

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Study Abroad



KANSAI GAIDAI
FALL 2019

Program Guide

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CONGRATULATIONS on being conditionally accepted to the UW-Eau Claire exchange with Kansai Gaidai University. Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

Building upon existing foreign language skills
Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
Increasing understanding of different cultures
Getting to know oneself
Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
Gaining self-confidence and independence
Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your experience!

This program guide is to be used together with the on-line general Study Abroad Handbook. The handbook has information that is valid for all study abroad programs. This guide will provide you with specific information for the Kansai Gaidai exchange program. It is designed to complement the handbook, study abroad orientation, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Please realize that although this guide was written to help you better prepare for your time abroad, and that all of the information available at the time of publishing has been used, it is impossible for one resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will e-mail additional information throughout the semester. We also strongly encourage you to contact the study abroad staff, your peer advisor, past program participants, and Japanese students on campus with your specific questions. You should also make use of the additional written and web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common goals of student studying abroad include: advancement in future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and a wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up, how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in Japanese culture, yet you are going to be with a group of international students, how can you ensure that you do not spend too much time with other U.S. Americans or international students?

The information in this guide was current at the time of printing, though changes may occur at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

Kansai Gaidai University and UW-Eau Claire have had a long-standing partnership since 1979. Between both universities, more than 650 students have participated in the exchange program and more than 11 faculty members have gone to Kansai Gaidai to teach or conduct research. In this exchange program, UW-Eau Claire participants become students in the Asian Studies Program of Kansai Gaidai University. UW-Eau Claire students have the choice of living in the university dormitories or with local families. They take classes with Japanese students and other international students from around the world.

The Location

Kansai Gaidai is located in Hirakata City, midway between Osaka, Japan's second largest industrial city, and Kyoto, the ancient capital. Instructors use the location as an advantage in planning field trips and assisting students in developing independent research projects.

The University

Kansai Gaidai was founded in 1945 as a private language institute. It has now grown to include Kansai Gaidai University, the Graduate School, Kansai Gaidai Hawaii College, and the Asian Studies Program. The University currently enrolls more than 13,000 students, including approximately 700 international students in the Asian Studies Program. Twenty-five to thirty percent of the Asian Studies students are from the U.S.; the rest come from around the world.

Academic Calendar

These dates are estimated at the time of publishing and will be confirmed upon

acceptance by Kansai later in the semester.
Please do not book airfare until you have received confirmation.

Depart the U.S.	August 22-23
Arrival Dates*	August 23-24, 26 (not Sunday, the 25 th)
Orientation*	August 27-30
Move in to permanent housing*	August 31-September 1
Classes Begin*	September 2
Fall Break*	October 25-28
Classes End*	December 16
Exam Period*	December 17-21
Deadline to move out*	December 24

**all dates are tentative!*

Please note that the last day to leave your university housing is subject to change without prior notice. For a more detailed semester calendar, please visit the Kansai Gaidai Web site:

http://www.kansaigaidai.ac.jp/asp/03_academics/01.html

Be aware that the Asian Studies program at Kansai Gaidai runs on a different schedule from the regular university classes. Fall semester is actually 2nd semester for Japanese students, and it does not begin until mid-September; spring semester for Japanese students begins in mid-April. **Opportunities for involvement, especially with student organizations, will not begin until the Japanese semester begins.**

ACADEMICS

There is additional information on maintaining program eligibility, as well as topics such as registration, class attendance, credits and course load, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-

Eau Claire library while abroad in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Program Acceptance

UW-Eau Claire conditionally accepts all applicants and will nominate you to Kansai Gaidai. Upon nomination, you will receive a user ID and password to create your Kansai application. Fall students can make their applications starting January 10th and spring students on August 1 (or earlier).

Fall and academic year students: if you have a completed Kansai application by March 15th, you will be notified by April 30. **Spring students:** if you have a completed Kansai application by September 15th, you will be notified by October 31.

Final acceptance is made by the Center for International Education at Kansai Gaidai University. Kansai will notify successful applicants via e-mail. The e-mail contains an "admission packet" with the information on the following two electronic documents:

- 1) Acceptance message
- 2) The URL to the K-GENSEYS admission site.

To confirm your participation, you must:

- 1) Submit the "Address Form" online. The address form is very important because it is what is used to mail your Certificate of Eligibility.
- 2) Submit the housing questionnaire (when available). You will receive a separate e-mail notification when this section becomes ready.
- 3) Arrival Information: please submit arrival information as soon as your travel plans have been arranged.

Pre-departure Academic Planning

The semester prior to your departure, you should make an appointment with your academic advisor to plan your semester or year at Kansai Gaidai. When you meet with your advisor, you should bring the Kansai Gaidai Asian Studies web site, and your degree audit. Using these materials, you should develop a semester plan as well as select a few back up courses.

You should bring the plan that you developed with your advisor, the course equivalency list, and your degree audit with you to Kansai Gaidai as you will use it to register. You will not finalize your registration until you arrive at Kansai Gaidai.

Course Equivalencies

For information about how specific Kansai Gaidai courses have transferred back to UW-Eau Claire, go to the Transfer Wizard:

https://my.uwec.edu/psp/PUBLIC/EMPLOYEE/HRMS/c/EAU_SS_CUSTOM.EAU_TRNCRDWZ_GBL. Search for Japan and then select Kansai Gaidai. If a course appears on the list, it has already been reviewed by the appropriate UW-Eau Claire department chair, and the equivalency listed is what you will receive upon successful completion of the course.

Please keep in mind that this is a historical record of past course equivalencies. **There is no guarantee that the same courses will be offered in the future, or that they will be offered during the term in which you are abroad.** For a complete and up-to-date course listing, please visit the Kansai Gaidai website: www.kansaigaidai.ac.jp/asp/.

Course equivalencies for any Kansai Gaidai courses not yet evaluated by UW-Eau Claire

will be done AFTER your actual registration at Kansai. This saves the Registrar's Office and department chairs hours of evaluating courses that no one actually takes. **Please note that you cannot assume that a course you are taking will transfer back in the way you want it to just because the course description sounds similar to a course taught at UW-Eau Claire.** All course equivalency decisions are made by UW-Eau Claire department chairs and are not official until the Registrar's Office receives the equivalency, with the chair's signature on it.

Japanese Language Class

All Japanese language classes meet in the morning. Everyone takes a Japanese language placement test. Your placement test will be used to determine the appropriate level for you. The spoken Japanese class meets five days/week; the Kanji and reading meet two days/week. Both classes have regular exams, including a midterm and a final. **The five-credit Japanese language course is required of all program participants.** The three-credit, elective, Kanji and Readings courses are designed to accelerate your skills in writing Kanji and reading authentic Japanese. The Kanji and reading courses come back to UWEC as Japanese language elective credit.

Asian Studies Courses

Asian Studies classes are taught in English and meet in the afternoons. All Asian Studies classes are three credits each; assessment varies by class: you may have papers, presentations and/or exams. The course offerings vary from year to year, but to get an idea of what might be offered, check here: http://www.kansaiheidai.ac.jp/asp/03_academics/02/02/01.html. Many of the Asian Studies courses are supplemented by outside field

trips. Kansai subsidizes some portions of the transportation fees, but the student must pay for whatever is not subsidized.

Studio Art Courses

You may take one art class (Japanese brush painting or pottery) per semester. No student, under any circumstances, is permitted to take these courses at the same time, nor register for an increased load of either one. There is an additional materials fee (around \$100), which must be paid before you register for the class.

Registration at Kansai Heidai

You will register during your orientation program at Kansai Heidai, as the program does not allow pre-registration. Available courses and short descriptions are in the Kansai Heidai Asian Studies web site at <http://www.kansaiheidai.ac.jp/asp/>. You will be allowed to add courses during the first two weeks of the semester and be allowed to drop any courses during the first three weeks of the semester.

As soon as you register you will need to log in to your BlugoldsAbroad account while you are abroad and fill out the Course Description Questionnaire indicating what courses you are taking during the semester. Study Abroad Coordinator will send this information to the Registrar's Office for evaluation.

Credits and Course Load

Credits earned at Kansai Heidai are considered UW-Eau Claire resident credits. The classes you take abroad will count towards the total credits needed for graduation, **and grades will be figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.**

At Kansai Heidai, students are required to take a minimum of four courses and may take a

maximum of five. All students are required to take the five-credit, Spoken Japanese class. This means that you will be taking a minimum of 14 and a maximum of 17 credits. Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved by both the Kansai Gaidai and the UW-Eau Claire Centers for International Education.

Grades

Kansai Gaidai uses an A-F grading scale, which translates directly in the U.S. system. The grades reported on your Kansai Gaidai transcript are the same grades that will appear on your UW-Eau Claire transcript.

Note that UW-Eau Claire students are not allowed to take classes pass/fail, and that grades from Japan are figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.

Transcripts

A transcript will automatically be sent to UW-Eau Claire within a month of the program completion. If you plan to graduate at the end of the semester you're abroad, your graduation may have to be delayed due to receiving your transcripts at a later date.

MONEY MATTERS

Information about how payments are made, when they are due, the withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Exchange Explanation

On an exchange program, each participant pays the costs they would normally pay at their home school, so UW-Eau Claire students pay

UW-Eau Claire costs, and Kansai Gaidai students pay Kansai costs, and they switch places. The money paid by the Gaidai students is then used to pay the tuition, fees, room and board for the UW-Eau Claire students, and vice versa.

No money is exchanged between the schools, and there is no direct monetary correlation between what you pay in Eau Claire and what you receive at Kansai Gaidai.

What is exchanged is not actual payment, but rather benefits: you should receive the same benefits a typical Kansai student receives, and the Kansai student receives the benefits a typical Eau Claire student receives. This type of arrangement allows students to participate in international programs at a similar cost to what they would pay to attend their home university.

Cost Estimate

You can find the most current cost estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [CIE Kansai Gaidai webpage](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term. Remember that the cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to Kansai (if anything), and what you pay directly to other vendors.

Paying for Meals

Because you are on an exchange program, your tuition and room charges will be paid directly through Kansai Gaidai. However, because there is no meal plan, **you will receive a stipend from Kansai Gaidai to buy meals.** The stipend is for weekday lunches if you are living with a host family or for all meals if you are living in the dorms. ***It usually takes about a month from the beginning of the semester for you to receive your meal stipend. Until that***

time, each student is expected to finance living expenses by themselves.

Opening a Bank Account

You will need to open a bank account upon arrival as this is how you'll receive your meal stipend. You'll receive assistance and more information with this process during orientation in Japan. You can expect to receive your stipend, into your Japanese account about one-one and a half months after arriving.

Personal Travel

Costs do not include personal travel, as this varies widely by student. It depends on your budget and your priorities. Students who want to be involved in their host community generally spend less time (and money) traveling. Others travel every weekend with correspondingly high costs and few close connections in their new home.

Currency Exchange

The currency of Japan is the Yen. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

Money in Japan

Japan is a much more cash-oriented society than the U.S. Therefore, past participants suggest using several methods to ensure that you can access your money, including having some Yen upon arrival, opening a bank account, and having a credit and a debit card, details are given below.

Cash

Remember that you will want some Yen in cash to take with you to pay for the car service from the airport and other small expenses you may encounter prior to establishing your bank account. **Note that you will need to pay for**

meals out of pocket until your Japanese bank account is opened and you can receive your meal stipend. Kansai recommends that students arrive with at least 30,000 Yen in cash (~\$300 U.S. dollars' worth).

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks are increasingly rare and difficult to use. They generally must be cashed at a major bank, although, in some countries, post offices also offer this service, and **you must have your passport with you.** Most banks charge a fee for cashing the checks; it can vary widely. Before cashing a check, ASK what the fee is.

Make sure you record your check numbers and keep the numbers separate from the checks, in case you need to get them replaced.

Credit Cards

Use of credit cards in Japan is much more limited than in the U.S. If you do bring a credit card, Kansai suggests Visa and Mastercard.

Debit Cards

There are international ATMs on the Kansai Gaidai campus, but when you are traveling, you will find ATMs at Japanese Post Offices!

Post offices in Japan also function as banks and their ATM machines are connected to most major networks. They even have menus in English. The transaction fee is basically what your home bank charges and the exchange rate is quite good. You slip in your card, type in your PIN, enter the amount you would like to withdraw in Yen, and presto...you have money! See the Web Resources section of Study Abroad Handbook for ATM locators that tell you where your card will be accepted.

There are two ATMs on campus at Kansai Gaidai. One is international and will take any American cards, including the U.S. Bank-Blugold card. Fees are pretty typical for an out-of-network ATM; withdraw a lot at once to make the most of the fees.

The other is the Sumitomo ATM and will only work with your green Sumitomo card, which Kansai Gaidai will set you up with when you get there. There is also a Sumitomo ATM in Hirakata, but they charge a fee for after-hours use, so plan ahead. Sumitomo machines are everywhere; find the area map in any major subway station and they should have the ATMs marked.

Other things to note about ATM use in Japan:

- ATMs are generally only accessible when the institution (post office, bank, etc...) is open. Don't plan on having 24 hr. access to ATMs.
- ATMs at Japanese banks are not necessarily connected to the right networks for U.S. cardholders. Therefore, the campus or post office ATMs are the best bet for withdrawing from a U.S. account.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In addition to the scholarship & financial aid information listed in your Study Abroad Handbook, there are a few scholarships that specifically support students on programs in Japan. These scholarships are generally competitive and will require that you spend a fair amount of time on the applications. Begin early. The Study Abroad Coordinators are happy to review drafts of your application, as long as you give them enough time before the deadline.

Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho) Scholarship

The Japanese Ministry of Education has a scholarship program for international students studying in Japan **for a full academic year**. Full year students are automatically considered and recommended by Kansai. It covers round-trip transportation, a "settling in" allowance, and a monthly stipend towards cost of living. Preference is given to students with previous study of Japanese.

If you receive the grant, you will not pay your room and board to UW-Eau Claire. Instead, you will receive money from the grant while you are in Japan to cover these expenses.

Bridging Scholarships

The Association of Teachers of Japanese Bridging Project accepts applications from American students participating in study abroad programs in Japan. Funding from private foundations and major U.S. corporations has made it possible for ATJ to award 100 scholarships annually to assist students with the travel and living expenses they will incur while studying abroad in Japan.

Undergraduate students majoring in any field of study are eligible to apply for these scholarships. Students must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents and be enrolled in a college or university in the United States.

Applications are not yet available at time of publishing.

Bridging Scholarship recipients receive a stipend of \$2,500 (for students on semester-long programs) or \$4,000 (for students on academic year programs). See <http://www.aatj.org/studyabroad/japan-bridging->

[scholarships](#) for application deadlines and forms.

Freeman-Asia Scholarship

This scholarship is supported by the Freeman Foundation and the Institute of International Education. Students studying for a semester can receive up to \$5,000 and those studying for an academic year can receive up to \$7,000.

To apply, students need to be a U.S. citizen, demonstrate financial need, be accepted to a program based in Asia (Japan is included), have a GPA of at least 2.8, have at least one semester left at UWEC after their study abroad program and have little to no experience in the country they plan to study in.

To learn more and to see when the application opens: Eligibility:

<https://www.iie.org/Programs/Freeman-ASIA/Eligibility>

Deadlines:

<https://www.iie.org/Programs/Freeman-ASIA/Apply>

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Before You Go

In addition to the general health precautions listed in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should consult your physician or a travel clinic to see if you should receive hepatitis A, typhoid, or Japanese encephalitis protection, depending upon the type of travel you plan. Other vaccinations may also be recommended, particularly if you plan to travel outside of Japan.

Restrictions on Medications in Japan

Past participants recommend that you bring your own cold medication, aspirin, etc. since over the counter medicine may not be the same or hard to find. However, **some common over-the-counter medications and commonly prescribed U.S. medications are illegal in Japan.** See the [Consular Information Sheet](#) for more information on traveling with over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

The following information about bringing medications to Japan is posted on the Japanese Consulate-Chicago website:

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html>

You can bring up to one month's supply of prescription drugs into Japan, and up to two months' supply of non-prescription drugs without completing any paperwork. This same rule applies to mailing prescription and/or non-prescription drugs.

It is always a good idea to have a copy of the prescription and/or letter from the prescribing physician explaining the nature of the medication, the purpose of taking it, recommended dosage, and frequency of ingestion.

Most prescription drugs are permitted, including drugs that may not be available in Japan, such as birth control pills. Drugs that are hallucinogenic, narcotic, and/or psychotropic in nature will be confiscated, except in extenuating circumstances where prior approval has been obtained (e.g., a cancer patient taking a type of medication that has a high percentage of pain killer; these cases are treated on a case by case basis).

The following over-the-counter medications are prohibited in Japan since they contain narcotic or stimulant ingredients in excess of the Japanese standard:

- a) Tylenol Cold
- b) Nyquil
- c) Nyquil Liquicaps
- d) Actifed
- e) Sudafed
- f) Advil Cold & Sinus
- g) Dristan Cold ("No Drowsiness")
- h) Dristan Sinus
- i) Drixoral Sinus
- j) Vicks Inhaler
- k) Lomotil

Campus Medical Facilities

There is an on-campus first aid center at Kansai, which offers treatment for minor medical problems free of charge. The center can refer students off-campus for treatment of more serious illness. Past students recommend having someone from the Center for International Education at Kansai Gaidai accompany you to the clinic, because if you need to be referred off campus, they will drive you and they can help you understand if doctors/staff don't speak English.

Mental Health Resources

Kansai Gaidai recently began offering psychological counseling in fall 2018. An experienced, U.S. trained, native English-speaking counselor will be on campus on Mondays and also available on call. If you need to speak with a counselor, it is recommended, you reach out to this counselor first. If you would like additional support, you can also reach out to your UWEC study abroad coordinator, Jenna (kroschjm@uwec.edu) and

she can assist with working with CISI to identify additional English-speaking therapists.

911 Equivalent in Japan

If you are in an emergency in Japan, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line in Japan is **110 for police; 119 for ambulance and fire**. We suggest you save these numbers in your cell phone in case you need to use them quickly.

The U.S. State Department also provides a list of [911 numbers abroad](#). Plan and research numbers before you go.

Emergency Contacts

General emergency procedures are described in the Study Abroad Handbook, and Kansai Gaidai has a Study Abroad Advisor who is available for consultation if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card at orientation; be sure to keep it in your wallet at all times. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

If you are traveling outside the framework of the academic program you may not be able to contact the coordinator for help.

If an emergency should arise while traveling, the U.S. embassies and/or consulates can offer some assistance. They will assist in the following:

- provide a list of local physicians and lawyers
- contact next of kin in event of emergency
- aid during civil unrest or natural disaster
- contact relations on your behalf to request funds or guidance in an emergency.

Safety in Japan

Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Japan is included in the [Consular Information](#).

Information specific to Kansai Gaidai will be given during the orientation there.

Past participants note that, although Japan has the reputation of being safe for women, they heard rumors of sexual harassment/assaults against women while at Kansai Gaidai, leading them to believe that the reported safety may actually be an under-reporting of incidents.

Take the same precautions you would in any large U.S. city. In particular, never walk alone at night to/from the train station and always have a travel companion.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport and additional visa information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.

General Information on Visas

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country. The CIE will provide you with information regarding entry requirements and visa regulations. **However, it is ultimately your responsibility to keep up-to-date about student visa requirements for your host country, and if required, to apply for and receive a visa from your host country's consulate or embassy.** Please read the "Visa" section of your Study Abroad Handbook for more information about what you should do to keep up-to-date on visa requirements.

Visa for Japan

You will need a student visa for your time in Japan. It is your responsibility to obtain a

student visa from the Japanese government. Instructions and required forms were given to you at orientation. Note that **you cannot apply for your visa until you receive your Certificate of Eligibility from Kansai Gaidai.** This typically arrives in July for fall/year students or in late November for spring students. It will be mailed to the address you listed on the form that Kansai emailed you when you were formally accepted.

IMPORTANT: If you enter Japan as a tourist or on any other type of visa, you must leave Japan to apply for your student visa and reenter with the proper visa. It cannot be issued within the country. It is therefore strongly recommended that you do not plan to travel in Japan prior to receiving your student visa.

Once you are in Japan, the CIE at Kansai Gaidai will assist you with the process of getting an Alien Registration Card. If you plan to travel outside of Japan while you are abroad, you should verify visa requirements for each country by contacting the nearest consulate or your travel agency. Many countries do not require visas for tourist visits of less than three months, but you need to know the rules!

PACKING TIPS

In addition to the general packing information in the Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Japan.

Weather/Clothing

The area around Kansai Gaidai has relatively mild weather, but you'll still want a warm coat, warm clothes, long underwear and warm slippers for winter, as few Japanese homes are centrally heated.

Summer is warm. Sandals, long shorts, and neat tops are acceptable; halter or tube tops and short shorts are not. You'll find that dress is generally more formal than in the U.S., but nice jeans and tops are acceptable for students.

Bring slip-on shoes, as you'll be slipping them off whenever you're inside! Men's size 9 and larger, and women's size 6 and larger are hard to find, as are panty-hose for women taller than 5'5". And note that clothes sizes, like shoe sizes, are at the small/petite end of the size spectrum.

What to Pack

Your peer advisor will give you a suggested packing list at the second program group meeting during the semester prior to departure.

Appliances

The standard electric current in Japan is 110 volts, the same as in the U.S., but three-pronged outlets are rare, so you may want a plug adapter.

Gift Suggestions

You are encouraged to bring "omiyage" to Japan. These "small gifts" are important in Japanese culture. This is especially important if you live with a Japanese family, but you will also want them if you are invited to a home. Some suggestions include:

- clothing and items with UW-Eau Claire logos
- Local goods found at the Local Store in Eau Claire (chocolates, caramels, Eau Claire memorabilia, etc.)
- cookbooks/American recipes, with metric conversions
- calendars with U.S. scenery

- pen-and-ink drawings or professional-quality photographs of areas in the U.S.

ARRIVING IN JAPAN

Travel Arrangements

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Kansai Gaidai*. There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the Study Abroad Handbook.

We recommend that you do not make your travel arrangements until Kansai Gaidai has accepted you to the program, dates have been confirmed and/or you have secured your visa to Japan. If you feel that you can't wait until you get your visa, we recommend that you purchase a ticket with a low cancellation and change fee.

*If you are a full-year student applying for a Japanese government grant (see Financial Aid section), book a ticket with a low cancellation fee. An airline ticket is included in the grant but must be arranged through the grant sponsor, and grant announcements are not made until mid to late June. Another reason to wait to purchase your ticket or buy one with a low cancellation fee.

Immigration/Customs

As of November 20, 2007, all foreign nationals entering Japan are required to provide fingerprints and a facial photograph at the port of entry. This requirement does not replace any existing visa or passport requirements.

Once you clear immigration, follow the signs to baggage claim. You must carry your own luggage through customs.

Getting to Campus

Pick-Up Dates

Specific pick-up arrangements have not been finalized for fall 2019. However, in the past, Kansai has indicated that students who would like to be picked up must arrive at Kansai International Airport (KIX) by 6:00 PM on the designated arrival/pick-up days. In the past, a staff member or student volunteer has met students and helped them get to campus. If you do not arrive at KIX and also want to be picked up, you would need to get to KIX on your own or see if they will be doing a pick up at your airport. If they see enough interest in different airports, they may suggest one pick up time for you, but this is not guaranteed.

If pick up days fall over the weekend, there will be no pick-ups on Sunday.

In order to sign up for the pick-up service you must send your travel information through Kansai's online application system, K-GENESYS. If they do not receive your travel information, there is no guarantee that their staff will meet you. If your travel changes, you must notify them.

Pick-Up Fees

You may be required to pay at least 5,000 Yen **in cash** for the pick-up service upon your arrival at the pick-up point.

Making Your Own Arrival Arrangements

Although Kansai Gaidai strongly recommends that students use the pick-up service, you can make your own way to Kansai Gaidai. If you choose to arrive independently, please look at Arrival Instructions that Kansai gives to you after your acceptance.

If you arrive in Kansai a day before the pickup service begins, you can get a hotel room near the KIX airport and then meet the staff at KIX on the day of the pickup. You will be responsible for any hotel and transportation fees. Kansai provides a list of hotels near the airport in the arrival instructions they give you.

Orientation

You will have an orientation upon arrival to Kansai Gaidai. During orientation, you will finalize your registration for classes, open a bank account (if needed), go over health and safety tips, etc. Past participants recommend that you make good use of this time to get to know other international students, especially if you will be living in a homestay. **All students have to pay a general refundable deposit of 10,000 Yen.** It will be reimbursed at the end of the semester when all outstanding obligations have been met (loan, return of library books, L.L. tapes and videos, etc.)

During orientation, you will temporarily be housed in university housing. If you are participating in a homestay, you will move to your host family's home at the end of orientation week. When living in the university housing, during orientation, you will eat your meals at the cafeterias on campus and you will be responsible for paying for those meals.

Airport Departure Tax

When you leave Japan, you will have to pay a 1000-yen (~\$10USD) airport departure tax. This will be paid at the airport while going through customs before your international departure. It is something to be prepared to pay.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Getting Involved in Japan

During orientation, you can sign up for the International Buddy program, which matches you with a Japanese student who wishes to practice English. One past student reported, "My international friends and I would all eat lunch together with our speaking partners. This way, we all became one big group of Japanese and international friends."

If you are living in the dorms, you can sign up for the Host Visit program. This is a chance to stay with a family on weekends and get some of the experiences you miss out on not living in a homestay (more information in the housing section of this guide).

During orientation in Japan, you will also get a pamphlet on possible volunteer opportunities. In addition to meeting people and giving back to your host community, you may be able to complete your service-learning requirement.

Student organizations, known as clubs and circles, abound. They range from sports to traditional Japanese cultural activities such as tea ceremonies or flower arranging. Clubs are very serious organizations; members are expected to be at every meeting. Circles are more laid back, just a chance to have fun with Japanese students.

Above your mailboxes at the CIE office at Kansai Gaidai, community events are posted. There are sightseeing trips, a trip to dye kimono fabric, making food events, concerts, etc.

Other suggestions for meeting people include:

- Go to the campus gym

- Get to know your Japanese language teachers. They are very friendly and willing to answer questions and offer advice outside of class time.

Japanese students are often interested in meeting international students, be open!

HOUSING

You have two choices of accommodations at Kansai Gaidai: living in the dormitories or living with a host family.

During orientation, all international students will be accommodated in Global Commons, you will be given your assignment prior to your arrival. After orientation, students will be placed in the semester long accommodations, whether they be dormitories or homestays.

Please note that **those who live in the dormitories must pay a 30,000 Yen refundable security deposit during orientation.** The amount must be paid in Yen. If there are no damages, you will receive your deposit back approximately two months after the completion of the semester.

All students (no matter where they live) must **also pay a mandatory liability insurance fee of 1,000 Yen (~\$10).** In order to protect students from a possible high compensation for damages, all international students are now required to join a mandatory liability insurance plan which will cover up to JPY 100,000,000 (approx. U.S. \$870,000) with a one-time JPY 1,000 premium per semester. This fee is paid at orientation.

Housing over Break

If you are staying for the academic year, you will live in Global Commons. Homestay

arrangements are not made during winter break; therefore, you will have to move out and possibly move to a new family when spring semester starts.

The fee to stay over winter break is 50,000 Yen and is not included in the exchange. All students are responsible for paying this fee directly to Kansai.

Dormitory – Global Commons

In deciding what type of housing is best for you, you may want to consider on-campus housing if:

- 1) You have a restricted diet. It is often difficult to find families for students who are vegetarians.
- 2) You wish to live with English-speakers.
- 3) You are staying the full academic year and do not wish to have to move or find housing over break. (Homestays are arranged for one semester at a time. The break between semesters is not included in either semester.)
- 4) You wish to be close to your classrooms. The dorm is about a 15-minute walk from classroom buildings. A homestay often requires using public transportation or a bicycle. Transportation costs can add up to 70,000 Yen (~\$878) per semester.
- 5) You do not wish to have the household and family responsibilities expected in a homestay.

Newly opened in March 2018, students will now live in the Global Commons, an international student dormitory. It holds about 650 international students and will allow a chance for you to meet people from all over the world.

All rooms are barrier free single rooms equipped with a desk, bed, closet, book shelves, small refrigerator and air conditioner. Internet access and linen service are available. There will be shared spaces such as a living room and kitchen facilities. There is also a fitness room and karaoke room on site.

Students in Global Commons have to adhere to the housing policies. Some of the policies that American students struggle with are adhering to the noise (zero tolerance quiet hours after 10pm, both in and outside the building) and visitor policies (no visitors between 9:30pm-9:00am). Failure to comply will result in dismissal from the Global Commons and a homestay will not be an alternative. If you are dismissed from Kansai housing, you will be responsible for finding and paying for your own housing. (a full list of policies can be found here:

http://www.kansai.gaidai.ac.jp/asp/pre_arrival/o4_housing/o8.html

Students who stay in the dorms have the opportunity to participate in the "Home Visit Program," which is a limited host family program which involves visiting a family, perhaps being invited over for an occasional meal or weekend stay, rather than the full homestay experience.

Homestay

Host families are in high demand and cannot be guaranteed. Placements are finalized the week prior to your arrival, no matches are made until students actually arrive, so you will not have information about your family before orientation at Kansai Gaidai. You will meet your host family the last day of orientation, in a meeting with an international office staff member, you, and your family.

A host family may look different for each student. Some past students have been placed with families with small children, families with grown children, single females, elderly couples, widowed females, etc. Some families may have some English background, but don't expect to have English spoken to you. Kansai puts a lot of effort into finding good host families, so if you run into any concerns, please reach out to the international office to see how those concerns can be addressed.

Because of the work involved in finding good host families, Kansai asks that you are truly motivated to participate in family life if you choose this option. You should be prepared to accept curfews set by your host parents, do chores along with other family members, and generally accept the restrictions and responsibilities that come along with being part of a Japanese family. Consider the following points in deciding whether you would like a homestay:

- 1) You will be expected to obey the family curfew, which will very likely be much earlier than at home.
- 2) You may not work.
- 3) You may be expected to assist family members with learning English. (An exchange of Japanese/English lessons can be fun.)
- 4) You must limit your use of the telephone. Please be aware that all calls, even local, have charges.
- 5) You should get permission from your family to miss a meal, be late for a meal, or be gone overnight.
- 6) Utility charges are very high in Japan. Turn off gas, water, etc., when not in use.
- 7) Your room should be clean at all times.
- 8) You should share in family chores.

- 9) You will provide your own shampoo, soap, towels, etc.
- 10) You are expected to spend time with the family. This is not a "hotel" situation.
- 11) Women may have more restrictions than men.

Your homestay may be located a long distance from campus, and transportation fees are your responsibility. We cannot guarantee that your placement will be within walking or biking distance.

That said, **students who choose homestays at Kansai have had an excellent experience**, precisely because it is not a "boarding" situation. You will be included in family life and introduced to Japanese culture in a way that you will not experience in the dormitories, where you will primarily have contact with other international students.

Homestay Bathroom

Most families prefer that you shower at night; they will tell you when you first move in. The shower is a bit different from what you are used to, you sit down and use a bowl of water to rinse off. You will often hear the water being turned on and off many times. This is because they are saving water (and money!) by only using water when they need to wash soap off. You will want to do this, too! Also remember that you should not take a long shower/bath, because other family members may be waiting.

Japanese homes also have a bath called an "ofuro," where you can dip and relax for a bit **AFTER** you have showered and gotten clean. They reuse the water for everyone each night, so don't drain the tub unless everyone else has already bathed!

Laundry

There are pay-machines in the Kansai Gaidai dorms for both washing and drying. The washing machines in Japan are generally smaller and less effective than the ones you may be used to in the U.S. Past participants report that the dryers, if one exists in your living arrangement, are even worse. However, the dorms and most host families will have a clothesline to hang and dry your clothes. Hanging your clothes to dry is very common, so planning in advance is a must.

Shopping

If you forgot to pack something, don't worry. You can find everything you need fairly close to campus. Suggestions from a peer advisor:

"In Hirakata, K's Denki is a good place to buy little electronics things you may need. It's kind of a hike, so bring some friends with. If you're bringing a computer to the dorms, you'll need to buy a phone cord at K's Denki to access the internet in your room."

"Convenience stores and grocery stores sell a lot of the little things you'll need. In Hirakata, there are also some clothing stores about ten minutes away from campus if you need a sweatshirt or new socks."

"But my favorite place for anything in Japan is the Hyaku-En Store. Everything in these stores is typically around ¥100 (a dollar) or priced accordingly and you can find just about anything. Flatware, towels, toothbrushes, chopsticks, pens, notebooks, ANYTHING. They're all over the place: ask around if you can't find one."

Some hyaku-en stores that I can remember are:

- *the Sanko up the street from the seminar houses*
- *Top World (a grocery store) about twenty minutes away from campus*
- *the basement of a building near the Hirakata train station - the building has a restaurant called Torinozoku on the fifth floor and the sign is a big yellow one with a chicken on it near the Kuzuha train station."*

FOOD

Meals and Table Manners

There are two full cafeterias and two "snack shops" on campus, offering food at relatively inexpensive prices. There is no meal plan, however. If you live in the dormitory, you will receive a stipend to pay for meals. If you live with a host family, you will eat breakfast and dinner with your family, with a stipend from Kansai Gaidai to buy lunch. **No refund is available for meals that you do not eat with your family.**

Past students note that your host family will be understanding if you have any food allergies or just plain do not like a particular food. This will be one of the topics addressed in your first meeting with them at the university. Be honest about things you simply cannot eat. On the other hand, don't be afraid to try new things!

Keep in mind that it is impolite when eating with your host family not to eat everything on your plate. You serve yourself, so **take small portions** of things to start with; you can always have a second helping! You **will learn to eat with chopsticks**, if you have not already.

A few things to know about table manners in Japan:

- Chopsticks are called "ohashi." When you need to set them down, set them across your rice bowl, on the side of your plate, or back on your chopstick rest, called a "hashioki." Never stick your chopsticks vertically into your rice bowl; this is only done when offering rice to the dead.
- It is considered very rude to point at people or stab your food with your chopsticks.
- Don't just sit down at the table. Wait until someone directs you where to sit at the table.
- When you begin a meal, put your hands together and say "etadakimau" (I humbly receive this.) When you are done, say "gochisosamadesita" (something like, "I humbly accepted; it was good.")

An interesting website about Japanese foods and table manners is: www.japan-guide.com/e/e62o.html

COMMUNICATION

Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on using your computer for international phone calls (SKYPE) is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Mailing Address in Japan

Airmail generally takes 10-14 days from the U.S. to Hirakata City. **You can leave the following address with family and friends:**

(Your name)
c/o Center for International Education
Kansai Gaidai University
16-1 Nakamiyahigashino-cho
Hirakata City, Osaka 573-1001
JAPAN

You may also send packages to that address prior to your arrival. You may have to pay a small "customs fee" to the post office to claim your parcel.

Time Difference

Japan is 15 hours ahead of Eau Claire. For example, when it is 8:00 AM on a Thursday in Eau Claire, it is 11:00 PM on Thursday in Japan.

Telephone

From the U.S. to Japan: First dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you dial 81, the country code for Japan, and the rest of the number.

From Japan to the U.S: To call home while you are abroad using a calling card or calling collect, you must dial an access code to get an American operator.

The dormitories have private phones; however, you cannot make international calls from them. You can receive international calls on the private phones. There are two pay telephones in the dorm for outgoing calls, either national or international. Students are requested to use phone cards to make international calls. Your parents can call you using an international calling card. Incoming calls do not use up your minutes, so if your parents or friends call you, there is no expense on your end.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are extremely popular in Japan, and especially so among college students. Virtually every Japanese student has one. In addition, they have been popular with the foreign students because not only will you be out and about most of the day, but they also afford you privacy and help you avoid awkward telephone use problems while you are in your host family's home. Another advantage is they

allow people from your home country to call you and actually connect with you, whereas it is very difficult for them to call you at a fixed line and actually catch you there at the same time. Students also find having a cell phone comes in handy as they can text their host family and keep them informed that way.

If you decide to bring your American cell phone, be sure to have it unlocked by your carrier before you go abroad. This will allow you to put a Japanese SIM card in it and make it function.

Internet and E-mail

There is an internet connection at Kansai Gaidai, but you will need to register your laptop or tablet to the campus network, free of charge. Instructions will be given at orientation in Japan but you will be responsible for registering your devices.

Since the network speed within Kansai Gaidai is somewhat limited, and some students who want internet in their homestay (where no Wi-Fi is available, or they want a stronger connection to watch streaming videos) may want to purchase a mobile Wi-Fi router for personal use. **Remember, Wi-Fi in homestays is not guaranteed.**

Language

Communication is obviously an issue in a country where the language is not English. Many international students studying at Kansai Gaidai have not studied Japanese while some have studied it for a few semesters. Here are some tips from past students:

Using your Japanese

-It is important to make friends from countries other than the U.S. That way, Japanese, not English, can be your common language.

-Talk with the many Japanese students hanging around the lounge of the International Education buildings (where your classes will be.)

-When you are at Kansai Gaidai, students will be willing to speak in Japanese with you, so take advantage of it. They are quite patient and won't laugh if you mess up badly!

-The hardest part of talking with my friends was getting used to short form. When I first started to learn Japanese, I found it easier to speak and listen to long form.

Getting Around

- *Lucky for English speakers, many of the forms of transportation in Japan, such as trains, have English translations on the signs. So, when you are going to major places you can somewhat orient yourself.*
- *The country of Japan is full of extremely nice and helpful people who will do their best to help you out if you are lost. Don't be afraid to ask.*
- *Be polite. The two most important words to know in Japan are I'm sorry and thank you. (Sumimasen and Arigatoo).*
- *Many Japanese students like to practice their English. Invite a Japanese friend to travel with you!*
- *After you have traveled around a bit, you will begin to know how to get places even if you can't read the signs.*

- *Be prepared to have a few problems in everyday situations. When I would go to the grocery store, I never wanted a plastic bag, so I learned how to say, 'no plastic bag please!'*

Ordering food:

- *Learn some basic vocab for food- that way you can say some of those to your waiter/waitress, and they can show you some of the dishes that contain those items.*
- *Some of the bigger restaurants will have English menus.*
- *Many restaurants have displays of food in front so you can point to what you want.*

When it's too much:

- *Be patient - you are learning more than you know every day. Learning a language doesn't happen overnight. Listen closely and try to pick up as much as you can during conversations. It's OK if you don't understand everything.*
- *It can feel overwhelming at times, but it does get better.*
- *It's OK to talk to other international students. Call home, e-mail, hangout - everyone needs a break sometime!*

CULTURAL NOTES

A Brief History of Japan

30,000 BC – First evidence of humans in Japan

700's – Nara Period. First emergence of a strong centralized state. Capital located in Nara, Japan. Buddhism becomes widely

accepted and many temples are built that still stand today.

794 – Heian Period. Capital moved to Heian-kyo (modern-day Kyoto). Japanese art and literature flourish (the lyrics to Japan's national anthem date to this time).

1185 – Kamakura Period. The first shogun (military leader) is appointed and moves government control to Kamakura, near modern-day Tokyo. Japan is under shogunist military rule. Zen Buddhism is introduced.

1467 – Onin Wars begin the Warring-States Period. For ~ 100 years, Japan's feudal warlords rule their respective domains and no national unity exists.

1500's – Portuguese Jesuit missionaries, the first western people in Japan, begin trade agreements.

1582 – Oda Nobunaga begins re-uniting Japan. He is followed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi and then Tokugawa Ieyasu, who ultimately unites the warring groups in Japan.

1600 – Battle of Sekigahara. Tokugawa Ieyasu takes control of the once-more shogunist government and begins the 300-year Tokugawa Period. Japan is at peace and relatively isolated from the rest of the world during this period.

1854 – Comm. Matthew Perry (U.S.) forces Japan to open to the rest of the world. Following a chaotic social and political revolution, the emperor Meiji becomes the head of the government, the first emperor with power since the 1180's.

1905 – Japan proves their military and economic power by defeating Russia in the Sino-Japanese War.

1941 – The Pearl Harbor, Hawaii bombings begin World War II in the Pacific Ocean, between the United States and Japan.

1945 – The U.S. drops the first (and only) atomic bombs used in warfare on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August. Japan surrenders and the United States begins occupation until 1952.

1970's and 1980's – Japan's economy expands at record-breaking levels and the economy becomes the second-largest in the world.

1990 – Economic collapse. Japan plunges into a decade-long recession.

Geography

Area: 144,689 square miles (about the size of California)

Japan is a volcanic island chain, so the terrain is mostly mountainous. While there are several active volcanoes in Japan, the greater natural hazard is from earthquakes. Major earthquakes are rare; the last recorded major earthquake was in 2011.

Japan consists of four main islands: Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku. There are over 3,000 adjacent islands.

Honshu is the largest island in Japan. It lies in between the other three islands. Major cities include Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, and Kobe.

Hokkaido is the second largest island. It was actually not considered part of Japan until the 1800s.

Kyushu is the third largest island and is at the southern tip of Honshu. It is famous for its hot springs and several important historical sites. Major cities include Nagasaki and Fukuoka.

Shikoku is the smallest island and lies just south of the western part of Honshu.

Weather

Japan's weather is milder than Wisconsin. The lows tend to be in the low 30's and the highs can get up to the 90's. Where Kansai Gaidai it rarely snows. In Hokkaido and on the west coast, snow is common during the winter. All of the islands get a lot of rain during the summer months.

People

Japan's population is fairly homogenous, with the largest ethnic population being the Yamato (people descended from those who lived on the main islands of Japan – e.g. not Hokkaido). There are a fair number of Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos and other foreign residents as well. Most of the residents speak Japanese as their first language.

Religion

Religion is important to the Japanese, but people typically follow traditions from a wide variety of practices. The primary religions are Buddhism and Shinto (the primarily animist religion of ancient Japan), with from 84 to 96 percent officially following a combination of both religions. Estimates state that only 30% of the population actually follows strict religious practices.

Cultural Concepts

Personal space is wider in Japan. When you meet someone, you stand a few feet apart and bow, rather than shake hands.

People rarely smile at a passerby on the street and eye contact is typically minimal.

Often, the trains are very crowded, and, in this situation, it is acceptable to break personal space rules. On trains, it is also advisable to keep from talking loudly and speaking on a cell phone is frowned upon.

Treatment of foreigners is an often-misunderstood area of Japanese culture. Stereotypically, the Japanese are standoffish to those not from Japan (called gaijin in slang). In practice, the Japanese are friendly and tolerant of foreigners, especially in places where many foreigners usually live (e.g. in international college areas). One should not expect Japanese people to go out of their way to interact with a foreigner, but civility and friendliness are very common.

That said, foreign visitors should be aware of Japanese customs of communication and interaction and should follow those reasonably closely. For example, the Japanese disapprove of excessive rowdiness or loud talking.

Politeness and hierarchy are very important in Japan. Japanese people apologize for almost everything, even if it's not their fault. Japanese people are also very aware of who "out-ranks" them in society; for example, a teacher ranks above a student, a parent ranks above a child, a boss ranks above an employee.

For foreigners in the country, following the "polite language rules" is not completely

necessary, but an awareness of it is helpful for understanding the culture.

Gender roles in Japan may still be considered relatively old-fashioned by U.S. standards, although this is rapidly changing. Men are the primary income winners and are expected to work long hours at their jobs. Women are increasingly joining the workforce, but whether they work or not, women are also expected to take care of the house and children.

An important contemporary social issue in Japan is a lowered birthrate; this is, in part, because women are choosing to have a career instead of children.

Government

Government Type: Constitutional monarchy, although the emperor has very little power. Japan's legislative body is called the Diet and it is located in Tokyo. The government is historically influenced by Chinese law and is also heavily based on German and American law.

Customs and Etiquette

On the train:

- The cardinal rule of train-riding is "Quiet!" Keep your voice down and do not talk on a cell phone (texting is okay).
- Do not block the train doors. Try not to use the fold-down seats near the doors if the train is crowded; if you are on the folding seats when the train stops, stand up to let others through.
- Do not stare at others on the train. Keep your belongings close to you and out of the way of others.

- Sleeping is okay on the train, but do not fall asleep on other people.

When riding a bike:

- It is okay to ride in the road, but watch out for cars, as roads are very narrow. Don't make unpredictable movements, especially around cars.
- Lock your bike whenever you leave it. Do not leave your bike in places that are not bike parking lots.

Eating:

- Before you begin to eat, it is customary to say "Itadakimasu" (ee-ta-da-kee-mah-s). When finished eating, say "Gouchisousama deshita" (Go-chee-sew-sah-mah de-shee-ta).
- Slurping soup is okay; it is even encouraged as a sign that you like the food. You may also pick your rice or miso bowl up to keep from spilling.
- It is rude to drink or eat messy foods while walking around. This rule is tricky, but generally, if you can't eat something discreetly, don't eat it while walking (e.g. open containers of beverage; foods like hamburger, bagged snacks, etc.).
- Drinking alcohol in public is severely frowned upon. There are beer vending machines around, but the Japanese will buy from them and bring the unopened beer home with them.
- If you need more drinks or food at a karaoke bar and it is not self-serve, use the phone near the door.

- Tipping does not exist in Japan.

General tips:

- Be quiet when walking around outside, especially at night. The walls of Japanese houses are thin and the Japanese do not enjoy being woken up in the middle of the night.
- If people are staring at you, don't get angry and don't stare back. Remember that as a foreigner, you are an unusual sight in Japan!
- When it is raining, if you have an umbrella, look for a little fixture near the door that wraps your umbrella in plastic. Not all places have them, but it's best to look just the same. If there is no plastic-wrapper, there will likely be a wire rack to leave your umbrella on. Make sure you take your umbrella when you leave!

TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

Here is specific information about travel in Japan to supplement the Study Abroad Handbook.

Travel through Kansai Gaidai

A history class makes a trip every semester to Hiroshima; they offer discount Shinkansen tickets and have a speaker at the atomic bomb memorial museum.

If you are interested in architecture or Japanese art, there are other classes that have trips. You may be able to attend by contacting the professors even if you are not taking the class.

You can book trips through the convenience store (Konbini) on campus. They speak English so you don't have to worry about traveling off

campus with a native speaker. Do your research and don't just rely on the glossy pamphlets that they give you!

Tourist Information

The Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) has three regional offices in the United States. Contact them for FREE brochures, maps, info on affordable accommodations, restaurants, etc. You can find info on their web site at <http://www.jnto.go.jp>.

Japan Travel Phone

The JNTO operates an English-language traveler's hotline inside Japan. Information is available from the JNTO. Japan Railways also has an English-language hotline which provides information on train departure times and transfers.

Train Travel

Students travel most frequently by train in Japan. The train lines are easy to navigate once you get the hang of it. The boards display the times and type of train in English, and everything is color coded. There is often a trip to Kyoto that is offered at the beginning of the semester; this is a good introduction to the train system.

Stations

Makino is the closest station to the Kansai Gaidai seminar houses, about a 15-minute walk. Since this is a smaller station only local trains will stop here so you will make a transfer at a larger station if you are going a long distance.

Gotenyama is the closest to Kansai Gaidai University in general, but it is not as big as Hirakata station so it is used less.

Hirakata is the largest station in the area. It has express trains that stop regularly and is basically the middle stop between Kyoto and Osaka. It is about a 20-minute walk from campus and a 40-minute walk from the seminar houses.

You can get anywhere in Japan from any of these stations. All of the train lines throughout the country are connected so it is just a matter of finding out where to transfer.

Tickets

Tickets can be bought at machines right before the turnstiles. You look up at the board to see the price and then push that amount on the machine.

Train stations only accept cash so Kansai recommends that you carry 10,000 Yen (\$100) on you for emergencies. Also, transportation is the cheapest in big cities and gets more expensive as you get to more rural areas.

Once you're in Japan, ask about a Japan Railway bargain, the *seishun ju-hachi kippu*. This is a booklet of six coupons that allows unlimited travel for a 24-hour period. The booklets are only available when Japanese students are on vacation. They may be split among travelers in a group. The Center for International Education at Gaidai sometimes has student discount coupons available, also. Your main train line will be the Kansai one; however, you have easy access to the Osaka and Kyoto train stations that have trains going all over Japan.

Shinkansen

There is an express train called *Shinkansen*. Shinkansen (bullet train) lines are found only at major stations. The cost varies, but it is not as

expensive as flying. You can do quick search of *Shinkansen* fares at

<http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/charge/index.html> .

Make sure you choose *Tokaido Shinkansen* (where *Osaka* is) for *Shinkansen Line* and *Shin-Osaka* for *Original station*.

Buses

If a train can't get you there, a bus can. In bigger cities, the train will often be enough, but in more rural areas, buses are needed. Reading the bus map can be more confusing at the beginning, but have patience.

There is a bus stop at seminar house 4 and the university. (Hint- going to Makino station is cheaper than taking the bus to Hirakata station). Night buses are also an option to get you between major cities inexpensively.

Air Travel

There are two Japanese airlines: Japan Air Line (<http://www.jal.co.jp/en/>) and All Nippon Airways (<http://www.ana.co.jp/asw/www/us/e/>).

Where to Stay

Past students report staying primarily in Japanese-style hotels or youth hostels. They provide basic accommodation: usually just a futon, TV, and closet for your clothes. The bathroom is always community-style, shared with other guests. They fill up quickly: reservations are recommended.

CONTACT NAMES & ADDRESSES

GENERAL UW-EAU CLAIRE & CISI CONTACT INFORMATION IS IN YOUR STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK.

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JAPANESE CONSULATE IN U.S.

Consulate General of Japan at Chicago
737 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60611
Tel.: (312) 280-0400
Fax: (312) 280-9568

Web: <http://www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/>

NEAREST U.S. CONSULATE IN JAPAN

U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe
2-11-5 Nishitenma
Kita-ku, Osaka 530-8543
Telephone: 81-06-6315-5900
Emergency after-hours telephone:
81-6-6315-5900
Fax: 81-6-6315-5914
Web: <https://jp.usembassy.gov>

WEB RESOURCES: JAPAN

City
Osaka Hirakata City Homepage: http://www.city.hirakata.osaka.jp
Osaka Guide: http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2157.html
Culture
About Japan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan
Japanese Food 101: http://www.japanesefood101.com/
Japanese Culture Guide: http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e622.html
JapaneseArt.org: http://www.japaneseart.org/
Country
Japan: http://www.worldtravelguide.net/japan
Japanese Rail Pass: http://www.japanrailpass.net/eng/en001.html
Lonely Planet: Japan: https://www.lonelyplanet.com/japan

PAST PARTICIPANT TIPS

WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN:

I wish I had known that nothing would be as intimidating as I thought it would be, like the classes, the professors, the international students, and the Japanese students. Things may have seemed difficult, but everyone kind of has an "in this together" attitude, so it's never a problem if you need help or advice - you can find both fairly easily, in friends, other students, and staff.

Changing my daily schedule/routine according to my environment was an adjustment I had to make. For example, I had to put more effort into finding the foods I like, meaning I had to plan when to go to the grocery store that was nearest to me and figure out what to buy, and I also had to adjust my exercise schedule. As a major creature of habit, I made these activities really routine in America, so adjusting these routines in Japan was a challenge, but not one I was unable to overcome.

I wanted to know who my host family would be because it was hard trying to find a gift to bring them from the United States. Unfortunately, that is outside anyone's control as the program doesn't pair you until you arrive.

THEIR SAFETY TIPS:

Sometimes late at night there are drunk people and they will follow me home. There is some sexual harassment on public transportation but I have not seen it happen, I have only heard about it from other students. Travel in groups, especially at night to avoid this.

HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP:

Kansai is in a great location because it's super close to Kyoto and Osaka. With a lot of things to do in both Kyoto and Osaka, if a student wants to travel, whether it's to shop or do more culturally-oriented things such as shrines and temples, they can occupy a lot of the weekends by going to these close cities. The campus itself is beautiful, the living situation is nice and Hirakata is a nice city too. When it comes to classes, a variety of interesting options are available!

The Japanese are so friendly here – I made a lot of friends very quickly and we're always doing stuff together.

