

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:	Medicine and Dentistry	Degree Status:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
Major/Minor:	Bsc in Medical Laboratory Science		
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:	Sophia University		
City/Town:	Tokyo	Country:	Japan
Exchange/Summer Program Period:	From: 07/25/2013 (mm/dd/yyyy)	To: 08/14/2013 (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?	Don't need any immigration documents.		
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?	Get started early so you aren't rushed and panicking right before you go!		

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?	JAP 101 and JAP 102
How did taking a class in another language (that was not your first language) impact your learning experience? Did you instructor make any accommodations?	I took JPZ 102 at Sophia University which is the equivalent of JAP 2XX back at UofA so prerequisite knowledge was needed in order to take the course. There was some overlap from what I learnt back at UofA because that was when they were still using Nakama instead of Genji but for those who have taken Japaense 1XX level courses with Genji, there sholdn't be too many difficulties in studying Japanese.

Academia

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

Prior to going, I got the Student Exchange/Study Abroad Program form filled out by my faculty for the courses that I was planning to take. We worked out what the equivalents were so that credits could be transferred when I came back. I decided to change one of the courses I was taking at Study Abroad and when I came back, we were still able to get my credits transferred.

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 applied for the host institution back in Canada online. The procedure was very simple because the UofA already has an exchange partnership agreement with Sophia University. Other forms that I had to fill in such as for housing was very straight forward and the Study Abroad Office would send those for me to the host institution. I didn't change any of the courses that I registered in upon arrival but it was possible to drop/add/switch courses within the first week or so and many people I know did do that.

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

JPZ 102B - Japanese 2-B and SOZ 430 - Japanese Popular Culture for the Summer Session in Asian Studies Program for the summer term.

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

3 credits per course. Each letter grade (A to F) is assigned a quality point (4.0 to 0) and the number of credits is multiplied by the quality point given for that course to calculate the grade point. Letter grades range from A, B, C, D, F and quality points range from 4.0, 3.0, 2.0, 1.0, and 0. An A is 100-90%, B is 89-80%, C is 79-70%, D is 69-60%, and F is 59% and under.

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

JPZ 102B was taught in very similar format to JAP XXX courses here at UofA. Class sizes were fairly small with only 20 students per class and allowed for participation opportunities, presentations, and vocabulary drills.

SOZ 430 was a paper based course which had readings assigned for each class and assignments consisted of reports and a final paper. The class had a variety of teaching methods such as lecture based, movies, documentaries, and trips to specific locations in Tokyo.

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

An unofficial transcript was mailed to my own address and the official transcript was sent to the Study Abroad Office which was forwarded to my faculty. On the admission application for Sophia University there is a section to fill out specifying where transcripts are sent to and the Study Abroad Office has instructions on how to obtain your transcript after your study abroad session in order for credits to transfer.

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 specific office for Summer Session in Asian Studies open during the duration which allowed students to deal with courses. Many libraries and computer labs were available throughout campus and there were also numerous Wi-Fi hotspots available. The bookstore specifically for textbooks wasn't open throughout the whole session but there was another one that sold binders, stationary, and university goods open all the time. A health clinic was open during the session as well. There were a number of cafeterias open throughout campus that served cheap and good food!

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

I honestly don't know sadly.

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

The Summer Sessions Office located on Campus possibly.

Housing Information

To the best of your knowledge, what housing options are available to students?	Sophia Soshigaya International House, DK House (dorm), Azalea House (apartment), Sakura Hotel, The Asia Center of Japan, Toshi Center Hotel (all hotels), and BUREAU Kioicho, BUREAU Kagurazaka, and B-Site Akihabara (all serviced apartments)
What type of housing did you stay in?	<input type="checkbox"/> On-campus residences <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Off-campus housing <input type="checkbox"/> With a host family <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
How satisfied were you with your housing choice?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> 1 = Not at all satisfied</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> 2</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> 3</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> 5 = Very satisfied</div> </div>
What should future students be aware of when choosing on-campus residences? <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> 	Be sure to understand the housing rules, especially if it is a mixed dorm. Students should check up on how far the housing is from other places like the airport, transportation costs, whether there is a meal plan provided or if you have to cook for yourself and if you need to provide your own cooking utensils. Students should have a good idea of what is provided in the rooms such as furniture and bedding so they know what to bring and what not to bring from home. Showers may not be in individual rooms and may be shared with the floor so students should know what to expect prior to going.
What should future students be aware of when choosing off-campus housing? <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> 	Students should make sure to read and understand the lease agreements before jumping to sign anything and plan far ahead before going! Again students should make sure they know what is provided and what isn't so that they don't have to bring unnecessary items from home over. Knowing the neighborhood and what type of people live there is important, whether families or young adults live in the location is important so that you don't disturb others. Distance from the school is really important because transportation can cost quite a lot!

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.)

Sophia Soshigaya International House where I stayed provided many opportunities to meet others and become good friends with the other students who were also in the same program. There are many extra-curricular activities offered by Sophia University while you are studying there so you get to meet others and learn about Japan at the same time.

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

Not too sure about this one, especially since the session wasn't very long.

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?

Japan is very safe and hygenic!

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

This is required to have prior to going. I had the UofA insurance plan which provided the necessary travel and health insurance. Travel Cuts at SUB does provide travel insurance for those who are on another insurance plan but don't have travel insurance.

Cultural Adaptation

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

It is very important to be polite on the streets and in public! You can't talk loudly on the trains and your cell phones should be silent or off. It is rude to eat on the streets!

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

The people are truly very kind and helpful. Even if they cannot speak English very well, they will try their hardest and go out of their way to help you out. The food is amazing and not very expensive!

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	Brief Description	Round trip from Calgary straight to Tokyo
Visa fees	\$ 0	Brief Description	Don't need a visa!
Books/term	\$ 75	Brief Description	Only needed a textbook for JPZ102B
Accommodation/month	\$ 190	Brief Description	At Sophia Soshigaya International House
Meals/month	\$ 80	Brief Description	Cafeteria food was very good and cheap!
Health insurance/month	\$ 10	Brief Description	UofA Undergraduate Insurance Plan
Local transportation/month	\$ 50	Brief Description	Going to and from school was about \$8 a day only!
Personal spending/month	\$ 300	Brief Description	This really varies on what you like to buy! I like to collect CDs so most of my money went to that. ;)
Communications/month (e.g. phone)	\$ 0	Brief Description	There is a phone plan available for students but I decided not to get it since I wasn't there for long.
Other travel	\$ 1000	Brief Description	I purchased a 14 day Japan Rail Pass at ~\$500 and spent another 10 days traveling throughout Japan.
What unexpected costs did you encounter?	I didn't really have really big issues because it is very convenient to get money from ATMs there.		

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 type="checkbox"/> Scholarships from Host Institution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student loans <input checked="" 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?

Very hot but be prepared for weather changes throughout the period that you are there!
 Take the chance to go out and explore the city and travel while you are there, studies are important but a balance of both school and fun is possible!
 Meet people and get to know them! You will meet some wonderful people who share your same interests who are also studying abroad and the locals are all very kind!

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

Definitely yes! The program is short and can be intensive depending on what courses you take but totally worth it! The program that I am in didn't enable me to have a full four months off during the summer and I couldn't afford to take a whole year or semester off so this program was perfect for me. You can transfer up to 6 credits during a 3 week duration in a whole other country experiencing something amazing. :)

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

I highly encourage students to study abroad during their post-secondary education! You won't regret it!