

STUDY in JAPAN

Saitama University
Short-Term Exchange Program



Saitama University
埼玉大学

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SAITAMA: JAPAN AT YOUR DOORSTEP

For many people, the thought of Japan conjures up images of rich cultural traditions, cutting-edge technology, and courteous hospitality. These images may be accurate, but they only provide a small glimpse of all Japan has to offer. A university exchange is a perfect way to learn more about this fascinating country. See the sights, master the language, experience the culture, and build friendships that will last a lifetime. Welcome to Japan... welcome to Saitama!

Unparalleled Livability

Saitama then and now

In feudal times, Saitama was the 'gateway to Tokyo'; a place enjoyed by everyone from emperors to peasants, and a refuge at times of crisis in the capital. Local samurai promoted a philosophy of peace and tolerance, nurturing the land and planting trees rather than crossing swords. This historical legacy has grown into a distinct local identity that blends urban amenities with all the charms of nature. More than 170,000 non-Japanese nationals now call Saitama home—a testament to the region's livability and friendly cosmopolitanism.

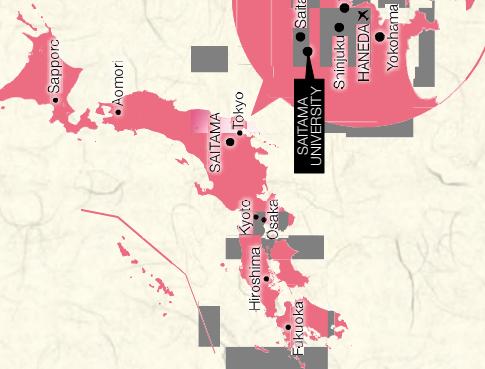


A metropolis at your fingertips

Located just north of Tokyo, Saitama is one of East Japan's most popular residential areas. The regional rail hub, Omiya station, is only 30 minutes from Ikebukuro and just a few more from other Tokyo hotspots such as Shinjuku and Shibuya. Saitama residents boast that the attractions and conveniences of big city life are at their fingertips, but never in their faces.

Easy access to Japan's top destinations

All of Japan's major attractions are within easy reach of Saitama. Popular day trip options include Mt. Fuji, the Nikko World Heritage Area, and the ski slopes of Sayama. Saitama is on the Shinkansen high-speed train network that can take you to northern attractions such as Aomori, or southwest to Kyoto, Osaka and beyond, in just a few hours.



Sofia Otero
University of North Carolina
at Asheville
(U.S.A.)
"I would find that when you do this, people will step up to help you, and that you won't feel alone. Gambatte!"

Making the most of the experience

Every day in Saitama has been slightly different than the last. It's been really refreshing to me to step out of my daily life and remember to find novelty in the seemingly mundane. I sometimes struggle to make myself understand in what would call 'beautiful' Japanese, and instead convey my intentions with broken phrases and words, but that struggle has only made me work harder to blend in and learn from watching others. Just last week, I lost the last train and ended up stranded in a part of the city I'd never been to before. This experience however created a situation where I was able to meet new people and find my own solutions to problems. I would never have had to face otherwise. I think this has really helped me grow as a person. In my mind this trip has been the quest/journey/coming of age event that has helped mark my understanding of who I am. That's the wonderful thing about Saitama and I would encourage anyone coming to Saitama

Did you know ?

No.1

Saitama is widely known as a magnet for major events. It boasts the Saitama Stadium, one of the largest purpose-built soccer venues in Asia and a host venue for the 2002 World Cup. Many of the world's top musical artists have performed at Saitama Super Arena. Smaller venues host an array of other performing arts events and exhibitions to suit all tastes. Several of Japan's top professional sporting teams also call Saitama home, including the Seibu Lions (baseball) and Urawa Reds (soccer).



Did you know ?

No.2

Saitama is the backdrop to the phenomenally successful animated feature *My Neighbor Totoro*, directed by the world-renowned Miyazaki Hayao. The film depicts the charming rural atmosphere of Saitama in the 1960s.



SAITAMA UNIVERSITY

The world's gateway to Japan, Japan's gateway to the world

One of Japan's elite national universities, Saitama University was founded after the amalgamation of three renowned national education universities in 1949. The university's 8,500 domestic students come from all over Japan, with more enrolling from outside the Greater Tokyo Metropolitan area than within it. Saitama University strives to be an international academic gateway, welcoming students and researchers from around the world not just as guests, but as valued colleagues and collaborators. Saitama University researchers stand at the pinnacle of their field in many disciplines, and the university has an active program of international partnerships in both research and learning cosmopolitanism.

Academic Programs

Faculty of Liberal Arts	Faculty of Science
Global Governance Studies	Mathematics
Sociology and Field Studies	Physics
Philosophy and History	Chemistry
European Culture and American Studies	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Japanese and Asian Culture	Regulatory Biology

Faculty of Education	Faculty of Engineering
Comprehensive Education	Mechanical Engineering
Modern Symbiosis Education	Electrical and Electronic Systems
Subject Education	Information and Computer Sciences
School Health Nursing	Applied Chemistry

Faculty of Economics	Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Economics	Graduate School of Education
Business Management	Graduate School of Science and Engineering

*as of April 2015



An ideal choice — whatever your goal may be

I chose Saitama University because it offers an excellent Japanese language program and great freedom for exchange students to plan their own studies in both English and Japanese language mediums. A Japanese friend studying at Saitama University had also told me good things about the friendly, attentive teachers and the laid-back environment. Here on campus, have the best of both worlds; a quiet and peaceful environment conducive to study, and proximity to the big city when I need it. University staff members are supportive and genuinely interested in exchange students welfare. I really hope to maintain a connection with Saitama University after my exchange has finished. Every exchange student has a different purpose; some are focused on their studies, others seek immersion in Japanese culture, and others hope to broaden their views of the world. The most important thing is to have a purpose in the first place! Saitama University will help you achieve your goals, whatever they may be.



(Thailand) Chulalongkorn University

What makes us special?

1. Low student teacher ratio

The Saitama educational experience is characterized by small class sizes and attentive, dedicated instructors. Students are encouraged to collaborate with their classmates and make the most of their instructors' knowledge and guidance.

2. Comprehensive campus

All academic departments are based on the university's main campus on the outskirts of Saitama city. This concentration of academic activity creates an intellectually stimulating atmosphere and provides many opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.

3. Generous scholarships

The university administers an extensive range of scholarship and financial aid programs, supported by government and private-sector donors. Many exchange students, both outbound and inbound, receive generous subsidies and allowances.



STUDYING AT SAITAMA UNIVERSITY

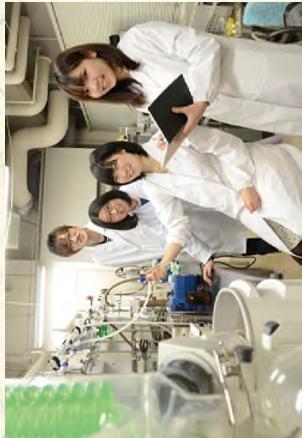
Take control of your exchange

Exchange students at Saitama University have the opportunity to tailor their academic programs to their own individual needs and interests. They choose from a wide array of academically rigorous courses, complemented by a Japanese language program that delivers proven results.



Regular Courses

Saitama University is a comprehensive university, offering a wide variety of courses across all disciplinary areas. Exchange students are welcome to enroll in these courses, subject to their Japanese proficiency and other previous study experience. Over 50 courses are also offered in an English language medium, allowing students with little or no Japanese ability to study alongside local students majoring in the same field.



Popular Courses Taught in English

The following English-taught courses have proved popular among exchange students in the past:

- Japanese Politics and Foreign Policy
- International Communication
- Japan in the Foreign Imagination
- Anthropology of Japan
- Japanese Pop Culture
- Pre-Modern Japanese Literature
- Justice and Violence Culture in Pre-Modern Japan
- Contemporary International Affairs

Search for current courses (Web Syllabus):
<http://syllabus.saitama-u.ac.jp/tacapp/searchall.aspx>
 List of courses taught in English (Spring 2014):
<http://en.saitama-u.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Saitama-U-List-of-courses-in-English-SP2014.pdf>

Academic System

Course Credits

One semester is 15 weeks and most semester-length courses involve one class per week.
 15 X 90-minute class = 2 credits
 15 X 90-minute class = 1 credit for a language course

Grades

Exchange students will be evaluated and awarded grades in accordance with Saitama University's policies.

GP	Grade
4	S (Excellent)
3	A (Good)
2	B (Satisfactory)
1	C (Minimal)
0	F (Fail)

Japanese Language Program

Exchange students also have the option of enrolling in the intensive Japanese language course operated by the Japanese Education Center. This highly regarded program features first-class instructors and the latest teaching methodologies. Exchange students are placed in classes best suited to their proficiency level. The full range of skill areas is covered, from reading/writing to everyday spoken Japanese. Many students go on to achieve excellent results in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).



Academic Year

This is the standard academic schedule at Saitama University. Exact dates vary from year to year. Exchange students may study for one or two semesters, depending on their own plans and the requirements of their home universities.

Schedule	Fall semester	Spring semester
Accommodation check-in for new arrivals	Late September	Last week of March
Orientation, course registration, placement tests	First week of October	First week of April
Classes begin	First week of October	Second week of April
Mid-semester break	Late December to early January	n/a
Final examinations	Late January to early February	Late July to early August
Accommodation check-out for departing students	By early March	By early September

A journey toward "Japan-literacy"

Courses taken at Saitama University (Semester 1, 2014)

- Japanese language program courses
- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Conversation/Presentation
- Advanced Writing

Courses taught in Japanese

- Introduction to Educational Methodology
- Japanese Language and Education
- Japanese and Asian Cultures
- English Grammar
- Korean
- Foundations of Modern-Japanese Political Thought



Anqi Li
 Renmin University of China

Experience within and beyond the classroom

Courses taken at Saitama University (Semester 1, 2014)

- Courses taught in English
- Japanese Pop Culture
- Contemporary International Affairs
- Japanese language program courses
- Reading & Grammar
- Oral Expression
- Listening
- Vocabulary, Kanji and Writing
- Conversation



Desiree Bennini
 University of Turin

Experience within and beyond the classroom

Courses taken at Saitama University (Semester 1, 2014)

- When I first came to class at Saitama University, I was pleasantly surprised by the small class sizes. Instructors give us individual attention and ensure that everyone's stay engaged. I also like the international atmosphere. Having classmates from places as diverse as Brazil, Russia, Spain, Thailand and the UK not only provides a great multi-cultural experience, but also ensures that class discussions are full of different ideas and perspectives.
- I feel that Saitama University's curriculum is extending my language skills and knowledge of Japan, but more importantly it's helping me make the most of the experience of immersion in the Japanese culture. I encourage students to treat the whole campus and community as a classroom. Even a simple walk around campus is sure to teach you something new!





STUDENT LIFE

Community

Warm welcomes and genuine friendships

Exchange at Saitama University is about much more than study. As soon as exchange students step off campus, they are part of the wider community. They experience real-life, everyday contact with locals, improving their language skills and gaining a deeper appreciation of Japanese society and culture. Community groups value interaction with exchange students and actively organize activities, such as homestays, cultural experiences, and school visits. Many students maintain connections with their "second home" in Saitama for many years after their exchange.



Enhancing the exchange experience

We believe that housing is a focal point for student life and a crucial feature of the educational experience. I-House offers new arrivals a ready-made social world where they can meet new friends and adjust to life in Japan in a supportive, convenient environment. An added benefit of life at I-House is the opportunity to interact with students from across the globe. This cosmopolitan interaction is an unexpected benefit of the exchange experience for many students at Saitama University.



Support Services

One-on-one attention to all students' needs

The Office of International Affairs is your first port of call for concerns and questions about life as an exchange student. General advice on studies and daily living is readily available, and the office can also provide introductions to specialized services such as medical care. Our staff members take pride in treating each student as an individual and will take the time to get to know you and your needs.



Student Clubs

Beyond the classroom, beyond your horizons
Exchange students at Saitama University are strongly encouraged to get involved in extracurricular activities. Joining one of the university's 172 registered student clubs is the ideal way to indulge your interests at the same time as making friends with local students beyond your regular classes. Popular student clubs for exchange students include Aikido, Judo, and Basketball.



The ideal place to start life in Japan

Looking back at my first two months on exchange, I realize that international studies, this might be the first time I have actually used Japanese as a language of international communication.

One of my major concerns before adjustment to life in Saitama, A- I-House, immediately felt part of a community of students that was keen But here in I-House, I am finding life very affordable. I have also been fortunate to receive a JASSO scholarship worth 80,000 yen per month, which is enough to cover my living costs here. I think the balance between affordability and quality makes Saitama University a great place to study.

I also enjoy I-House's cosmopolitan atmosphere. My immediate neighbours are from the U.S. and China, and three of us have in common. Even



Jacob Lennart
University of Hamburg
(Germany)



My Day A typical day in the life of Charleen Lay

Rise and shine	7:30~	Lunch and a chat	12:10~
My alarm wakes me just in time for a quick breakfast in my room at International House		The Cafeteria is my favorite spot for lunch. Today, catch up with my some other Australian exchange students over a bowl of curly	
Off to class	8:45~	A charge of pace	14:40~
It's a 10-min walk from International House to the main campus. It is		All courses are taught in English. Today's class is Traditional Performing Arts	
Japanese	9:00~	Indulge my passion	16:10~
My first class today is Japanese Grammar. There is a mini-quiz at the start of each class to keep us on our toes		After class, I meet up with some other exchange students back at I-House, and we decide it's go out for dinner in Saita-dori, a dining precinct that's famous for its ramen noodle shops. As usual, it's hard to know which restaurant to choose	
Time for a coffee	10:30~	Dinner	19:00~
I have a coffee break for a quick break. There are several coffee shops and students from many different countries on campus this semester, and it's easy to make new friends		After dinner, I meet up with some other exchange students back at I-House, and we decide it's go out for dinner in Saita-dori, a dining precinct that's famous for its ramen noodle shops. As usual, it's hard to know which restaurant to choose	
More Japanese	10:40~	Back to study	21:00~
Next up is a Japanese conversation class. With countless opportunities to speak Japanese outside the classroom, really feel that my skills have improved since I came to Saitama.		After dinner, I head home to my room in I-House. With a Japanese test tomorrow, there is still plenty to do before I hit the pillow. Wish me luck!	

MONEY MATTERS



HOW TO APPLY



Living Expenses

More affordable than you think

Life in Saitama is an ideal combination of convenience and affordability. Students are pleasantly surprised to find that living costs are significantly lower than in many parts of Europe, North America and Oceania. We recommend you budget around US\$5,000 for a six-month exchange and US\$10,000 for a year-long exchange. See the chart below for a breakdown of average costs.



Insurance

All exchange students are enrolled in Japan's National Health Insurance scheme. 70% of all regular health care costs, including medical prescriptions and dental care, are covered by this insurance for a small monthly premium. The university student cooperative (Co-op) also provides all students with low-cost insurance coverage for both accidents and personal liability.



Scholarships and Financial Aid

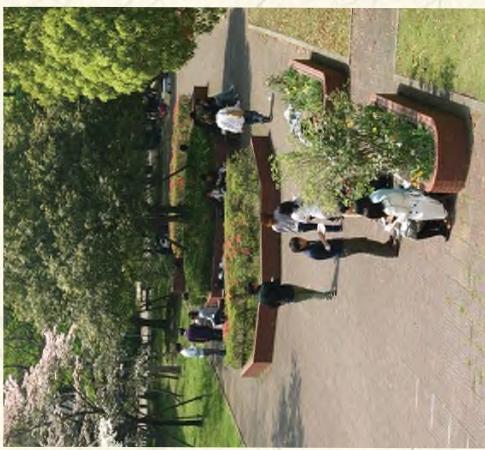
In addition to any support provided by their home institutions, high-achieving exchange students at Saitama University may be eligible for scholarships offered by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO). In the past, these scholarships have been awarded on the basis of academic merit and provided stipends of around US\$300 per month. Saitama University itself also offers Honors Scholarships valued at \$600 per month to students who actively participate in university and community life. The Office of International Affairs informs all new exchange students of the scholarships available and assists with application processes.



From Application to Arrival

If you are interested in going on exchange to Saitama University, the first step is to apply to consult with a study abroad advisor at your home institution and gain approval to complete the Saitama University exchange program for credit. Once you have been approved by your home institution, the process is as follows:

1. Submit application and gain approval from Saitama University. Your home institution will advise you on the necessary documents and deadlines. This process usually begins around 4 months before you arrive in Saitama.
2. Obtain a student visa. Saitama University will help to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility which you take to your nearest Japanese embassy or consulate to apply for a College Student visa to study in Japan.
3. Reserve air tickets, confirm housing and other details. The university will advise you of the arrival schedule and consult with you regarding housing options.
4. Come to Saitama! Saitama University's Office of International Affairs will provide full transport instructions to ensure that your arrival in Japan and on campus is smooth and enjoyable. The Office's friendly staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have as you adjust to life in Saitama.



Living Costs Snapshot

Fees are subject to change.

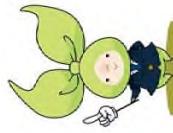
Expense Description		JPY (¥)	USD (\$)
International Residence Hall (on-campus)	Monthly	13,340	118
Utilities (electricity, water, gas etc.)	Monthly	7,000~10,000	60~85
Deposit	7,000~10,000	300	213~256
Meals	Monthly	25,000~30,000	15~17
Local Bus			
Saitama City area	175~195	220	1.9
Tokyo area	220	140~220	1.2~1.9
Saitama City area	140~1,000	140~1,000	1.2~8.5
Saitama City to Central Tokyo	280~450	280~450	2.5~3.8
Transportation			
Local Train	Monthly	1,000	8.5
Japan National Health Insurance	1 year	5,180	44.2
University CO-OP Student Insurance	6 months	4,320	36.9
Books	Per semester	5,000~10,000	43~85
Textbook	Smart phone	6,000~10,000	51~85
Cell phone	Regular contract	3,000~5,000	26~43
Daily Expenses and Other Fees	Monthly	4,500~10,000	38~85
Club activities	Monthly	2,000~5,000	17~43
Social activities	Monthly	5,000~10,000	43~85
Entertainment & Hobby			

Update: March, 2015

- Q. Will I be placed in the right level of Japanese language classes?
A. Yes, all Japanese language program students take a placement test at the start of semester and are assigned to classes suitable to their proficiency level.
- Q. Will I have time to travel around Japan while on exchange?
A. Saitama is an ideal base from which to launch short trips around Japan, and even to nearby countries such as South Korea. During semester, you will have time to travel at weekends and on non-class days. If you are staying for two semesters, you can use the vacation periods in August/September and February. You will be permitted to stay in your accommodation at Saitama University for several weeks after the end of semester (depending on home university requirements), giving you plenty of time to explore the rest of Japan.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. When should I start planning my exchange?
A. As soon as possible! Many students begin to plan 18 months or 2 years before they depart. Your university will usually require you to begin the application process at least 9-12 months before the exchange. Please ask a study abroad advisor for details.
- Q. Do I need to find my own place to live?
A. No, Saitama University will arrange housing for you, usually in the on-campus dormitory, International House.
- Q. When do I choose my courses?
A. Courses lists are finalized before the start of each semester. You will be guided through the course registration process shortly after arriving in Saitama. Course listings from previous semesters are available on our website for reference.



Saitama University
Official Mascot 'Wen-Chan'