

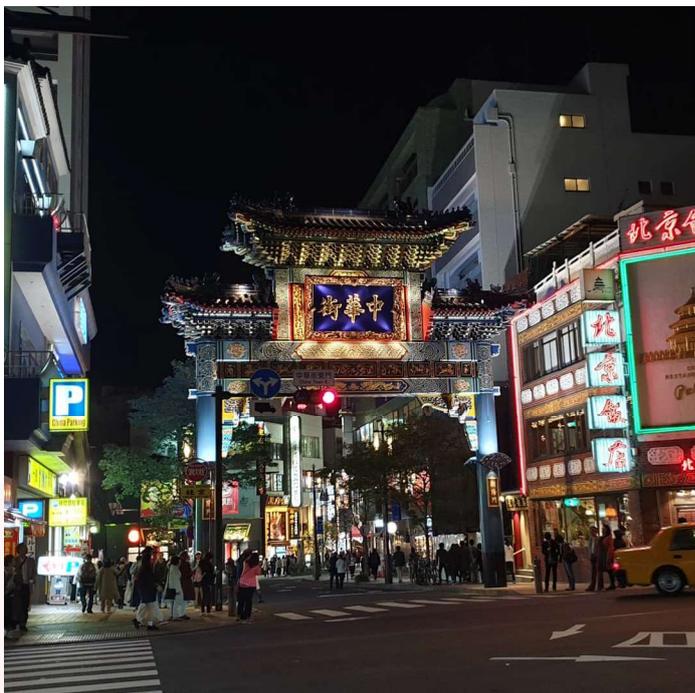
2019 Spring 1 semester

From Korea University



Kamakura Buddha statue

Students can visit Kamakura in the weekends and travel beautiful coastal town.



Yokohama Chinatown

Students can find many Chinese stores and foods here.

2019 Spring 1 semester

From Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University

Exchanging in Yokohama National University is one of the best experiences. I learned many new things every day through my daily life both inside and outside university. This includes Japanese culture, tradition, lifestyle and language. How people use public transportation as their main type of their transportation mode. How people get in line nicely. How people slurp their noodle. How people still wearing Yukata to watch firework. I have developed many skills, such as social skills, life skills and language skills, while living in Japan as well. I must say that living in Yokohama is a great decision because there are not too many people like in many popular cities. For example, Tokyo is very crowded both on the train and on the street.

Yokohama National University is a very international-friendly environment university with good facilities and many helpful teachers and advisors. At first, when I arrive the university, I get a little bit lost because it is quite big. During my exchange period, which is 4 months, I really enjoy learning here and spend time in this university. The student cafeteria is one of the best facilities. It provides variety of delicious food with cheap price. It's also very spacious, even though it is very crowded in the lunch time, there is still enough tables for everyone. JOY Program also provide many interesting subjects for exchange students. The courses that I took while joining JOY Program are 2 Japanese courses and other subjects. I must say that my Japanese language skill has developed significantly throughout 4 months exchanging here. I am very glad that I took these courses because I get to know more about Japan and the teachers are very helpful, kind and fun to learn with.

I also get to meet new people, including Japanese university students and exchange students from many different countries from living in the share unit and joining circles. It was quite interesting to know and learn about other countries' culture and food. I have joined many university's circles, such as Shodo (Japanese Calligraphy), Badminton, Archery, 105, Shorinji Kempo and tea ceremony. It was very fun to join the circles and join their activities with other university students from different year. I get many friends from joining the circles. Even though my Japanese is still at the beginner level meaning that I am still not quite good at communicate in Japanese with Japanese university's student. There are many times that they try to speak Japanese with me, and I cannot understand it. Therefore, I really appreciated their friendliness, kindness and patience and I want to thank them for their effort for trying to explain and translate their clubs' activities in English. I enjoyed the activities very much. I get to experience and try many new things that I have never done before like writing Japanese character with the black paint and brush, how to have tea in tea ceremony and practicing Shorinji Kempo, one of Japanese martial arts.

The dorm that I am living in during exchange is Tokiwadai International Residence is very convenient because it is only 15 minutes walking to the classroom and there are convenient stores and bus stops nearby.

Lastly, I get to travel around Japan and visit many famous places while living here. I have joined festivals and watched firework. It was quite an experience that I will never forget and regret of exchanging here!

2019 Spring 1 semester
From Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University



2019 Spring 1 semester

From Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University

While living in Japan for 4 months, I have experienced a lot of things that I thought I would have never gone through if I did not come for an exchange at Yokohama National University (YNU). I felt that time passed by so fast that I couldn't believe it is almost the end of the semester. Since the very first day, I received a warm welcome by my roommates. They provided me a lot of support in guiding and explaining stuff. Furthermore, they helped me with my Japanese homework and taught daily life Japanese conversation. I felt relieved that I had someone to rely on whenever I need assistance. We usually took turn making each own country's food and had dinner together. Not only we got to exchange our cultures by introducing each own's famous dishes, but we were also able to get closer to one another. I developed a great relationship with my roommates that I will certainly miss them when I go back to my home country.

Yokohama National University itself was a great university. All the teachers were nice and caring. They treated each student with respect and put their whole effort in teaching the students. At first, I was afraid that the Japanese course I took was too difficult. Since it was an intensive course, there was a huge number of quizzes and tests which required a lot of perseverance. Nevertheless, I ended up enjoying the class and felt glad that I took that course. In addition, the university provided numerous activities for international students to join that allowed them to get to know people as well as learning Japanese cultures. I always wanted to learn how to arrange the flowers and I finally got a chance to participate in Ikebana workshop. It was actually very interesting to learn the history of Ikebana and the process of preparing flowers.

Apart from education, I also engaged in extracurricular activities of the university. The club I joined was Shorinji Kempo, one of the Japanese martial arts. I have never known of this sport before, thus it was totally new to me. I felt that Shorinji Kempo had unique body movements which made it fun for me to learn. Not only that I became strong in terms of health, I got to make friends with Japanese people in the club. Despite the fact that my Japanese was in the beginner level, I was able to get along well with the club members since they were remarkably kind and friendly. They helped me in studying for my Japanese test and even encouraged me that I could pass the exam easily. It was so nice of them that I felt appreciated their generosity. Every time after the practice, we will have tea and snacks together. It was a great time of talking and sharing in which I would take it back home as my memorable memories.

Staying here, I was capable of improving my skills in various ways. First of all, I was able to practice my cooking skill that I rarely did in my home country. I found out that I liked cooking far more than I thought which led me to do diverse types of dishes. Moreover, I tried to bake for the first time, and it ended up well that I even shared it to my roommates. Second of all, I was able to manage my time more wisely. I needed to allocate each time slot carefully so that I could study and participate in activities that I desired. Third of all, I developed my responsibility. Living alone allowed me to be freer, so I had to force myself to study and catch up among the classes I took at the university. Last but not least, my English communication skill has improved a lot during my exchange period. I always had great conversations with my roommates, and it was pleasurable to talk with them.

To conclude, I had a wonderful time coming for the exchange at Yokohama National University. It was a notable experience that allowed me to learn and to develop as an adult. I was impressed by a lot of things including people who I made friends with, the university itself, my roommates, various activities I have done, and so on. I myself fell in love with Japan especially the city of Yokohama that I would come to visit again in the near future.

2018 Fall & 2019 Spring 2 semester
From Dalian University of Technology

JOY プログラムに参加させていただき、本当にありがとうございました！日本での一年間の生活が楽しかったので、一生忘れられない思い出になっています。

もともと横浜国立大学で短期交流の経験がありました。その時の自分は日本語がまだうまく話せなく、日本人の学生たちに勇気もなかったのです。「本当に話したい！本場の日本語を聞いて習いたい！」と心でそう叫んでいました。国大と縁があるかもしれないから、JOY プログラムに参加するチャンスをもたらったのです。

国大の JOY プログラムは、世界各地から日本語に興味を持ち、日本文化に憧れる優秀な学生を召集して、みんなで一緒に日本語を勉強したり、様々な活動や文化体験をしたり、日本と繋がって自分の将来を考えてみるいいプログラムだと私は思います。ここで、色々な国から来た学生と日本語で交流して、自分の国の文化や日本語を勉強するときの感想を交換して感じたり、日本語の習得（対象：特に漢字圏以外の方）や日本語の発音の正しさに惹かれてきたのです。日本人との交流することから日本語の魅力を感じることにとどまらず、ここでそういう特別な感じもできたのです。



一年間、友達と一緒に日本のあちこち旅行して、日本で独特な季節の美が深く感じられました。春の桜、夏の紫陽花、秋の紅葉、冬の雪華。また、日本人は自然に対する深い愛も感じ、人間と自然の間にある言葉で言えない絆もわかるようになりました。



実は一番印象に残ったのは、第 8 回 YNU 日本語スピーチ大会についてのことです。ここで、留学生の目から見たことを世界伝えるのは了解して、「今私たちのような若い者は不思議な力を持つはずだ」と感じさせられたのです。また、日本人の二人のサポーターさんの手伝い、友達の応援のおかげで、きちんと発表しました。最後、最優秀賞をもらったが、もっと勉強すべきなことが多いと思います。

[ここに入力]
2019 Spring 1 semester
From Sun Yat-sen University

As a student of JOY Program in Yokohama National University, I not only learned knowledge, but also made many friends from various countries. And this is really a valuable experience for my further study in the future.

In this program, Japanese language courses can be offered. At the same time, we can apply to the instructors to have major courses taught in Japanese together with Japanese undergraduates. There are also English-teaching courses provided for JOY students to choose, including foreign culture, art and music, business and economy, etc.. So no matter what course you want to take, there will always be one for you.

In addition to the course study, the school also has various associations, such as hip-hop club, drama club and so on. These associations are also very friendly to foreign students. In addition, there are school activities such as festivals and outdoor barbecue.

Besides in-school activities, some organizations outside the school also put up posters on dormitory bulletin board for all kinds of activities they hold, including Bon dance, cruising, hiking, etc.. Students who want to participate can contact them by e-mail. It is these extracurricular activities inside and outside the school that enrich our extracurricular life.

The school also thoughtfully matches a tutor for every foreign student. You can consult him if you have any problems in your study and life, and he will answer them enthusiastically and comprehensively. In addition, the International Student Center has special communities for foreign students to help them adapt to Japanese life.

In the short four months of studying in Japan, I have learned not only knowledge, but also Japanese culture through various activities. I have met many interesting friends, broadened my horizons and broadened my knowledge. It is really a valuable experience for me.

2018 Fall & 2019 Spring 2 semester
From Shandong University

Different from my home university which is located in the downtown, Yokohama National University is located almost at the top of the mountain, far away from the noise, automobile exhaust and the crowd. So at the first time I entered this university, I was impressed by its fantastic natural environment which is just like a beautiful scenery of the animation. There are so many trees of various kinds growing freely and vigorously that I can hardly walk out of the shade and can always enjoy a breath of fresh air. Thanks to them, my memory of walking in this campus is always full of green and comfort, and I gradually got used to settling down to think. Briefly speaking, living in harmony with nature and keep humble is the first lesson this university impart to me.

As a foreign student, the first and the most thing I was concerned about is the style of the class, especially whether I can get used to it or not. But after the first two-week adjusting period, I found that there is no need to doubt YNU' s globalization level. I made so many friends from different areas who came to YNU through different programs. We share stories, values and cultures of each other, seeing the tremendous and wonderful world at this small campus, or even just in that small 105 classroom. At first, I felt a little worried if I can make foreign friends successfully because I am so shy, but later I found that there are so many chances and possibilities to promote communications that you can hardly miss.

Apart from these open and global classes, thank to the passionate and efficient system that YNU provides, I am also very lucky to have access to those traditional Japanese-style classes which I am interested in. I discussed with my Japanese classmates, felt pressured about the presentation and the reading materials. All these ordinary but satisfying tasks and memories made me feel that I truly integrated the life of YNU.

Time flies by. But I will cherish this unforgettable memory of studying in YNU forever.

2019 Spring 1 semester

From University of the Philippines

My experience in Japan felt like the longest and quickest four months of my life. This was the first time I met so many different people from so many different cultural backgrounds and I felt extremely blessed to get to know them. The exchange program has taught me to become more open-minded as I adjusted to living in Japan and living with people from different cultures. As a Sociology major, we were always taught to recognize culture as part of a society's upbringing and identity and it was quite the privilege for me to experience the uniqueness of Japanese culture firsthand through this exchange program.

The easy access to travel around because of Japan's highly industrialized transportation system was one of my favorite parts of my stay in Japan. It helped me explore the beautiful city of Yokohama and even visit multiple places in Tokyo. The opportunity and independence of studying abroad in Japan was an exciting experience that I will always look back on fondly. The JOY Program in YNU is composed of multiple Japanese language classes which are handled really conducive for learning and different English courses which contain various professors from different cultural backgrounds and encourage you to interact with and help Japanese students learn English as well. Overall, I had the best time in Japan and met some of the best people both in Japan and from all over the world. Most of them told me that I am welcome to visit them in their home countries and I will definitely welcome them if ever they decide to visit my country as well. I encourage anybody and everybody to go on exchange and study in Japan, it felt like you will never run out of an adventure here.



2019 Spring 1 semester

From University of the Philippines

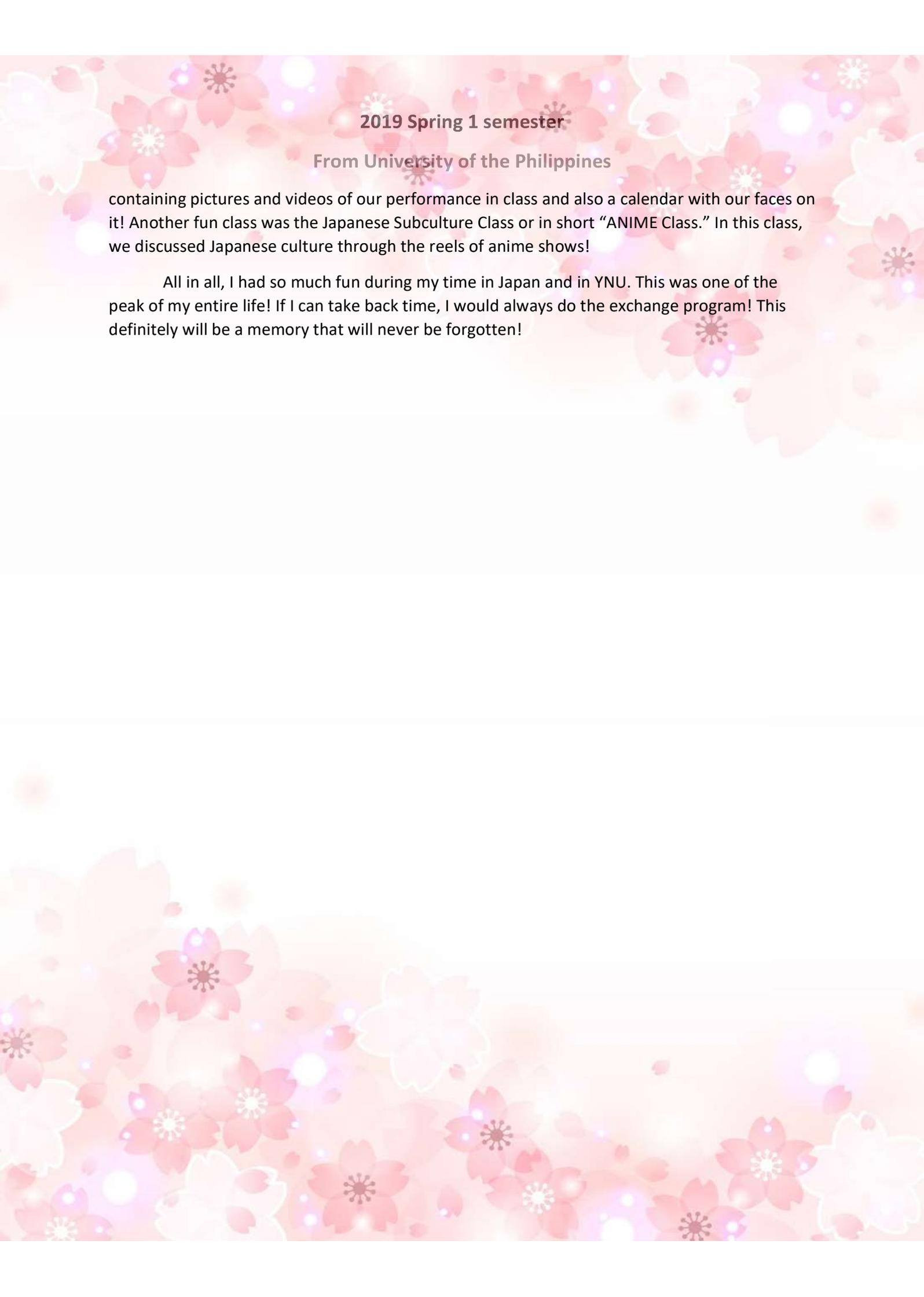
I have always wanted to come to Japan. Mainly due to the influence of Japanese pop culture on my childhood. As I watch more anime shows through the years, my understanding of Japanese culture grows too. It came to the point that going to Japan made it on my bucket list and because of that, my time on Japan was very special. I remember my relatives go travel abroad from time to time but my family always get left behind due to financial problems and other hindrances. My parents always think how difficult it is to travel abroad and how much it will cost. I understand what they were saying but at the same time. Get envious of my relatives going abroad.

This is why when I heard about the exchange program in my home university, I was ecstatic and became very determined to go to Japan via the program. I spent one whole year applying and preparing for the program. At the end, it was all worth it. "I am going to Japan!"

My first time away from my family for a long time, my first time flying abroad, was very ambitious: culturally different and linguistically different place. Also, the expenses are double, even triple of that from my country Philippines. But, I didn't let it get in my dream of going to Japan. All of it were worth it.

One of the main goals while in Japan is to make friends with the locals. This was achieved through my stay. Our international residence provided Japanese students lodging and this gave me three Japanese students in addition to two international students as my roommates. These guys became my family during my stay in Japan and it breaks my heart to think that we are gonna be separated for a long time when I go home. Also, there was a small soba shop we often go to run by the loveliest old couple. The food is very good and not expensive. In addition to this, they are very nice people, always chatting with us even if we can't communicate in Japanese that fluently. They also give us free food as "service" which is exclusive to us international students. We shed tears during our farewell when I went home. Another special Japanese people during my stay are my homestay family. This was part of the extracurricular activities offered to us international students. With this program, I was able to stay with a Japanese family for two days and one night. We had delicious sushi, drank umeshu together and bonded with other homestay families the next day on a barbecue party. After that, we went together on a live music party where we listened to my host family father perform.

Aside from making good relations with people in Japan, another goal I had was to learn. Learn Japanese language, Japanese customs, and special subjects on the university. My learning of Japanese language in YNU was very fun and at the same time, I was learning a lot. I used to just know how to say "this is a pen" in Japanese but now I am able to make a presentation about what I did last weekend and my plans for the future. Other classes offered in English in YNU were very interesting. First of all, Iaido! Traditional martial arts of the katana taught by the sweetest professor I met. Yokoyama sensei always smile while teaching us, always give us omiyage or souvenirs whenever he travels on other prefectures, and in the end, he gave us CD's



2019 Spring 1 semester

From University of the Philippines

containing pictures and videos of our performance in class and also a calendar with our faces on it! Another fun class was the Japanese Subculture Class or in short “ANIME Class.” In this class, we discussed Japanese culture through the reels of anime shows!

All in all, I had so much fun during my time in Japan and in YNU. This was one of the peak of my entire life! If I can take back time, I would always do the exchange program! This definitely will be a memory that will never be forgotten!

2019 Spring 1 semester

From Universiti Utara Malaysia

JOY Exchange Program has given me a huge opportunity to discover Japan and know more about Japanese education system and cultures. Basically the education system here is almost the same as my home university; Universiti Utara Malaysia. It was just the credit here is lower, but since each class of the subjects is held once a week, it does make sense. For the culture, it is known that Japan and Japanese are so famous worldwide because of the cultures; be it manners, foods, clothes, festivals and so on.

All the sensei are so helpful. They will help you every time you have problems regarding the subjects. My only female sensei, Anje sensei, was so kind and helpful. She taught me the skills about writing and doing presentation. I just knew that the font of the title should be smaller than the contents, avoid using contrast colours especially blue and lots of things that are crucial for my future career. I still remember during my final presentation, I was so nervous that I lost my words and I couldn't speak. She asked me and all the classmates to close our eyes and do some breathing techniques. She was so considerate that she asked me to do the presentation again from the start, and she reset the timer.

For Business Mobility class, it was so great that I only had one presentation for the whole semester, but it was indeed challenging. I was glad to know that Marinov sensei really likes our presentation. He kept saying that my group's presentation was so good and it was like "take the wind out of someone's sails" because we had already answered all the questions he was about to ask. I was really excited for the Japanese Culture and Subculture classes since I could learn lots about anime and yuruchara. I get to know about the pioneers of manga and anime, and how they impacted the pop culture and mass culture worldwide. For the yuruchara, I got to design my own mascot and it was even got printed in a handkerchief as a souvenir and commemoration. Next, it was fun to do a research for Japan in the World subject. I could know more about the students' perceptions of agriculture. I'm an agriculture student; I could say that most of the students still assumed that the agricultural farming is still traditional especially for the non-Japanese. This was maybe due to the country that is poor or still developing; the agricultural technology is not really emphasized.

For the environment, I've always wanted to meet Japanese and experience the culture by myself. I really love watching anime, Japanese dramas and also Japanese movies. I've watched how the Japanese behave, the richness of the culture, the clear environment and the pretty views around Japan. This program really gives me the opportunity that I've always wanted. The first time I met Japanese, I could tell that all the things that I watched on screen wasn't a lie. The people were so polite; the manners and courtesy were at the highest level. They were so helpful and always ready to help; they looked so happy when I asked them for a direction. They even get out of the stores to show me the way. The way they nod, the intonation of their voices when they talked have made we feel so welcome

2019 Spring 1 semester

From Universiti Utara Malaysia

here. I joined lots of matsuri during my stay here. I got to wear yukata, watch hanabi and bought lots of delicious food at the food stalls along with all the Japanese. The last matsuri that I joined was Bon Festival which was held at the Tokiwadai Elementary School. I was interviewed by a TV program, newspaper and got to be a model to promote a program (feel like an artist). The obaasan who helped me to dance and wear yukata were extremely sociable and friendly. They always tried to talk to me, asked me whether I enjoy the dance and matsuri even when they already knew that I couldn't speak Japanese very well. Maybe they wanted me to feel welcome to be among them.

I got the opportunity to visit all the best places in Japan, especially around Yokohama and Tokyo. I was so thankful for that. The views were breath-taking, just like in what I have seen in the photos. I just couldn't believe that I was in those places in a real life. I went to Shibuya, which is famous for its tax free shopping and a wonderful developed city. I bought lots of souvenirs there to bring home. I also went to Shinjuku and Harajuku frequently; for visiting and taking lots of pictures from the places that I have seen in anime and movies. Of course Yokohama is my mostly visited place; I love the scenery of the port, together with the Cosmo Clock, Landmark Tower and Intercontinental Yokohama Hotel as the background. The most unbelievable memory was the view of the top of Mount Fuji when I first visited that place. It was so spectacular even when it was cloudy at that time. On my last day staying here, I just realised that I could see Mount Fuji from the hilly area near Yokohama National University. It was so amazing to know that I wasn't that far from Mount Fuji. Besides, I love the weather here too. In Malaysia, we don't have four seasons and that was the reason of my excitement. I could experience the cold temperature, wearing thick clothes, and walk along the road with the sakura viewing around me. I even brought some of the sakura petals home to show to my family and friends.

Overall, this was my first time being here, yet the best experience for me that I will cherish my whole life. I believed that this program has benefited and strengthened the relationship of two countries; Japan and Malaysia since I have made lots of Japanese friends during my stay here. I have promoted Malaysia tourism to them, but at the same time I kept promoting the beautiful view around Japan to my fellow Malaysians. I will encourage anyone who is planning to go for this exchange program, for it is so interesting and beneficial for their future careers. They can learn more on how to be independent, and learn everything that makes Japan one of the best developed countries in the world; be it technology, economy, education, cleanliness, manners and everything.

**2019 Spring 1 semester
From Universiti Utara Malaysia**

I got accepted to Yokohama National University, and into their “JOY” (Junior Year Overseas)) Program. It was probably the most exciting, yet nerve-wracking thing that I had ever done in my life. I got on a plane and went to the Japan for a full four months as a new students in college. When I was leaving my home, family, friends, and job I was anxious and sad to be leaving, but once I arrived in the Japan I could not contain my excitement. I studied at University Utara Malaysia in Kedah, Malaysia . The semester that I studied abroad was probably the best time of my life. Upon arriving in Japan, The culture, cuisine, and breathtaking geography had always fascinated me. I was truly immersed in Japanese culture and daily life, and gained a deep understanding of the Japanese people. I quickly noticed several differences between Japan and Malaysia. For example, on Malaysia trains, people talk to each other or on the phone, and the train cars are usually loud and almost rowdy sometimes. This was not the case in Japan: there, everyone was polite in the trains, and the cars were dead silent because no one talked on their phones. Additionally, I noticed that children in Japan are much more independent than children in Malaysia. Here, children are often driven to school and sports, and parents tend to hover over their kids. On the other hand, in Japan, children walked or rode the trains by themselves to school, and were much more independent than children in Malaysia. However, that is not to say that families were not close. In those four short months, I experienced a different culture, ate new foods, made lifelong friends, travelled to other places, learned to understand an accent that sounds like a whole other language, and learned to be independent. As the program ended and I headed back to Haneda Airport after four months living in Japan,, it was terribly bittersweet. I was grateful for this wonderful opportunity and amazing experience, but also was heartbroken to leave such a beautiful and interesting country.

Goodbye, Japan. See you again.

2019 Spring 1 Semester

From California State University Sacramento

I very much enjoyed my time as a JOY student in Japan. I had enough free time to visit many of the places I wanted to go, which had been a number one concern of mine when I first applied. I was mostly satisfied with the classes I took, and although I was surprised by how many of them I needed, they were not terribly difficult, and having them each only once a week (besides Japanese) meant I had plenty of time to complete assignments. The JOY staff were friendly and always tried to help me with whatever I needed to the best of their ability. I got to meet people my age from all over the world, learn a little about their cultures, and made quite a few friends. I feel like my Japanese skills improved exponentially since I arrived in Japan thanks to the excellent J101 class I took. I was also able to pick up or learn about some small cultural mannerisms by being around Japanese people. Some of the things I will miss most include the efficient public transit system, the safety I felt even walking by myself at night, and the friendly people who helped me even though we could barely understand each other. My biggest challenge may have been the garbage system, which is a great deal more complicated than what I am used to in America, but I think I have gotten the hang of it. I saw beautiful places, wonderfully historical buildings, and am bringing home many special souvenirs. Overall, I'd say I accomplished most if not all of what I wanted to this semester. My JOY program was just how I had hoped it would be!

2019 Spring 1 semester
From Osnabrück University

After arriving at Narita airport I took the shuttle bus to YCAT. At Tokiwadai dormitory I paid rent for the first month plus a moving in deposit in cash. In this dormitory Japanese students live together with exchange students. One of my Japanese roommates helped me with buying articles of daily life and showed me how to use public transport etc. . A few days later we had an introduction ceremony where there were explanations of course selection and future events. On this day we did a placement test in Japanese to determine which level of Japanese courses would be appropriate to our current skills.

There was still a week before courses would start properly so I took the opportunity to view cherry blossoms in Shinjuku Gyoen Park. I went together with all of our roommates and the Japanese roommates guided us there. Afterwards course work started up. During the semester there were activities planned by a group of Japanese students who facilitated international exchange. The biggest one was the Astage camp excursion, where we went to a kind of youth hostel together and did a bunch of activities together to better get to know each other. In the evening there was an opportunity to try a public bath together and afterwards there was social drinking and card and board games. On the next day we performed a bunch of sports like games and competitions together before returning back to Yokohama and our dorms. I would recommend this experience to every JOY student who comes to YNU if the camp takes place during that time. I also enjoyed the excursion to Noh and Kabuki theater as organized by professors in specific courses. It was however also possible for students who were not in these courses to participate. Those visits were special visits with English translations aimed at foreign visitors.

However I probably had the most fun traveling either by myself or with roommates around Tokyo. If you want to travel a lot in Japan, you should definitely have mobile internet connection. If you have not gotten a contract at home, you can buy monthly or several monthly prepaid SIM cards with data for that period at electronics store like Yodobashi Camera in Yokohama. With mobile internet and Google traveling becomes very easy once you figured out how to find your way around stations.

Also if you want to be in contact with other Japanese students, you should use the phone app LINE which is similar to WhatsApp and very widely used in Japan.

If you decide to come to Japan I hope you have as great a time as I did.

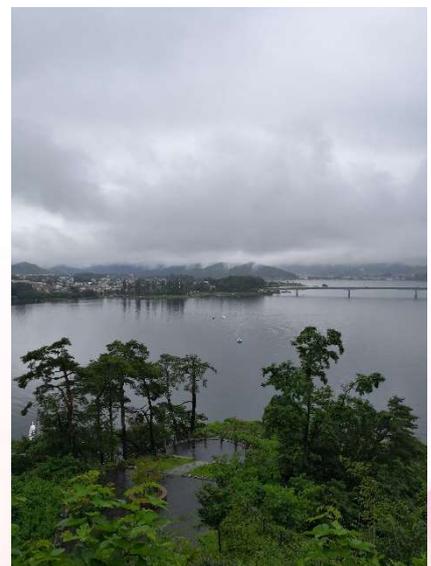
2019Spring 1 semester

From University of Oulu

Yokohama is well-located city if you want to visit different areas not only in the Tokyo metropolis but also other locations further away. It doesn't take long to travel with the wide and handy metro system or by bus. Yokohama itself has many beautiful and interesting locations to visit, such as the Minatomirai and harbor areas or the lively shopping centers in and around the central train station. The smaller suburban residential parts also offer a different kind of an experience. Japan also celebrates many unique and different festivals, such as the Kanabata matsuri, which are worth a look. Other points of interest are for example the Shinjuku National Park, the Moominvalley Theme Park, the sea-side city of Kamakura, the shopping opportunities in Shibuya and Harajuku, and the lakes around Mt Fuji.

Overall, studying at YNU was nice. At first it took some time to adapt to the different kind life here for example when it came to grocery shopping and bureaucracy, but it wasn't overly challenging. The courses offered by the university were varied from film studies to linguistics and they were quite well balanced, and the teachers were knowledgeable and friendly. The university and its affiliates also offered various activities, including a welcome walk in the harbor, a sightseeing cruise, and traditional theater visits. The new dorm made the exchange experience and daily life even better by being located on-campus and offering a nice balance of privacy and interacting with your roommates. It was also easy to make your own food or to enjoy the many kinds of cuisines offered at the restaurants all around the city from raamen and chaahan to Indian food and hamburgers. In addition, even though Yokohama doesn't actually feel too crowded, the nature-filled campus balances the busier sides of life here. The summertime warmness and rainy season weren't too much to bear either. I would recommend coming here for an exchange based on all the possibilities it offers and because you can shape the experience to your wants and needs.

2019Spring 1 semester
From University of Oulu



2019 Spring 1 semester

From University of Oulu

I chose Japan as my exchange country because I had had a special emotional bond towards the culture since I was just 12 years old. I was dreaming about travelling to Japan, but the country was too far away, and I had my studies as well as other responsibilities back in Finland. When my university studies were almost over, I decided that I can't miss this last opportunity. I applied for Yokohama National University because I had heard good comments from my friends and now I can agree with their vision.

Even though I had a lot of things to do when I first arrived, I felt that there were so many people ready to help me. I didn't have to worry about dormitory arrangements since everything was ready for us. Rules were told clearly, and we also got many informative papers. People in the management office were really sweet and they could help me with any kind of problems. I experienced the kindness of Japanese people in multiple situations, also in our university environment. The very first day was exciting for all of us, but because of the kindness of JOY Program staff members, I wasn't worried at all. Everything important was said in the welcoming event and also written in the booklet that we got. Going to the ward office in our first days was the most complicated part of the exchange but fortunately, the arrangements were made easy for the foreign students and we got Japanese guides who helped us with the registrations.

The JOY students were all living in the dormitory. It was easy to join the group when we had common interests like visiting new places in Japan or we shared questions related to studying or living in Japan. I think that most of the exchange students wanted to sort out possible problems first with other students before considering having help outside the student community. However, I noticed that as I chose the intensive course for Japanese language, I didn't have time to go out with other students so often. Luckily, I could get familiar with wonderful people in Japanese class, so I didn't feel alone. Joining a circle was also a great way of getting Japanese friends and improving my Japanese skills. Now the classes have finished and it's time to go home. I can't believe how fast these months flew by and I definitely have to come back one day. I recommend applying here as a JOY student at least for one semester but definitely for a year if it's possible.



2018 Fall & 2019 Spring 2 semester
From Université Jean Moulin-Lyon 3

In this program, I was lucky enough to learn a lot of new things during this year and the most impressive part would be the Arabic class taught by Yoshida sensei.

I think I will be continuing my Arabic studying even after this program.

Here are some photos of the activities and I hope you will too enjoy your exchange life here

Best wishes



2019 Spring 1 semester

From Université Paris-Est Creteil

Back to Monday, April 1st, 2019. I finally land in Japan, the country that created the things I love the most on Earth: One Piece, Smash Bros and sushi. I discover my new home, Tokiwadai International Residence, which is next to university. A lovely place where I had a lot of fun playing games with my friends. The residence was brand-new, comfortable and convenient. It has several units, mine had 8 rooms. Japanese students and foreigners live together and try to get along well.

Wednesday, April 3rd. The JOY Program that I have been longing for so long finally begins. In the room, a lot of unknown but friendly faces of people from more than 20 countries. I remember the wish of the coordinator for our promotion: to learn more about Japan and about ourselves. It came true: this short stay in Japan was truly life-changing for me. It made me think about my future, through the business classes but also thanks to the people I met. I was a bit busy with classes (19 credits) but I did my best to enjoy my time outside classroom as well. I attended all the events of 105 – a student organization that makes sure you enjoy your time in Yokohama without worrying about anything, for example, you can practice Japanese with them while building friendship, they organize movie nights, camps, and a BBQ before the final exams! I also had a tutor from Mitsui V-net, who taught me a lot of things about Japan's history and brought me to interesting places. And I participated in a homestay program (2 days, 1 night). I could experiment the life of a Japanese household and it was truly an amazing moment, I felt like belonging to the family. I also did a speech to present Madagascar to Japanese people.

The JOY Program is truly a suitable name. It brought so much joy into my life, I can't be thankful enough for the partnership between YNU and my home university in Paris (UPEC). This was truly the best time of my life. If you are reading this and if you can come through this program, just try and come. I believe Japanese ability is a plus and will open way more doors but even without it, you can manage in daily life, enjoy your time here and learn more about Japanese culture. Everyone finds something cool to do: watching fireworks while wearing yukata in summer, going to see temples and shrines, eating food from curry to sushi, etc... Yokohama is a lovely city and I am sure you will love it.

About the future, I decided to do my best to live in Japan right after I graduate from my degree. And once again, I will sing my favourite songs at karaoke after a good day in Minato Mirai area with wonderful people. Thanks to everyone that made this stay in Japan possible and made it unforgettable! I promise I will be back soon.

2019 Spring 1 semester
From University of Le Havre

Spending one semester at Yokohama National University as part of the JOY Program was an incredible and enriching experience, both on the academic and personal levels.

Coming to Japan was for me an opportunity to improve my level of Japanese, and at YNU there are many possibilities for students who are interested in Japanese classes. There is a lot of different classes, some dedicated to special skills like writing or speaking, but I chose the course entitled Intensive Japanese, the most complete one. I had nine hours a week of Japanese classes, and I can now say that even though it was quite difficult, I know I got a lot better in only one semester.

I also chose to participate to the Iaido Class, a Japanese martial art, which was a good way to learn about Japanese culture. I really loved this class and can only recommend it.

Then, I also had the opportunity to take a class for which the teacher was an American visiting scholar, and another one based on the cooperation of international and Japanese students to organise an event.

Finally, one of the requirements for the students in the JOY program is to write a research paper in English or Japanese, entitled "Japan in the World". This is a personal work and students are only asked to send reports indicating how their research are going once every two weeks. This kind of research paper requires a lot of time and implication, however writing it was for me a good experience, as it helped me learn new things not only about Japan but also other countries, including my own. That is what I think is the best thing about exchange programmes: learning more about the host country enables you to reflect on your own country and yourself.

Living for one semester in Japan was indeed also very enriching on the personal level. It was an incredible opportunity to live, have class and become friends with people from all around the world. In the dorms I had Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Belgian roommates. In class, I met and studied with Japanese and other international students, and we enjoyed our free time together.

Living in Yokohama was one of the things I enjoyed the most. I lived in the Tokiwadai International Residence, a very modern dorm situated on campus. It is a huge advantage, as I could go to class in 10 minutes in foot. Plus, the campus is beautiful, and you can find everything you need there. When I wanted to go for a walk, I usually ended up in Wadamachi or Mitsuzawa, approximately 30 minutes away from the dorms, and sometimes I went to see Minato Mirai at night. Also, there is a bus stop to go to Yokohama station 5 minutes away. From Yokohama Station you can easily reach Tokyo or the more traditional city of Kamakura. Yokohama is an animated, beautiful and well-deserved city, so I took advantage of that fact to go sightseeing every week-end. There is always something new to discover in the area, and the holidays are an opportunity to travel more and go North or South to discover different cities and aspects of Japan.

To conclude, I loved my stay in Japan. It was a once in a lifetime experience and I enjoyed every second of it. The fact that international students are so well-supervised helped a lot. I know I could seek answers to my questions to the Student Center or the Management office of the dorms. I recommend this experience to everyone and hope they enjoy their stay at YNU as much as I did.

2019Spring 1 semester
From University of Le Havre

The JOY Program was a great experience which I would recommend to everyone, to live such an experience once in his life.

The program provides a great supervision to its students so that everything always goes smoothly during the period of stay which is a real relief when arriving in a new country. The staff and teachers are really kind which gives this journey a better feeling of being at home as whenever you have a question or a problem everyone will be willing to do its best in order to help you.

There is a large range of courses proposed, some to fulfill one's learning of its major but also some on Japanese culture which provide a better understanding of the country we are living in during this stay. Moreover, the Japanese classes proposed definitely improves one's Japanese skill. Thanks to those courses I feel like I did huge progresses, and I feel a lot more confident while talking with Japanese people.

Through this stay in YNU, JOY students were provided great opportunities to meet and make new friends through the international community in the university and its different programs, but also with Japanese students through courses and events being held on the campus. Meeting people was according to me the best part of my stay. I had opportunities to meet many people from different origins and shared with them some good moments while understanding a bit more about everyone's culture. This is the best occasion to practice English and Japanese with the different people you meet during your stay.

2019 Spring 1 semester

From The Higher Education Institute of the Province of Liege

I lived in a share unit. It was my first experience leaving alone and it was my first time leaving abroad for so long.

I was a bit afraid of leaving alone in an apartment, without talking to anyone or meeting anybody. But I was also reluctant with the idea of leaving with strangers because we never know how it can turn out. But the share unit was the good solution.

Fortunately, everybody was following the rules and was very kind with each other. I met people from different countries and different cultures, and it was really nice. Moreover, when I wanted to be alone, I could just go to my room. I could socialize and have privacy when I wanted.

The dormitory is brand new, so everything is clean and nice.

I was able to live and meet people from other countries in the lobby. This place was very nice because I met a lot of people from different programs there. It was also very convenient because when I wanted to leave the unit but not especially wanted to go outside, I could go in the lobby to refresh my mind peacefully.

Comparing to my home university, this campus is huge so I thought it would be difficult to meet people, but the cafeteria and the international student centre were very nice and convivial places.

The classes are interesting, I learned a lot of things. It was obviously different from my home country, but I enjoyed it a lot because I learned in a new way.

The different facilities are also very convenient. The library, the computers, the cafeterias, the convenience stores inside the campus... And for they are really affordable.

The coordinators were also very nice. I am grateful because they helped me a lot when I was a bit lost.

2019 Spring 1 semester

From Haute École de la Province de Liège

On April 2nd, 2019, I left my family in Belgium and headed to Japan. It was a special day for me, and I had never imagined it would be one of the best experiences of my life.

When I first met with my flat mates at the dorm, they had a typical Japanese dish from their city for me and they gave me a warm welcome. At that moment I knew I would be welcomed and loved during my stay in Japan by its kind people.

If someone asks me about the secret to my exchange student experience, I would say communication and an open-minded personality are the key factors. I always tried to initiate conversations with Japanese people even though my language skills are not the best, and also joined school activities as much as I could to further immerse myself into the community. As a result, I was able to adapt in a new environment and made many Japanese and international friends in such a short time period.

