majority of the lessons were on powerpoint. This was actually pretty similar to UW.
- teacher/student relations There was a lot of teacher-student interaction in some of my classes. This is similar to UW's smaller classes. In my business class where the classroom size was a bit larger there wasn't as much interaction.
- grading/exams Exams were mainly done by presentations other than business class which was a final paper and
- administration case study. This is different from UW where most finals are written.
- library, computer, and classroom facilities

Administration: Sometimes helpful. Not all staff could speak English but the ones who could were quite helpful.

Facilities: Computer room was very helpful and so was the printer in the computer room. However the printer in the Global Gate room-which is where I was the majority of the time when I wasn't in class-was extremely hard to use. Compared to UW, where it was very easy to print in the libraries. Also the printers didn't charge money however you needed to bring your own paper which was difficult considering I was only in Japan for a limited period of time and didn't really need to bring paper.

b. Please evaluate the quality and content of instruction.

The quality and content of the lessons were very good. The teachers were very knowledgeable about their field and were also extremely enthusiastic when teaching the class.

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

I'd recommend the Economics 1 course because it was actually the most interesting class I had taken out of the three classes I took. There's a lot of group assignments where you go out with your group to somewhere in Tokyo. The professor was also very funny and made the class very interesting and fun!

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

It didn't. I had planned to major in business but changed later in the year, after being accepted to the Waseda Summer Session, to Linguistics. It was too late to change classes so I stuck with it. I took Business 1 and Economics 1 as well as Japanese 3. The first 2 classes don't really relate however the Japanese class does. I want to minor in Japanese and so that class really helped me improve my Japanese speaking skills.

3. HOUSING:

a. What housing options were available to you?

Dormitory Only

b. Which did you choose, and why?

Dormitory as it was the only option.

c. What would you recommend?

Dormitory especially the Japanese dormitories. It really gives you a sense of how Japanese students actually live.

4. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE SITE:

Describe the campus and surrounding community.

The campus is quite large though not as large as UW. It is very widespread though and the architecture is very different from UW. All the buildings look very similar to me and so it was quite easy to get lost. Waseda University is located in a very good area. There are many places to eat and shop around the campus.

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.

There wasn't really any health or safety concerns I had during this study abroad trip. I felt pretty safe throughout the entire trip.

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.)

Field trips, went out with dinner after classes.

b. Describe cultural differences and challenges you encountered and how you addressed them.

(e.g., gender issues, social etiquette, stereotypes, etc.)

Did not actually face too many cultural differences or challenges.

7. FINANCIAL:

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

ATM machine/currency exchange at airport.

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

I stayed for only 4 weeks which is less than a month so I'm exactly too sure but I'd recommended \$300-400. Transportation alone cost me more than \$100 for two weeks. However this really depends on how far you are from the school and how often you go out.

c. Please note any unexpected expenses you incurred.

There were no unexpected expenses that occurred.

d. If you used Financial Aid to fund your program, were there any problems? If so, how did you address them?

Did not use financial aid to fund program

8. PROGRAM/EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATION:

Please comment on the effectiveness of the UW Study Abroad Office's services. What service could be improved?

I was informed from an upcoming study abroad in Fall and sent them an email to inform of this sudden change. I am unsure if it was during the summer hours however it took a few days for them to respond. I felt like this was quite normal especially since it really was a change in plans and such. Shannon Quinn, the study abroad advisor, also sent me emails afterwards confirming this change and I felt like this was extremely helpful.

9. PROGRAM/STUDENT TYPE:

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

Someone who is incredibly outgoing and friendly. In simpler terms, a social butterfly.

10. OVERALL EXPERIENCE:

How realistic were your expectations, both academic and personal?

My personal expectations were very high and not very realistic, truth be told. Most of those were not met, however that's quite normal. I didn't have too many academic expectations and any that I did have were set relatively low and were very realistic. Those were met.

