

A Window Open to the World

Sugiyama
Nurturing humanity

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Volume
14

Center for International Exchange Programs at
Sugiyama Jogakuen University Newsletter

Toward International Exchange in the "with coronavirus" Era

President Yoshihiko Kuroda

I was appointed as the president of the university in April 2022. I am grateful for this opportunity to serve as president for the next four years.

Although we are still far from the end of the coronavirus disaster, we are now at the beginning of the full-fledged resumption of study abroad activities as we enter the "with coronavirus" era. First of all, I would like to review the conditions of studying abroad at Sugiyama Jogakuen University.

Our study abroad program consists of six strands. These are our (1) Undergraduate Program, (2) Exchange Program, (3) Study Abroad, (4) Partner University Summer Program, (5) Recognized Study Abroad Program, and (6) Privately Funded Study Abroad programs. As you can see in the table below, the total number of international students participating by year in these six programs increased from 207 in 2016 to 230 in 2017, and slightly decreased to 228 in 2018. In 2019, the number increased by more than 20% to 282.

Looking at the breakdown of study abroad destinations, regions include Europe, America, Southeast Asia, Oceania, and East Asia, covering a wide variety of languages, including English, French, German, Chinese, and Korean. I think it can be said that study abroad has generally developed smoothly in terms of both quantity and quality.

However, studying abroad was forced to come to a halt due to the coronavirus disaster. From 2020 until 2022, the number of international students decreased to zero. There are 34 students this year, but this is only 15% of the average number of students studying abroad from 2016-2019.

I have heard that some universities have already restored Short-term overseas training for large numbers of students to pre-coronavirus levels. We are planning to make 2023 the year when we will fully resume studying abroad at our university.

Starting in April 2024, the School of Cross-Cultural Studies will be reorganized into the School of Foreign Studies. In the new School of Foreign Studies, all students will generally participate in short-term overseas training programs, so the number of students studying abroad is sure to increase dramatically.

In anticipation of these developments, under the leadership of Professor Kasahara, Director of the Center for International Exchange Programs (appointed last April), we are working to improve internal structure to accommodate an era of hosting large numbers of international students.

We will continue to do our best so that all interested students can realize personal growth through studying abroad.
(December 13, 2022)



	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
America	28	24	17	27
Canada	42	25	50	23
Australia	69	48	59	72
New Zealand	11	14	8	4
England	4	3	2	6
Singapore	0	18	0	22
France	6	27	35	40
Germany	7	8	14	20
Ireland	0	1	1	1
China	19	16	3	15
Taiwan	0	6	17	2
Korea	13	29	16	28
Thailand	2	11	4	20
Malaysia	0	0	0	2
Philippines	6	0	2	0
Total	207	230	228	282

Life in Australia

Sayuki Ishiguro (2nd Year, Department of Foreign Studies)

I have been attending Southern Cross University in Australia as an exchange student since September 2022. The reason I chose Australia as my study abroad destination was because I was attracted to Australia when I visited Brisbane for language training in high school, and I had a strong desire to study abroad in Australia when I became a university student. I also wanted to study tourism in Australia's Gold Coast, a major tourist destination. Before leaving Japan, I was worried whether I would be allowed to enter Australia due to the unstable situation caused by the coronavirus pandemic, but now I am living life as an international student without any problems.

I am currently studying academic English in order to take local classes at a language school. Every day, I take the same classes with students having various other nationalities and of other ages. I am stimulated every day getting to know differences between languages and ways of thinking in different cultures. Many of the teachers have visited Japan before, and are highly interested in talking about Japanese culture. Another good thing about the language school is that I can practice greetings in the languages of other classmates during breaks and learn about many other languages. Some classmates have lived in Australia for a long time, so they tell me about good restaurants and ask me if I have any problems. They are very friendly and helpful, so I feel safe and enjoy my study abroad life.

The Gold Coast, where I am studying, has many beautiful beaches, tourist attractions, and a rich natural environment, allowing me to spend my days off in a relaxing atmosphere. It's easy to go have fun on days off because it's only about an hour to downtown Brisbane by train.

I'm going to continue with my life studying abroad and working hard to achieve my dreams.



My Experience as an Exchange Student in Korea

Mayu Kimata (3rd year, Department of Culture-Information Studies)

In the first semester of my third year, I studied abroad at Soonchunhyang University in South Korea, outside Seoul. It's only been a few years since the agreement was signed, and I was a third generation student. The reason I decided to study abroad in Korea is that it had been my dream to study abroad in Korea since I was a junior high school student. I took the exchange student selection test even though the destination exchange university was not in Seoul and I had a lot of anxiety about it. But, after that, the coronavirus pandemic spread, and it became impossible to travel abroad, and I lost sight of my dream. I thought about dropping out, but when I got the notice that it would become possible to study abroad again, I thought that finally my dream could come true.

When I was finally able to travel, restrictions on entering Korea due to coronavirus were still strict, so I had to stay in an isolation facility for a week before I moved into a university dorm. Six people lived together on one side of the dorm with another six people living on the other side of a living space. French and Finnish people were living on the other side of the dorm, and I had a lot of fun teaching them Japanese language and giving them Japanese sweets. However, at the same time, there were also difficult aspects, such as struggling with differences in personal hygiene. However, I feel that this experience improved my ability to adapt.

When classes started, I made many friends and started to feel very fulfilled. I was also able to make Korean friends because there was an opportunity to Zoom with Koreans for language exchange. There were also many Uzbek students in the same class and I became friends with a guy who believes in Islam. He taught me a lot about a culture I previously knew nothing about. We don't learn very much about religion in Japan, so I was very interested in it. There were many opportunities to discuss things with people at the international center and with my class instructor, and although our opinions differed, it was a good experience. Not everything was fun, but I feel that I have grown a lot through studying abroad. I met people from various countries and learned many things such as differences in culture, lifestyle, and ways of thinking compared to Japan.

Lastly, I have grown a lot and made many memories by going from Sugiyama Jogakuen University to Soonchunhyang University. I will treasure these memories for the rest of my life. I am full of gratitude to everyone who supported my study abroad, especially my friends and family who assisted me. Now that I have fulfilled my dream, I am in the middle of searching for a job. I would like to use the experiences I have gained from studying abroad to keep pushing forward.



The Disparity Between the Image Presented by Photos and Videos of Foreign Places and Reality

Kazuki Tanaka

(Lecturer, Department of Culture-Information Studies, School of Culture-Information Studies)

When people who have never traveled abroad try to imagine a country they have never been to, first they look at related books and television shows and on the Internet, and more recently they browse video websites such as YouTube and social networking sites. However, there are many cases in which people are surprised by the gap between the images created with such tools and the actual situation they encounter when they actually go to the country.

For example, I once went to Beijing, China, and in the center there is the famous Forbidden City. You may have seen it on the Internet or a video site, but when I actually went there, I was overwhelmed by the enormity of the palace. After that, I went to Xi'an, China. Xi'an used to be called Chang'an and prospered as the capital of the former Han and Tang dynasties. In the northwestern part of the city, the ruins of the entire town of Chang'an, from the former Han dynasty, have been preserved intact. When I went there, it was still huge, and the foundation of the main palace remained, but it was quite big and tall. If a palace was built on this foundation, one can imagine that it would have overwhelmed anyone who sees it. Anyway, I had the impression that various things were big and broad. Even if you try to put it into words and explain it to someone who has never been there before, it will not be possible to sufficiently convey the impression it leaves. I think it is still important, at least at first, to actually go and see and experience things, even in this information age. On the other hand, after going to China myself, it's easier to imagine what a place must be like to some extent, when I see a city or tourist spot from China that I have never been to before on a video site, etc.

International exchange was temporarily hit quite hard due to the coronavirus pandemic that started in 2020. However, travel restrictions have been easing gradually in many countries lately, and old exchange agreements are being restored. Students of Sugiyama Jogakuen University are also encouraged to broaden their experience and deepen their knowledge through studying abroad and visiting and seeing foreign places for themselves.





Experiencing Japanese Culture

Exchange students participate in hands-on experiences with Japanese culture as part of their off-campus educational training. In 2022, they took an overnight trip to Nara for training. Through visiting temples and making Japanese sweets, they learned about traditional Japanese culture, history, industry, and the life of ancient Nara. During the one-day Nagoya Yuzen dyeing field trip, they experienced this traditional craft of Nagoya, where the university is located, and experienced local Japanese culture. In addition, students went to Gujo Hachiman in Gifu Prefecture for training during the autumn leaves season, experienced nature, and Gujo dance which is a famous summer tradition, and visited Gujo Hachiman Castle. Since Sugiyama Jogakuen University students also participate in such off-campus training, it is not only a place for international students to practice Japanese conversation, but also an opportunity for international understanding and cross-cultural exchange for both international students and Sugiyama Jogakuen University students.



Foreign Student Supporters / Study Mates

Sugiyama Jogakuen University students support the exchange students' life. Sugiyama has an International Student Supporters system and a Study Mate system. International exchange student supporters participate in supporting incoming exchange students. They plan and execute various seasonal events like enjoying off-campus training events together and having fun at SUGIYAMA Café. In FY2022, we have planned an event to introduce the 'New Year in the world.' We held a yukata (summer kimono) dressing event and a Christmas party. In addition, Study Mate students help international students with their homework once a week and talk about their culture and current trends. We sometimes take part in off-campus activities, such as visiting places in Nagoya that we have learned about in our activities.



Participation in the University of Tasmania Study Abroad Fair

On August 26 (Friday), Director Kasahara visited Australia's University of Tasmania and participated in the study abroad fair held there. This event allows Sugiyama Jogakuen University to directly describe the university to students of the University of Tasmania who wish to study abroad and to recruit international students to our university.

On the day of the event, Ms. Caylee Tierney and Ms. Olivia Skeers, who have both studied abroad at our university, participated as support. During the presentation, Kasahara revealed an episode only a person who had experienced it could talk about. Students who interested in studying at our university visited our booth after hearing the story. The event was an opportunity to realize that the relationship between our university and partner universities will continue to develop through exchange students.



Agreement Reached with Western Michigan University

On October 21 (Friday), Dr. Ying, in charge of international exchange from Western Michigan University in the United States, and eight university officials visited our university. She was greeted by President Kuroda and Vice President and Director of the Center for International Exchange Programs.

This visit was carried out in two parts, and in the first session, the instructors played a central role in confirming details such as how to proceed with each study abroad program and study abroad conditions. In the second part, agreements were concluded regarding overseas study abroad programs and undergraduate study abroad programs. Opportunities for our students to study at overseas universities will increase even further based on this agreement.



In the future, we will proceed with preparations to start the early dispatch of international students.

"CIEP News" Initiated

The Center for International Exchange Programs has been operating an information website about study abroad programs under the purview of the center for International Exchange Programs, and in 2021, it started operating the information website titled "CIEP News".

The existing website explains each study abroad program, and provides information for those who wish to study at our university. On the other hand, "CIEP News" provides a wider range of content, including events held by our university and partner universities, as well as international exchange events provided by external organizations.

In the future, we plan to post content that will spur your interest in studying abroad, such as local reports by study abroad students.



Incoming exchange student report

Let's go see the wide world

Wang Yi (Shanghai Normal University)

I am Wang Yi from Shanghai Normal University. I studied at Sugiyama Jogakuen University as an exchange student for about 5 months from April to September in 2022.

I have returned to Japan as a 4th year student, and I am busy looking for a job. Looking back, my time in Japan was really fun for me.

After returning, people asked me things like: "Is it really worth all the time and money to come here as an exchange student?" and "Do you regret all the hardship?" Certainly, the coronavirus pandemic has definitely made studying abroad really difficult. Especially in Shanghai, which was in lockdown at the time, I had several flight cancellations. I felt like it was totally hopeless and I was in the worst possible situation. Even so, I was able to overcome it with the feeling that I want to go to Japan. I truly believe that I am the person I am today thanks to that painful experience.

What I learned from this study abroad experience is immeasurable. First and foremost is my Japanese proficiency. At first, my face would turn red with shame and I could not even speak due lack of confidence in my Japanese. As I started my life at Sugiyama, I gradually developed the courage to speak to Japanese and I grew in confidence as the people around me kindly listened to my attempts to communicate as part of my daily life.

I was very impressed by the kindness of Japanese people while living in Japan. I think my ability to be kind to others has also improved, because my teacher and everyone around me was always so kind to me. Everyone around me noticed that my personality had become much brighter after I returned home.

Before studying abroad, I left my parents' house and lived in Shanghai, but I think that I became even more independent after experiencing life as an international student. Life in a foreign country presents many daily challenges, and I grew in confidence with every difficulty that I overcame. I think that I have grown without even realizing it by overcoming my occasional feelings of loneliness and dependence on others, and taking responsibility for myself as I live my own life.

Although my time in Japan was short, I got out of the living environment I was used to, met various people, and got to see the diversity and fun that exists in this world. The experience has opened my mind and broadened my perspective. Although I have returned to China, I have continued to work hard studying Japanese. I have received many things from Sugiyama, and I would like to continue to become a kinder and more respectable person.



Welcome to Sugiyama—Personal Introductions of Incoming Exchange Students —

◆ Supap Sirilak

I come from Sripatum University in Thailand. My major is Japanese business communications. I want to diligently study Japanese culture and language for one year. I hope to better understand the customs and way of thinking of Japanese people.



◆ Liu Yun-Chen

I come from Asia university in Taiwan. I have come this time to study in Japan as a foreign exchange student with the idea of improving my Japanese. I think it is necessary to work hard in order to achieve what I want in life. Although I will only study here for a short period, half academic year, I want to spend my time in Japan experiencing as much as possible.

◆ Ooi Yu-Zhi

I come from Universiti Sains Malaysia. My major is economics. Having studied only Japanese, I want to learn about Japanese culture, make friends, use my free time to travel all around Japan, and have a variety of experiences.

◆ Doicharoen Naphatson

I learned about various Japanese food and culture, and became interested in Japan. Being able to come to Japan as a foreign exchange student is a dream come true. I want to get better at Japanese and also learn more about Japanese culture and etiquette.

★ Welcome to the Center for International Exchange Programs ★

◆ First International Salon held ◆

01 International salon
キセキ!!
椋山に留学生がやってきた
— 外国人留学生の体験談 —
2022.6.22 [WED]
17:00-18:00
@星が丘キャンパス

オウゲイ
交換留学生
中国 上海師範大学出身

リュウ セイソク
大学院留学生
椋山女学園大学
現代マネジメント研究科在籍
中国出身

イムイラン
学部留学生
椋山女学園大学 人間関係学部在籍
韓国出身

お申し込み用QRコード
【締切】6月17日(金) 17:00

【主催】国際交流センター
Email: ciep@sugiyama-u.ac.jp

The First International Salon was held on Wednesday, June 22. The purpose of this international salon is to have exchange students and privately-funded students tell Sugiyama Jogakuen University students about their experiences studying abroad in Japan. This was the first time this event was held. In the first session, titled "A Miracle!! International Students Come to Sugiyama -Experiences of International Students-", we welcomed three international students: an exchange student, an undergraduate student and a graduate student, as guest speakers to talk about their reasons for coming to Japan, and restrictions and difficulties they faced entering Japan due to the coronavirus pandemic. Many questions were asked by participating students, and it was a lively forum for exchanging opinions. Although there have been fewer opportunities for international students and Sugiyama Jogakuen University students to interact with each other due to the coronavirus pandemic, this event increased the opportunity for exchange.



Editorial postscript

We are sending out Volume 14. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to everyone who lent their cooperation in compiling and editing this edition of the newsletter. Opportunities for international exchange have decreased due to the influence of the coronavirus, but we are pleased to say that exchange programs have been revived at our university. This year, we welcomed a total of 5 international students from four different universities, including our first student from the Universiti Sains Malaysia. A total of 19 students from Sugiyama Jogakuen University have been accepted as exchange students or dispatched students at six overseas universities, including Soonchunhyang University in South Korea. In October of this year, we signed a new agreement with Western Michigan University in the United States, with which we can expect future interaction. In addition, the First International Salon was held, featuring a lively exchange of opinions with three international student guest speakers. The Center for International Exchange Programs engages in activities that enhance international exchange at our university. We would greatly appreciate it if you would provide your opinions and impressions on the Center's newsletter.

(2022.12.19 Y.O)

■ Please contact us using the information below if you have any opinions or requests.

Center for International Exchange Programs, Sugiyama Jogakuen University

TEL: +81 52-781-5674 (direct)

FAX: +81 52-781-2038

E-mail: ciep@sugiyama-u.ac.jp

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Edited and published by the Center for International Exchange Programs, Sugiyama Jogakuen University
17-3 Motomachi, Hoshigaoka, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya 464-8662
(TEL) +81 52-781-5674 (direct) (FAX) +81 52-781-2038
<URL> <https://www.sugiyama-u.ac.jp/ciep/>