

The Education Abroad Program office wants to hear about your experience abroad! Tell us about your experience by filling out the *Return Student Report for Exchanges/Summer Programs*. Your feedback will be used to help improve programs and services for future students and be a valuable resource for future students who are interested in studying abroad.

The Return Student Report consists of two parts:

- Part A: Participant Information
- Part B: Internship Information

Part A will not be made public. Part B will be made public and available online to future students interested in learning more about the education abroad process and program. Education Abroad Program will preserve your anonymity by not revealing your name or any personal details.

Part A

Participant Information

Please provide the following information.

Name:			
Student Status:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Domestic <input type="checkbox"/> International	Home Institution:	University of Alberta
Faculty:	Education	Degree Status:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
Major/Minor:	Japanese/English as a Second Language		
Current Year of Study	<input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4th <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		

Part B

Exchange/Summer Program Information

Please provide the following details related to your Education Abroad Program.

Host Institution:	Chiba University		
City/Town:	Chiba	Country:	Japan
Exchange/Summer Program Period:	From: 10/01/12 (mm/dd/yyyy)	To: 02/15/13 (mm/dd/yyyy)	
Did you participate on an internship during your exchange/summer program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
What immigration documents (e.g. study visa, residence permits etc.) are required to study at your host institution?	I only needed a student visa and health care and a Canadian passport. Once in Japan I was also given a foreigner registration card which residents must carry at all times for identification purposes.		
What issues (if any) did you encounter while obtaining these immigration documents?	None.		
What tips would you give to future students regarding their student visa and other required immigration documents?	Though the Japanese consulate is in Calgary you don't actually have to go down there, call the office for your options.		

Languages

What was the language(s) of instruction at your host institution? <i>Check all that apply</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> German <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Were there any adequate course offerings taught in English for your field of study?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Prior to your departure, did you take any language courses at your home institution? If yes, what courses (e.g. FREN 111) did you take?	Japanese 202, 301 and 302.
How did taking a class in another language (that was not your first language) impact your learning experience? Did you instructor make any accommodations?	No accommodations were made but having taken Japanese for 6 years I am used to being taught only in Japanese. I feel I definitely learned more without being able to use English.

Academia

What arrangements regarding pre-approval of credit transfer were you able to arrange with your faculty before leaving on your program?

I just filled out the standard forms required by my faculty.

Please describe the course registration process at your host institution.

- Were you able to pre-register in Canada?
- Did you receive any assistance from your host institution?
- Did your course registration change upon arrival? If so, why?

I was only able to preregister for Japanese language classes in Canada. There was very little assistance from the host University. My registration changed because I was put into a higher level language class.

Please describe your academic plan (e.g. number of courses per term, course name etc.).

We were required to take 7 classes per term. I took language classes including conversation and kanji and a selection of options including Traditional Foods and Intercultural Communications.

Please describe the credit and grading system at your host institution.

The grading during the courses was very similar to University of Alberta. I still know nothing about my credits.

How was your overall academic experience (e.g. teaching style, class structure and sizes, amount of coursework, assessment) in comparison to your home institution?

The course work was not comparable to University of Alberta standards, it was more like high school level work. The classes were small and the entire body of exchange students were sequestered into one building. I never felt like I was part of the student body. I enjoyed my Japanese language and conversation class but felt the others were not really University standard.

How did you obtain a transcript for coursework completed at your host institution?

I believe Chiba University sent University of Alberta a transcript in Japanese which had to be sent back for translating. University of Alberta has still not processed my credits.

Student Services

Please describe the type of facilities (e.g. library, internet/Wi-Fi access, computer labs, bookstore, health clinic, counseling services) available at your host institution.

There was a nice library on campus. There was also a good cafeteria and a very nice convenience store. There was wi-fi but despite asking several times I was never given access. Other than the library and convenience store there was no common student area for studying or socializing purposes.

To the best of your knowledge, what support and services are available at your host institution for:

- Students with disabilities or special needs
- Students identifying as LGBTQ
- Students of visible minorities

Pretty much no support for students with disabilities or special needs, I don't recall seeing any wheelchair ramps or automatic doors or wheelchair stalls in bathrooms, there was definitely nothing for LGBTQ students and being part of the foreign exchange student group made me a minority.

Please describe where you could find exchange student advising or receive academic counseling at your host institution.

I was never aware of any such place.

Housing Information

<p>To the best of your knowledge, what housing options are available to students?</p>	<p>There was an off campus dormitory available for exchange students. I lived in my own apartment with my boyfriend because he was not allowed to live in the dorms with me and because of this was not included in most of the activities organized for the exchange students.</p>
<p>What type of housing did you stay in?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> On-campus residences <input type="checkbox"/> Off-campus housing <input type="checkbox"/> With a host family <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Apartment I found myself </p>
<p>How satisfied were you with your housing choice?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 = Not at all satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 = Very satisfied </p>
<p>What should future students be aware of when choosing on-campus residences?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Application process for housing</i> • <i>Utilities and furniture</i> • <i>Meal plans, cooking facilities</i> • <i>Housing rules (e.g. curfew, how early can you move in, closure during major holidays etc.)</i> • <i>Assistance from host institution staff (e.g. airport pick-up, orientation)</i> 	<p>I am not sure because I didn't stay in on-campus residence. I heard from the other students that the dorms were quite small, expensive and only equipped with a hot plate for cooking. I believe they also had strict rules about alcohol and the curfew and the students had to pay extra for heating in the winter.</p>
<p>What should future students be aware of when choosing off-campus housing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lease agreements, deposits, tenant rights</i> • <i>Utilities and furniture</i> • <i>Location and neighbourhoods</i> • <i>Safety and security</i> • <i>Type of resources available to look for housing (eg: Craigslist)</i> 	<p>Proximity to the school as trains are very expensive, also the cost of rent in Japan, proximity to stores and other conveniences such as banks.</p>

Student Life

What would you recommend to future students who are looking to meet other students at your host institution? (e.g. extra-curricular activities such as student groups, intramurals, residence events and activities, volunteering opportunities, etc.)

The tutor program for exchange students was where I met my only friend and I still speak with her frequently.

What work or internship opportunities are available for students on and/or off campus?

As I was on a scholarship I was not permitted to work.

Health and Safety

Are there any specific health/safety issues that future students should be made aware of? What precautions can you recommend to mitigate or eliminate these issues?

The trains can sometimes be a safety issue, I tripped when entering one and my leg was caught between the train and the platform. The town of Chiba itself was ill kempt and run down and not a very pleasant place to live. Tokyo was lovely in the tourist areas but much the same in residential areas. There was lots of garbage and rust and broken down buildings.

Did your host institution require a mandatory travel/health insurance plan for exchange students? How did you arrange this?

It did only for the scholarship students which I was, so I ended up paying twice for health insurance. I purchased it at the local city office. When I emailed U of A about the issue of paying twice I was offered no assistance.

Cultural Adaptation

What cultural differences (if any) did you find particularly challenging?

Having been to Japan for extended periods of time before I was accustomed to cultural differences but I found the attitude in Tokyo to be quite harsh and sometimes racist.

What parts of your host country's culture did you most appreciate?

I have always loved and studied Japanese culture so to pick a few things would be difficult. I appreciate the culture as a whole. The religions and traditions are fascinating and I love the different regions and geographical cultural differences.

Costs and Budgeting

Please describe your basic costs in Canadian dollars. This will help future exchange/summer program students plan their own budgets.

Airfare to host country	\$ 1400.00	Brief Description	One way plane ticket.
Visa fees	\$ 50.00	Brief Description	
Books/term	\$ 30.00	Brief Description	Very few textbooks required.
Accommodation/month	\$ 800.00	Brief Description	Rent, utilities included.
Meals/month	\$ 150.00	Brief Description	Usually bought daily.
Health insurance/month	\$ 100.00	Brief Description	Health insurance.
Local transportation/month	\$ 400.00	Brief Description	Train tickets.
Personal spending/month	\$ 400.00	Brief Description	Admission tickets.
Communications/month (e.g. phone)	\$ 0.00	Brief Description	I used Skype for free.
Other travel	\$ 500.00	Brief Description	Bullet train, train tickets.
What unexpected costs did you encounter?	The train costs are very high.		

Funding your International Experience

Please indicate how you financed your program. This will help future students plan their own budgets. <i>Check all that apply.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scholarships from UAlberta <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scholarships from Host Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Student loans <input type="checkbox"/> Family contributions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal savings <input type="checkbox"/> Employment while in host country <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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Final Thoughts

What were some highlights of your experience abroad?

The travelling I did on my own and living on my own with my boyfriend, other than the fact that we shared our apartment with about 6 other foreigners it was wonderful, our landlord was very friendly and helpful. We took advantage of the train system and travelled around different parts of Japan and had an incredible experience.

Would you recommend your internship program to other students? Why or why not?

I would not recommend Chiba University, it did not meet my expectations at all.

Please provide any final information/tips for students interested in studying abroad that you would like to share.

I would chose a University in Tokyo or just to go to the country to travel and not to study as University expectations and practices between our two countries are vastly different.