My Study Abroad Experience in Japan

By Jordan Carroll

1. Cost of Living

First semester - Homestay 105,000 yen per month

Second semester - Share house - 69,000 yen per month, Food - ~50,000 yen per month

2. Scholarship

I had scholarship money from Clemson that paid tuition and very month I received 80,000 yen from JASSO, leaving about $400 a month out of pocket.

3. Accommodation

I did a homestay for my first semester, then moved to a sharehouse. The homestay was very far from campus, about an hour and a half each way, making it fairly inconvenient, and I found that I wanted more independence.

4. Japanese courses at Sophia, credits transfer

I took Intensive Japanese 1 and 2 at Sophia, as well as 4 economics courses, and was able to transfer everything back to Clemson for credits. The Japanese courses met 3 hours each day and transferred back for six credits apiece, but there are normal Japanese classes as well.

5. Students club opportunities

There is a wide variety of student clubs you can join at Sophia, I was in SISEC, which is an international communication circle with 100+ members, around 85% Japanese students. We would do events and go out and drink together.

6. Additional Comments

Don’t speak English!
1. Cost of Living, Accommodation

The rent at I-House (dorm) was around 24,000 yen and they took it straight out of my stipend. I spent about 20,000 yen a month cooking at the apartment instead of eating out. If you like to shop, the bus and subway are nearby so you can quickly and easily to travel to Nagoya to shop, watch movies, or just wander around.

2. Scholarship

I received a 60,000 stipend from NUFS.

3. Courses at NUFS, credits transfer

There were classes ranging from linguistics, food culture, art and history, and volunteer classes that one could take.

4. Field trips

There were many school sanctioned trips you could take such as to see a kabuki play or sumo wrestling.

5. Students Club Opportunities

When you take the culture classes, you will be in a mixed group of Japanese and exchange students. Also, they have various clubs you can join such as Jazz band or cheerleading.

福井大学  Fukui University

By

1. Cost of Living

We were quite lucky in Fukui. The exchange student dormitories were subsidized so we were only paying about $50 a month. As for food and bills I paid nearly identical prices to what I did back in Clemson.
2. **Scholarship**

I personally didn’t receive a stipend while I was in Fukui, but I know many of the students who needed it were given around $500 a month.

3. **Accommodation**

During my time in Fukui I lived in a specialized exchange student dormitory. The dorm is located a 5 minute walk from campus. All of the students in the dorm were international as well. It was a really comfortable, fun environment.

4. **Japanese courses at Fukui U, credits transfer**

Fukui is a fairly small school, I would expect to transfer home about a semesters worth of credit for the year abroad. The support on Clemson’s end for making these classes work was great.

The really quality experience to be had in Fukui had less to do with the classes, and more to do with the fact that there are normally only 2-3 native English speaking exchange students enrolled at the University in any given semester. You’re forced to use your Japanese and immerse yourself in the local culture. I joined the university soccer team and absolutely loved it. There are clubs for everyone.

5. **Field trips**

Your first semester in Fukui you will have a course specifically designed for exchange students where every second Friday the school takes you on a field trip to a local, traditional business. They also provide purely social field trips like camping and ski trips.

6. **Students Club Opportunities**

Far and away the best decision I made during my time abroad was joining the university soccer club. They were incredibly welcoming, and none of them spoke English, so it was a great opportunity to immerse yourself in Japanese culture, make new friends and practice your Japanese.

There were clubs for just about anything you can imagine, from archery and hip hop dance, to tennis and orchestra. There were opportunities for everyone and I can’t stress enough how wonderful my experience was with clubs in Japan.

7. **Additional Comments**

The last thing I would want to tell other students studying abroad in Japan is to get out! The real growth and learning while abroad comes from living life in a new world and experiencing new things first hand. You can study Kanji and watch anime in The States, get out of your dorm and enjoy yourselves.