

General Information		
Host Country	Japan	
Host School	Ryukoku University	
Program start & end dates	April – August 2024	
Program of Study at KPU	History	
Type of Study Abroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> UMAP exchange <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
General Evaluation		
In a couple of sentences, summarize and explain your general evaluation of your experience.	It was a really good experience as it helped me improve my language skills profoundly in such a short amount of time that wouldn't be possible from only classroom learning in Canada.	
What is your recommendation rating of the University and why from a 1 (bad)– 10 (amazing)?	8, the core language program is intensive for the level i was assigned (JEP 2), class every day from 9:15-12:30, but really helped to learned all of the beginner level grammar, vocab etc. The dorm is really close to the school, which is a big plus, and the school is easy enough to navigate. The dorm itself was... an experience, as it seemed that there was always something going on.	
Arrival		
How easy or challenging was it to obtain your travel documents (visa, permits, etc.)?	Extremely easy.	
Describe your transportation arrangements to your host country. Would you alter any part of those arrangements?	I probably shouldn't have bought a round-trip ticket as i was not entirely sure when classes would end and went based off the school's academic calendar. I wasnt aware that normal faculty classes go on longer than the JEP program by a week or two and it made me worry that i was leaving earlier than the program end date, but through talking with people there i found out our program ends a bit earlier than stated so my initial return date was actually okay.	
How was your experience clearing customs and immigration upon arrival in your host country? Any surprises?	Extremely easy, I thought customs in Japan would be harder because of the student visa and past vacations to Japan but it was a breeze.	
Describe how you traveled to your host facility. How long did it take and how much did it cost?	I flew with the new budget airline Zipair so the roundtrip flight was roughly \$1600CAD.	
Orientation and Assistance		
How satisfied were you with the assistance available to at your host school? Were there people and	The English-speaking coordinator at Ryukoku was a bit unhelpful to be honest, so if i needed help i often asked friends who had been there	

resources available for you for support?	for a semester already, the dorm supporters (student volunteers who live at the dorms) or the dorm manager.
What help did you receive from the international staff or office?	The one thing they helped me with was telling me where i should dispose of the needles for my medication on campus.
How was new student orientation at the host university? What did they do?	There was the orientation for the whole school (all in Japanese) and another one for the exchange students. The one for exchange students helped teach us about everything we would need to know while living there (insurance, rent etc.) through various speakers and presentations. They had translators at this event, but the all Japanese one was a bit hard to follow.
Housing & Daily Life	
Describe your accommodation in your host country. Were you pleased with this choice or what would you have done differently?	I was glad to have chosen a single room, as i couldn't really imagine how people could really be comfortable as the single and double rooms are the same size. The staff and supporters are really nice and are quick to respond when needed help with something. If i would've done something different, it would have been choosing the newer dorm, as the rooms there come with their own toilets.
When could you move into housing and how long were you allowed to stay?	Classes started around April 9 th , but we needed to move into the dorms by March 24/25 th . I was then allowed to stay until August 10 th but i had checked out earlier on the 2 nd in order to be in Tokyo to fly home on the 5 th .
What kinds of services and facilities were nearby where you lived (shop, cafe gym, parks, pharmacy, stations...)	There is a convenience store right across from the dorm, a park also right across from the dorm, lots of restaurants and grocery stores within a 10-15 minute walk and clinics. The train station is also really close (10ish minutes)
Describe what you did about meals and what other options were available. How satisfied were you with the food?	I usually cooked all of my meals, but sometimes bought something premade from the local Family Mart. For me i don't particularly care about what i eat so i was satisfied with everything i ate usually. Japanese food is never spicy however, so i was usually craving spicy foods often.
How close was your accommodation to where you studied?	Across the street, probably 5 minutes on average to get to class.
Academics & Course Registration	
Describe the registration process at your host institution. What assistance was available to you? Were you satisfied?	Though there were a lot of forms to fill out, as long as you get everything done in time it isn't that difficult. There was an information presentation before course registration from the school, telling us how everything worked, so the process was that difficult.
What advice would you offer to another exchange student about registration at your host institution?	Make sure to not procrastinate the papers.

What tips to you have for finding the courses and course syllabuses/outlines?	I just followed how i was done in the presentation, everything was in Japanese though so having a translator was important.
Academics & Course Registration (cont'd)	
How satisfied were you with the amount of knowledge/skills you obtained from your host?	Extremely satisfied i learned so much more in the 5 months there than the 3+ years of Japanese learning here.
How did the style of teaching, and workload compare to Canada? Was it more independent or group learning?	My level was super intensive, with the schedule kind of similar to high school (class every day for minimum 3 hours). The homework was basically nonexistent, but the classes were very involved, often doing practice conversations, answering questions, worksheets etc. At first it was a bit difficult, but as time went on it became routine. The teachers are also really helpful.
How many courses did you take during your time abroad? Are there particular courses would you recommend?	I did all the core classes (a requirement) and 3 more electives from the list they provided.
What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, internet access, specialized equipment and supplies available at your host facility?	The on-campus internet is frankly quite bad at times, so be aware. I only every ad Wi-Fi on my laptop, as my phone was unable to connect and had to usedata.
Cost	
Books and Supplies/per term:	Depends on class level i believe, for my level around 5000 yen
Flight:	\$1600
Accommodation/per month:	With the weaker yen: \$350~
Meals/per month:	\$200~
Local transportation/per month:	\$20~
Health insurance/per term:	Paid all at the end, roughly 6000 yen
Communication (internet, phone, etc.) – per term	Phone plan was \$30/month I was lucky and the dorm provided me a free wifi router, but that might not be the case for everyone
Travel documents (Passport, Study permit, visa, etc.)	0
Vaccinations:	0
Personal spending (entertainment and extra travel) – per term	\$500/month
Were there unexpected costs you encounter? What items were less or more expensive than expected?	I did have to go to the clinic twice and get medication, but the insurance covers most of it so it wasn't too bad (2000 yen each time roughly)
Extra-Curricular & Social Activities	

What type of organized activities were available to you? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future students?	The school has a lot of clubs, but i didn't participate in any. The dorm supporters also host events sometimes or promote events aimed at exchange student, but again i did not participate
Did you travel outside the host location? If so, where do you recommend?	N/A
What opportunities were there to work or volunteer? Did you require special permits to do this?	I believe there were tutoring opportunities but im not too sure.
Health and Safety	
Describe any health/safety concerns or issues you had during your experience.	My health is already pretty sensitive, and it became 100x times worse in Japan. My body just couldn't really adapt well, and it caused my skin to break out often. I ended up going to the clinic two different times to get medication to help with it.
What helped you keep safe and healthy? Did you access any health care supports and if so how was the experience?	The doctor at the clinic i went to didn't speak English, but i just made sure to write down my concerns in Japanese first and show it him and he also spoke more simple Japanese, so it wasn't too had to understand.
What wellness supports did they offer at the University? Were there counselling or medical services?	I there is an on-campus clinic, but i only every used to dispose of my medical needles.
Personal and Cultural Connections	
Were there any cultural differences you had to adjust to? Were there language barrier issues?	Having been so many times and watching videos from over the years from foreigners living in Japan, there weren't many if any differences i was not prepared for. They do dress a little bit more conservatively, even in the summer.
What part(s) of the country and culture did you most appreciate?	To be honest i spent a large majority of my time in my dorm, so i didn't really go out to experience the life in Japan, however i found myself really enjoying my weekly grocery trips as it was a way for me to relax. I also overall really liked the quieter nature of Japanese culture.
How was it traveling alone and making friends?	My core class was really small (10 people) so i was able to make really good friends with them. I've also been to Japan solo and with family so no problem travelling the country.
How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?	Everyone was nice! If anything, the most problems between people i had seen were between people within the dorm itself.
How accommodating are they to students with a disability? Were there any accommodations offered?	Not too sure, but definitely talk with them.



How is the situation for students who are visible minorities in your host country?	Kyoto has a lot of tourists, so it seemed pretty safe, at least according to others at the dorm.
How welcoming are they to for those who identify as LGBTQIA+?	Not too sure, but they seem pretty accepting of it from other people's experiences
Overall	
What are 5-10 important things other students should know before going to your host country/region?	
1. Make sure to pack everything you could possibly need to save you from buying it there	
2. If you like a certain sauce, ingredient, snack etc. maybe bring some, as it could be really hard or impossible to find it there.	
3. Learn how to make basic meals, as eating from the convenience store all the time gets a bit gross and its cheaper	
4. If you get to the dorm early enough there will be a lot of stuff donated by the previous residents, and it's a good place to get stuff for your room/kitchen	
5. Summer is absolutely brutal; on average it would be 35ish degrees in July and August and that doesn't get any better at night (maybe going down to 29 degrees). May/June is also the rainy season so its hot (not as hot as July/August), really humid and raining.	
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What was the most rewarding part of your study abroad experience?	How much Japanese i was able to learn.
What was the greatest challenge you faced during your experience abroad?	Health
How has your perspective changed as a result of your study abroad experience?	Im a lot more open to talk with other people, as it was how i was able to make friends. It was also interesting to see where people had come from and why they had chosen to study abroad. It really widened my perspective on the reasons why people study abroad (fun, major related, hobby etc.)
What else do you want to add about your study abroad?	

Below is a space to share photos