

Sabbatical Report

George Davison

Fall 2016

1 & 2) Studying Japanese and Japanese Literature:

I took and passed the Japanese Proficiency Test, level 2 (see attachment).

I studied at the Osaka branch of Human Language Academy, which is the leading Japanese language school in Japan.

After I took my placement test, I consulted with one of the counselors and one of my potential instructors about my goals and timeframe. I did 2 things: I enrolled in their Japanese Language Proficiency class to help me prepare for the test, and then I took private lessons to help me increase my reading skills by reading contemporary literature.

For the Proficiency Test class, the class started in mid-September and went to the end of November (the test was on Dec 5th). I used their textbooks and printouts to study. I spent a lot of time doing rote studying of words, characters, and grammar.

For my private lessons, we decided on the book *Convenience Store Human Being* (コンビニ人間) . It won the highest literary award in 2016 and was recommended because it was quite accessible compared to the novel that won the year before *The Spark* (火花) the second book I read.

I was to read about 10 pages a day. I was expected to annotate the text by looking up vocabulary I didn't know, finding grammar I didn't understand, noting parts of the chapter I didn't understand, labeling cultural bits I wasn't familiar with, etc. This was by far the most difficult part of my study.

Value of the study beyond the study:

One of the greatest experiences on this sabbatical was physically doing the above. This is what I ask my students to do everyday. I've always been a strong reader in English, so if I am telling the truth, I had a hard time empathizing with my students when they read texts that are a somewhat (or a lot) out of their independent reading level and heading into their instructional or frustration zones. Reading in Japanese, I was in my instructional zone some and in my frustration zone most of the time. Sitting in that zone and dealing with the difficulties accompanying that was probably the most valuable experience of my sabbatical.

One unexpected benefit of the sabbatical was the collaboration with the two teachers who taught me. I explained that I would like to do annotation the way I have my students do it, and they hadn't ever used the techniques I was asking them to use with me. I

Aside from the reading, I also was preparing for the Japanese Proficiency Test. Some of the things one of the teachers was doing was not really helping me understand the material, so I asked him to adjust a couple of the things he was doing. This made me think that I need to really communicate with my students, why I am doing what I am doing and see if the teaching techniques I am using are productive for them, in real time. I need to assess, not at the end of the semester, but continually, as the semester progresses so that I don't lose them early.

3) Translation:

Instead of a short story, I decided to translate the first 10 pages of the book *Convenience Store Human Being* (コンビニ人間). I really enjoyed the book and thought others might want to get a glimpse into one of the most talked about books in Japan in the last 6 months--It will probably never be translated into English, so this might be the only morsel anyone will ever get to savor of this work. It took about 3 weeks to finish the translation.

Convenience Store Human Being

Sayaka Murata

A convenience store is filled with sound. The sound of the chime when a customer enters. The voice of the current famous person coming through the speakers broadcasting advertisements for the latest goods. The voices of workers. The sound of the scanner reading barcodes. The sound of things placed in baskets. The sound of hands grasping plastic packaging. The sound of heels walking around the store. Together, they become the sounds of a convenience store, echoing in the depths of my ear.

When I hear the small *kararara* sound of a plastic bottle traveling forward on rollers to replace the one in front that has been taken, I raise my head. A lot of customers grab cold drinks as the last thing before they head to the register. In response to the sound, my body begins to move automatically. A female customer with a bottle of mineral water in her hand hasn't yet come to the register. I see that she is searching for a specific dessert, and I return my gaze to the work in front of me.

As my body replaces the *onigiri* (rice balls) on the shelves, I pick up important information from the scattered, innumerable sounds. At this time in the morning, *onigiri*, sandwiches, and salads sell well. Over there, Sugehara is using a scanner to check inventory. I am lining up hygienically produced food made by a machine. Two rows of the new product *mentaik* [1] cheese *onigiri* are lined up in the middle. Next to those are two rows of the best selling mayonnaise tuna *onigiri*. *Okaka*[2], which isn't selling well, is on the edge. Speed is key in restocking. I don't use my brain. The rules have fused into me, and my body just follows them.

I respond to the sound of the soft clang of coins by turning my head, glancing at the cash register. There is the sound of someone with a fist in his pocket, making noise with his coins. He probably wants to buy cigarettes and a newspaper and quickly get out, like most people do. I'm

sensitive to the sound of money. Sure enough, a guy, holding a can of coffee in one hand with the other hand stuffed in his pocket, approaches the register. Making sure the customer doesn't have to wait, I quickly I start to move, sliding in behind the front counter waiting to respond to the customer's needs.

"Welcome and good morning!" I bow slightly and take the can that he thrust toward me.

"Also, I'd like a pack of cigarettes, number 5."

"I'll get that immediately." I retrieve the pack of Marlboro Light Menthols and scan it.

"Please touch the screen that verifies you are of age to purchase this."

As he touches the screen, I see his eyes move to the case where the fast food is lined up. I stop moving my fingers. "Shall I get something for you?" I was going to ask, but I could see he was deliberating whether or not to buy something, so I take a step back and wait.

"That and a corn dog."

"Thank you. I'll get that immediately."

I wipe my hands with an alcohol-based sanitizer, open the case and wrap the corn dog.

"Shall I separate the cold beverage and hot items in different bags?"

"Uh, no. No, together is fine."

I quickly put the can of coffee, cigarettes, and corn dog in our S sized bag. The guy making noise with the coins in his pocket, puts his hand in his chest pocket. That gesture tells me at once that he is going to pay with electric money[3]

"I'll pay with my Suica[4] card."

"Thank you, please touch the card there."

I am able to read the customer's minute gestures and eye movements automatically and my body moves reflexively. Eyes and ears become important sensors to catch the customer's movements and purpose. To be sure the moment is not unpleasant, I seek only the pertinent information so that I may move quickly.

"Here's your receipt. Thank you very much."

When I hand him the receipt, he says, "Thanks," in a quiet voice and departed.

"Thank you for waiting. Welcome. Good morning."

I bow to the next customer in line, a woman. During the morning, inside this small box of light, I feel normal in these movements.

Outside the glass that has been wiped clean of fingerprints, I can see the figures of busy people walking. The day is starting. The world is waking, and the gears of the world begin to spin. I am a cog in it. I've become a component of the world, rotating in the midst of this *morning* time.

As I was rushing back to continue stocking the *onigiri*, the shift leader, Izumi, speaks to me.

"Furukura, how many 5000 yen[5] bills does that register have left?"

"Um, only two."

"Oh no, that's bad. A lot of people used 10,000 yen bills today. We don't really have any left in the safe either. Once the morning rush has died down and we've stocked the shelves, I'm thinking about going to the bank."

"Thank you so much!"

Because the night shift is short on people, the store manager is filling in. In the afternoon, Izumi (the same aged, part-time female worker, who is more like a corporate employee) and I mind the store.

“Ok, about ten o’clock, I’ll go and get change. Oh, and we received that order of *inarizushi*[6], so when the customer arrives, please let them know.”

“Ok!”

When I look at my watch, it is just past 9:30. The morning rush is about to calm. I finish the stocking quickly. It’s now time to prepare for the lunch rush. I stand up straight and return to the *onigiri* and start lining them up again.

I have very faint memories, and I can’t recall anything vividly before I was born as a convenience store worker.

I was raised in a residential suburban area. My family was normal, and I was loved normally. However, I was strange as a child.

For example, when I was in preschool, there was a dead bird at a park. The bird was a beautiful blue. Other children surrounded this small bird and were crying seeing that its neck was twisted and limp and its eyes were shut. Yet, I wondered who had raised it.

At the same time as one girl asked, “What should we do?” I quickly picked up the small bird and put it in the palm of my hand. I took it over to the bench where my mom was chatting with other moms.

“What happened Keiko? Oh, the little birdie! It must have fallen from somewhere...that’s so sad. Let’s make a grave for it.” he rubbed my head, as she said that sweetly,

“Let’s eat it,” I said.

“Whaaaat?”

“Daddy loves grilled chicken. Today we can grill this and eat it.”

I didn’t think my mom heard me, so I repeated myself very articulately.

Startled, as were the other children’s mothers, my mother’s eyes, nostrils and mouth opened all at once. It was such a strange face that I almost laughed, but I noticed her gaze was fixed on my hands. Then I realized that one bird wasn’t going to be enough.

“I should go and get some more, right?”

Close by, I spotted two or three sparrows walking. My mom finally came to and in a piercing voice she screamed at me, “Keiko!”

“We are going to make a grave and bury that little birdie. Look, everyone is crying. It’s like their friend died. They’re all very sad. Isn’t it awful?”

“Why? It just died.”

My mother was at a loss for words.

The only thing I could think of was how my mom, dad and little sister and I would enjoy eating this bird. My dad loves grilled chicken, and my sister and I love fried chicken. There are so many birds at the park that I thought we could gather a bunch of them and take them home. I couldn’t understand why we had to bury it and could not eat it?

My mom tried so hard, “See, the birdie is so small and cute, right? Let’s make a grave over there. Everyone will make an offering of flowers.”

And, that’s what happened. I still couldn’t comprehend. Everyone was sobbing and saying the same thing about it being so sad about the little birdie while they were ripping flowers from their stems and killing them. They were saying things like, “Such beautiful flowers. The birdie will be very happy.” This scene made me think that everyone was crazy.

The little bird was buried in a grave that was behind a fence with a sign that read, “Do not enter.” Someone found a popsicle stick in the trash and stuck it in the ground above it. They made an offering of those flower corpses.

“Look Keiko, isn’t it sad and awful?” My mom whispered this to me several times, but I didn’t think that at all.

[1] A roe (fish eggs) served salted and spiced with red peppers

[2] Finely chopped small pieces of dried bonito

[3] Forms of electronic currency: Apple pay, Google pay, see Suica below.

[4] A card that is preloaded with money, initially used just to pay train fare, but more and more businesses accept it as currency.

[5] About \$50

[6] Sushi rice wrapped in a thin fried tofu covering

4) Japanese Literature List for the Department:

Instead of just a list of contemporary Japanese authors, I decided to give the department a list of the very best Japanese literature as well. I presented this at the last department meeting and emailed it to all the professors.

****Bold** indicates my favorites.

Classics:

Tale of Genji ♀

Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon ♀

Manyoushu (court poetry)

Narrow Road to the Deep North (Haiku and prose) Matsuo, Basho

Modern (Late 1800s-WWII):

Rashomon, Ryunosuke, Akutagawa

The Temple of the Golden Pavilion, Mishima, Yukio

Snow Country, Kawabata, Yasunari

Woman in the Dunes, Abe, Kobo

Kokoro, Natsume, Soseki

Masks, Enchi, Fumiko ♀

The Makioka Sisters, Tanizaki, Jun’ichiro

The Setting Sun, Dazai, Osamu

Contemporary (Post WWII):

A Personal Matter, Oe, Kenzaburo

The Wind-up Bird Chronicles, Murakami, Haruki

Kitchen, Yoshimoto, Banana ♀ (transgender)

Twinkle, Twinkle, Ekuni, Kaori ♀ (gay)

All She Was Worth, Miyabe, Miyuki ♀

Out, Kirino, Natsuo ♀

Trash, Yamada, Amy ♀

Snakelust, Nakagami, Kenji
The Diving Pool, Ogawa, Yōko ♀
1Q84, Murakami Haruki
Real World, Natsuo Kirino (lesbian) ♀
Almost Transparent Blue, Murakami, Ryu
Snakes and Earrings, Kanehara, Hitomi ♀
The Devotion of Suspect X, Higashino, Keigo

Short Stories:

The Diving Pool, Ogawa Yōko ♀
Tokyo Decadence: 15 Stories by Murakami Ryu
The Book of Tokyo: A City in Short Fiction
Yellow Rose, Yoshiya Nobuko (lesbian) ♀
Digital Geishas and Talking Frogs: The Best 21st Century Short Stories from Japan
The Best Japanese Science Fiction Stories

5) Study Abroad:

I sent out many emails to schools in Tokyo and Osaka--the two largest cities in Japan. Unfortunately, I only got a few responses. I eventually visited 2 schools in the Tokyo area. (see the brochures) I am still in communication with a school in Osaka.

I visited Josai International University and Kanto Gakuin University. I attached some relevant pages of their brochures. I will be giving the actual brochures to the Global Council for their consideration.

During the meetings, I was able to discuss the possibility of creating reciprocal programs for our schools. While the schools in Japan have lots of amazing resources (classes, facilities, dorms, etc), we had very little to offer, so the conversations were not very fruitful. What we ended up discussing was the possibility of having individual study abroad experiences (read, only for the people who can afford it). Even though we cannot offer their students much other than our classes and beautiful location, they might be willing to host our students as a group during the winter and summer sessions.

I will be talking to Gordon Dossett and the Global Council about what kind of program we might be able to produce for our students.

6) China and Korea Visits:

China

In total, I was in China for 2 weeks. I spent the first week in Shanghai and the last week in Beijing and on the Great Wall.

The ubiquitousness of the choking pollution has not been overexaggerated. On a “clear” day, the sun was at best a hazy ball floating in the sky. Nearly every day, the smog level was at the extremely hazardous level.

China is a dichotomous country. You see the amazing technological progress mixed in with the still underdeveloped older civilization. You zip through the countryside on a bullet train, passing through towns that are still rooted in their pre-technological ways. Then you come upon a massive city that no American has ever heard of even though it's bigger than any city in America.

One of the clearest examples of this is in the subways. Having lived in Japan, where things are very orderly, China felt chaotic. When you are entering a train, it is (I thought) customary to allow the people on the train to exit before you enter. This isn't the case in China. The people waiting will just barge on with no concern for the people trying to exit. To combat this, the municipality has placed signs near the doors to the train to show people the proper way to enter and exit the train.

Visiting the Great Wall was an amazing experience. Walking on one of human's greatest architectural feats was quite humbling.

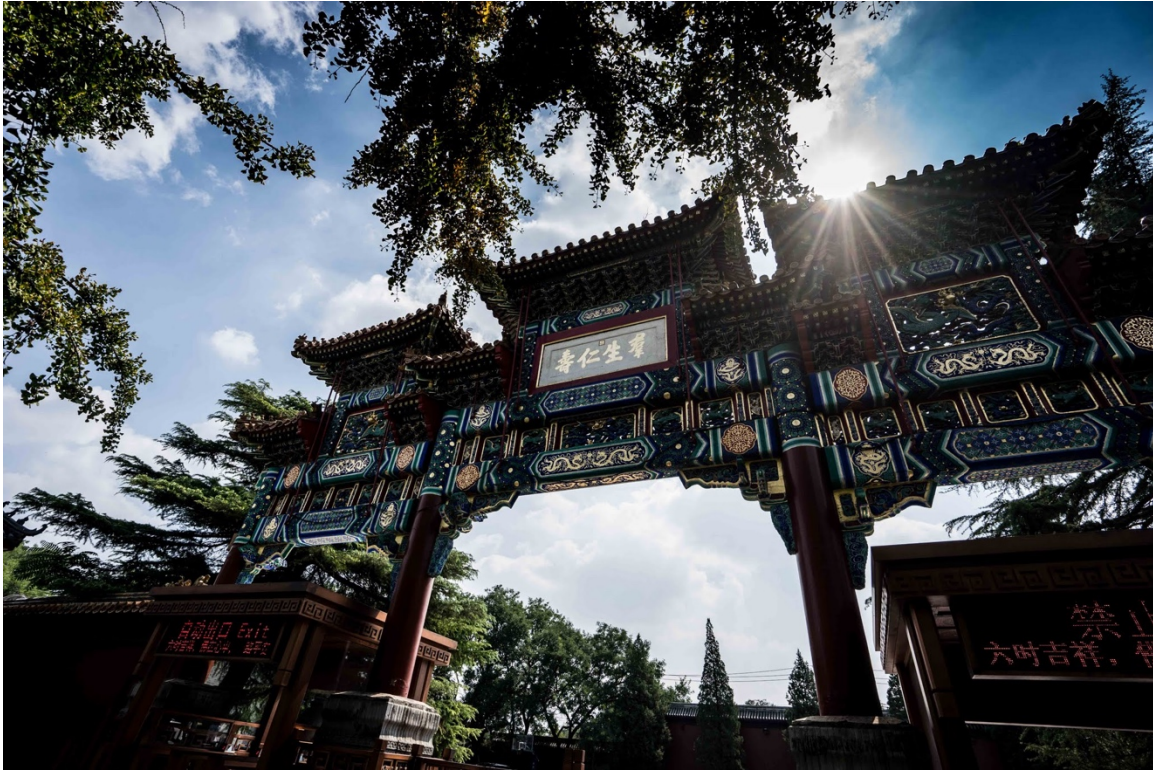
Shanghai





Beijing





Great Wall



Korea

I spent about 10 days in Korea, mostly in Seoul. I made a short trip south to visit the two major Buddhist temples. I also went to the Demilitarized Zone.

Seoul is a modern megalopolis. It's as massive as Tokyo, To put it in perspective, it has twice the population density of New York City. .

Korea is the only East Asian country that embraced Christianity. About 50% the country is Christian, the other half is Buddhist. Unlike Japan, Buddhist temples do not dominate the cities. I had to head south into the deep country to get a feel for the Buddhist tradition. You feel like you've gone back in time. These temples are located deep in the hills, miles away from any city.

The last place I went was the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North Korea and South Korea. This really opened my eyes to the damage that WWII and then the Cold War has had all over the world. We are so insulated from its effects. Korea was torn asunder by the US and Soviet ideological war. What scares me most is that I see this happening right now in Syria. Russia and the US are on opposing sides of a conflict.

DMZ: the closest soldiers are in S. Korea. The building in the background is N Korea.



Seoul



Temples in Southern Korea: Haeinsa & Bulguksa



Most Complete set of Buddhist Scrolls in the World: Haeinsa Temple



N2

レベル Level

日本語能力試験**認定結果及び成績に関する証明書****JAPANESE-LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST
CERTIFICATE OF RESULT AND SCORES**

公益財団法人 日本国際教育支援協会
理事長 井上 正幸
Masayuki Inoue
President
Japan Educational Exchanges and Services



独立行政法人 国際交流基金
理事長 安藤 裕康
Hiroyasu Ando
President
The Japan Foundation



2016年12月4日に、公益財団法人日本国際教育支援協会及び独立行政法人国際交流基金が実施した日本語能力試験に関し、認定結果及び成績を次のとおり証明します。

This is to certify the result and the scores of Japanese-Language Proficiency Test given on December 4, 2016 jointly administered by Japan Educational Exchanges and Services and the Japan Foundation.

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受験番号 Registration No.	270320191
氏名 Name	GEORGE DAVISON
生年月日 Date of Birth (y/m/d)	1973/02/20
受験地 Test Site	日本 Japan

レベル Level	N2
結果 Result	合格 Passed
認定番号 Certification No.	N2A142323J



得点区分別得点 Scores by Scoring Section			総合得点 Total Score
言語知識(文字・語彙・文法) Language Knowledge (Vocabulary/Grammar)	読解 Reading	聴解 Listening	
39 / 60	47 / 60	53 / 60	139 / 180

Certificate of Completion

修了証書

This is to certify that the mentioned below

George Davison

(date of birth 20/02/1973) has

successfully completed the course

**Japanese Language Proficiency Test
Fall 2017 Preparation Course, Level N2**

In witness whereof, this certificate is given.

Principal
Seiichi Miyamura

デベソン ジョージ 殿

1973年2月20日

あなたは、ヒューマンアカデミーアカデミー日本
語能力試験N2コースを修了されましたので、
これを証します。



Human | ヒューマンアカデミー



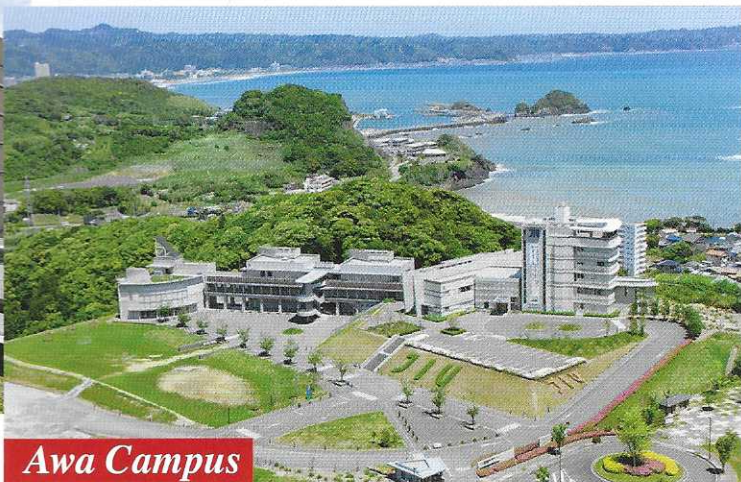
学校長 宮村誠



Tokyo Kioicho Campus



Chiba Togane Campus



Awa Campus

Center for Language Education

Japanese Program

Tokyo Kioicho / Chiba Togane / Awa



JOSAI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Summer Program & Customized Program

■ Description of the Summer Program

Josai International University offers an intensive Japanese language and culture program. Participants who meet the course requirements will receive the Certificate of Program Completion at the end of the program, and will also earn Japanese language credits.

The goals of this program are to enable participants to comprehend spoken Japanese at natural speed and to communicate naturally in Japanese, as well as giving participants an opportunity to experience and increase their understanding of Japanese culture and customs. This program is intended to make the most of the chances the participants have to speak and interact in Japanese. Participants on this course will be exposed to natural spoken Japanese from the very beginning

■ Contents

1. Japanese Language (66 hours) * 2 levels

Classroom teaching: 90min x 40 = 60 hours, Outside of classroom & Mentor sessions: 6hours

Textbooks: *GENKI* for basic level, *An Integrated approach to Intermediate Japanese* for intermediate level (The Japan Times)

2. Japanese Society and Culture

Lectures: 90min x 16 = 24 hours

Hands-on activities: Tea ceremony, Calligraphy, Kimono, Martial arts, a homestay weekend, a field trip to local historical sites, and a weekend trip to Tokyo

Sample lectures: Traditional Culture in Contemporary Japan

Survey of Major Japanese Historical Periods

Japanese Popular Culture

Seismic Culture of Japan

Post-WWII to Economic Boom in Japanese Popular Music

Transforming Japanese Society: Japanese Women and Men

■ Accommodation

JIU apartments



Sensoji Temple in Asakusa, Tokyo



Campus life: making friends in Japan



Martial arts: Kendo



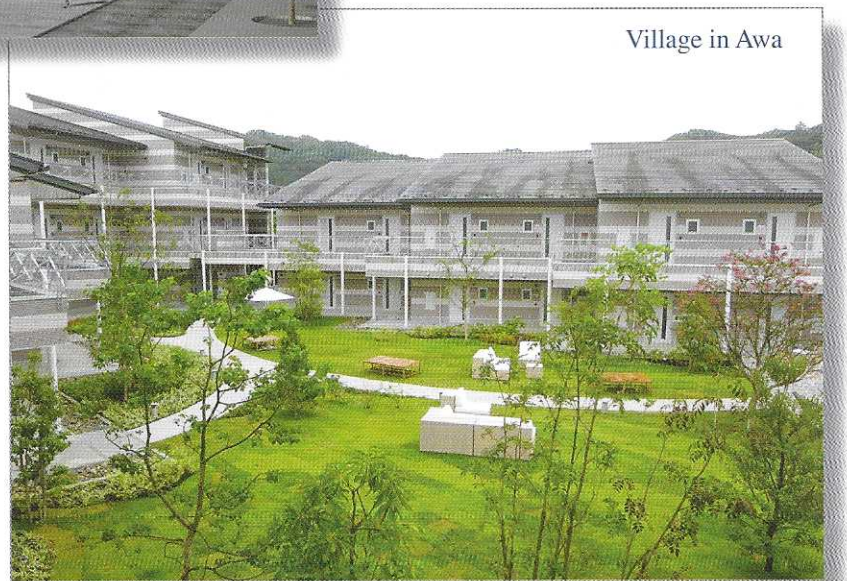
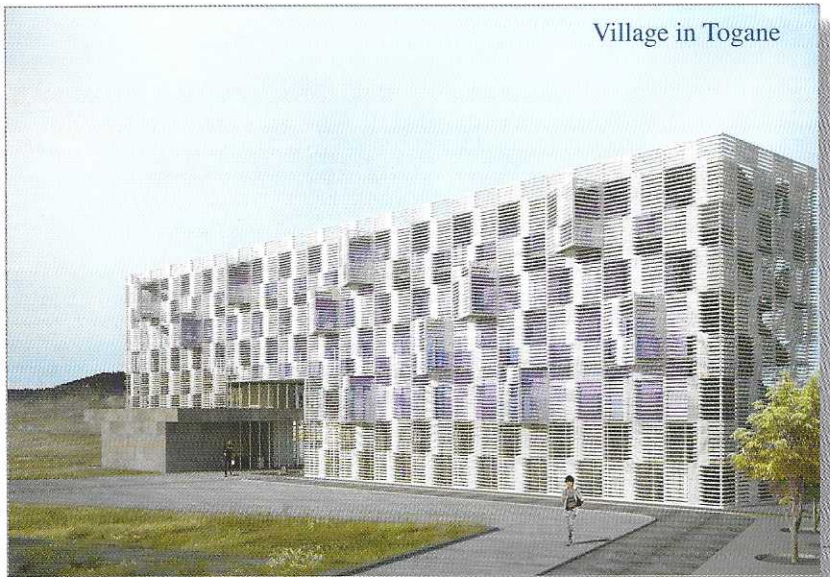
Wearing traditional armor at Otaki Castle

JIU Customized Program

The center for language education offers study programs and Japanese courses customized for the needs and requests from the universities that are partnered with JIU.

Global Villages

We have constructed dormitories both in Togane and Awa campuses for our students. We intend to enhance the students' multicultural ability and communication skills by housing both Japanese students and international students together in these dormitories.



Housing

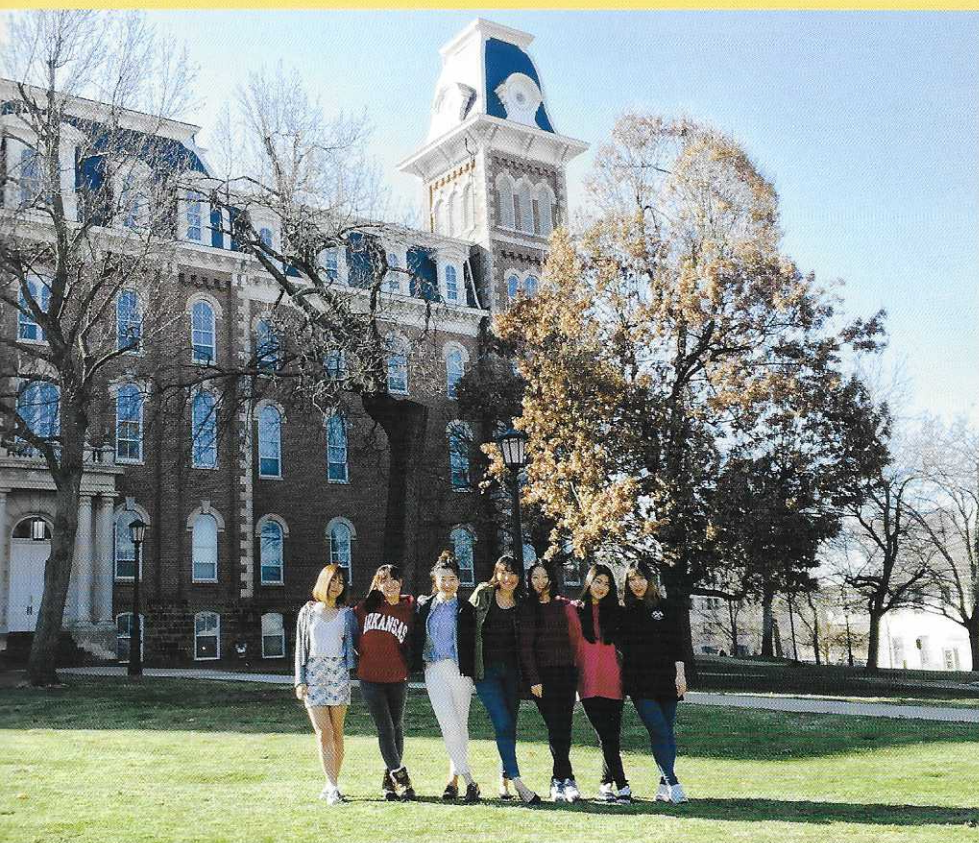
There are nearly forty apartment buildings managed by the university. Their terms of use differ slightly based on the programs to which students belong.

- Rooms: Single room, Shared room (2 or 3 people/room):
- Equipment in room:
Refrigerator, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, air-conditioner, TV, bed, bedding, table, chairs

GLOBAL CABLE

Center for International Relations
Kanto Gakuin University

2016



大学が全面サポート!

留学・語学研修プログラム

気軽に参加、世界を広げよう

国際交流イベント

新たな自分を発見できる

VOICE - 私の留学体験



今日からできる！ 国際交流

国際センターではさまざまなプログラム・イベントで留学生との交流の場を提供しています。

毎年、関東学院大学には提携を結んでいる協定校から交換・派遣留学生が来日します。また、アジア地域を中心に私費留学生が本学の正規課程で学んでいます。「将来留学を考えている」「異文化交流に興味がある」という学生は、留学生と交流してみるのも良い経験になるでしょう。日本においても国際的視野を広げることはできるのです！



交流行事



新入留学生歓迎会

学部・大学院に入学した留学生を歓迎する会です。



ハロウィンパーティー

アメリカからの交換留学生とバディがハロウィンパーティーを主催しています。



留学生親睦ツアー

日帰りで留学生と交流ができるツアーです。

GLOBAL CABLE
今日からできる国際交流



日本語チューター制度

日本語の日常会話の練習や授業・勉強の相談をしたいという留学生、日本語を通して留学生の母国文化・言葉について理解を深めたいという日本人学生のために「日本語チューター制度」を行っています。

- 留学生、日本人学生ともに登録制で、国際センターがマッチングを行います。
- 基本的に学生同士1対1で、週1~2回を目安にお互いの都合に合わせて行います。
- チューター活動は原則としてキャンパス内で行います。

留学生バディ 留学生をサポートするバディを募集しています！

国際センターと共に交流行事を企画・実行したり、留学生の日本での生活のサポートなどを行います。お互いに国境を越えた友情を築く良い機会となっています。

留学生バディ を募集！

【活動期間】 8月~12月

各キャンパス掲示板・
Olive Campus
でお知らせします。

【内容】 留学生のサポート

空港出迎え・見送り、キャンパス案内、交流行事の企画・実行（歓送迎会、BBQパーティーなど）、その他留学生への日常生活におけるサポート。



留学生のためのホームステイプログラム

留学生が日本文化をより深く理解するために、日本の家庭に滞在し、日常生活習慣や家族との交流を図るホームステイプログラムを実施しています。国際交流に興味があり、家族の一員として留学生を受け入れ、ホストファミリーになってくださるご家族を募集しています。飾らない日本での生活は留学生にとって貴重な体験となるはずです。

ホストファミリーを募集しています！

	(ホームステイの期間) / (留学生の日本滞在期間)
アメリカ、ロシアからの交換留学生	10月~11月の5週間 / 8月下旬~12月中旬
中国・台湾・韓国からの交換・派遣留学生	随時・週末1泊2日 / 半年または1年
正規課程の留学生	随時・週末1泊2日 / 通年(学部・大学院に在籍)

応募に関するお問い合わせ: 045-786-7015