

J. F. Oberlin University, Tokyo

Reconnaissance Japan

桜美林大学





Reconnaissance Japan, the study abroad program at J. F. Oberlin University in the outskirts of Tokyo, provides in-class and experiential learning to observe, study, and discover Asia-Pacific culture and traditions.



Expand Your Horizons . . .

Explore Japan . . .

Discover Yourself



Reconnaissance Japan Fast Facts

- Created in 1991
- Located in the suburbs of Tokyo, one of the most populous and exciting cities in the world
- To date 1,480 students from 26 countries
- Single semester or full year
 - Spring: early April to early August
 - Fall: mid-September to January
- Six levels of intensive Japanese language courses; previous language study recommended but not required
- Japanese tutors and class visitors who participate on a regular basis
- Center for Japanese Learning Resources
- Content courses taught in English
- International students fully integrated into Japanese student body
- International students encouraged to participate in extracurricular clubs with Japanese students
- Excursions with Japanese students to the mountains and the sea
- Housing: dorms (studios) or home-stays
- 'Buddy program' helps international students settle into student life in Japan, meet conversation partners, and just have fun
- For more information: www.obirin.ac.jp/en/rj

J. F. Oberlin University at a Glance

History: founded in Japan in 1946; traces lineage to Chongzhen Girls' School, founded in China in 1921

Location: Machida, in the Tokyo suburbs

Religious Affiliation: Congregational

Organization: Five Undergraduate Colleges (Arts and Sciences, Business Management, Health and Welfare, Visual and Performing Arts, University College of Cornerstone Education) and Graduate Division

Majors/Minors: 49 majors, 37 minors

Number of Students: over 9,000

Number of JFOU Students Studying Overseas Annually: over 500

Number of North American Students at JFOU Annually: approximately 100

Number of Non-Japanese Students: 600

Study Abroad Ranking: #3 in Japan

Affiliated Division: Confucius Institute



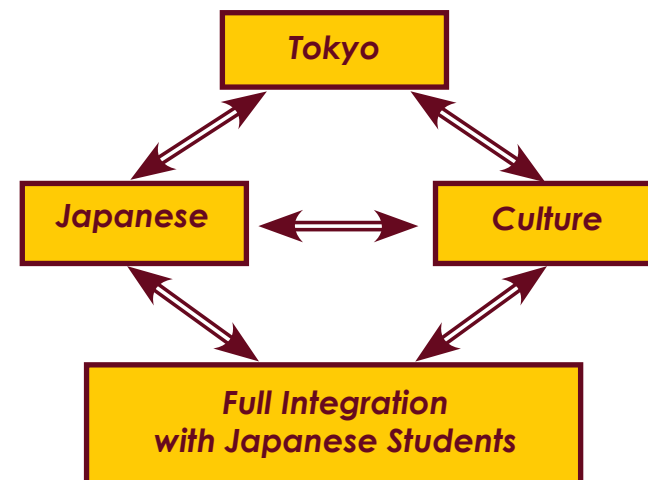
Clubs and Extracurricular Activities

Cultural Clubs

- Art Club
- Ceramics Club
- Dance Company
- Drama Club
- English Speaking Club
- Flower Arranging Club
- Folksong Club
- Hip-Hop Dance Club
- 'Love Okinawa' Club
- Light Music Society
- Modern Jazz Club
- Obirin Christian Club
- Rakugo Club
- Tea Ceremony Club
- Photography Club
- Social Work Club
- University Choir
- University Orchestra
- University Wind Ensemble

Athletic Clubs/Teams

- Archery
- Aikido
- Badminton
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Board Sailing
- Cheerleading
- Cycling
- Dance Team
- Football
- Golf
- Kendo (Japanese Fencing)
- Kyudo (Japanese Archery)
- Men's Lacrosse
- Women's Lacrosse
- Judo
- Rugby
- Soccer
- Shorinji Kenpo
- Ski Racing
- Soft Tennis
- Softball
- Track and Field
- Volleyball





The **Buddy Program** helps foreign students make the transition to life at J. F. Oberlin. Each semester more than 50 Japanese students who want a chance to interact with international students volunteer to act as “buddies” and offer them a wide range of support, such as helping them fill out forms in Japanese so they can get registered at local government offices and taking them on tours of Sagami-hara and Machida. The program has proved so popular with Japanese and international students alike that a campus student group called “Global Supporters” is in the process of expanding the support services offered.



Lots of Interaction with Japanese Students

J. F. Oberlin prides itself on providing international students with many opportunities to interact with Japanese students and members of the community as well as other international students.

- Japanese student ‘buddies’ help international students settle in, understand Japanese college life, practice their Japanese, go on excursions, make friends, share interests, and just have fun.
- Japanese students majoring in teaching Japanese provide tutoring services.
- Japanese students regularly attend Japanese language classes as class visitors.
- Japanese students organize intramural tournaments for international and Japanese students in such sports as soccer, volleyball, basketball or badminton.
- Volunteer activities pair international students and Japanese students.
- Bilingual fieldwork class pairs Japanese and international students to conduct research in nearby communities.
- International students are encouraged to join extra-curricular activities with Japanese students.





Message from the President

From its founding, J. F. Oberlin University has welcomed students from around the world. Today we can see Japanese and international students interacting all over campus. You can say our university community is a cosmopolitan society offering students, eager to gain a global, perspective a perfect environment for study.

J. F. Oberlin's international character developed directly from the educational philosophy of our founder, Yasuzo Shimizu, who served as a missionary in Beijing beginning in 1921. There he established a tuition-free school to teach and train young, poor women in the Beijing projects. In the 1920s, Shimizu also studied at Oberlin College in Ohio where he received a Divinity Degree. He continued his Christian educational mission throughout the politically difficult years of the war.

At war's end in 1945, Shimizu had to return to Japan with only a single suitcase with all his worldly possessions. Once again, he set about establishing a school to educate young people with a vision and dedication to world peace. He named his school after the Alsatian pastor John Frederick Oberlin, a pioneer in community programs and schools in poor neighborhoods in France in the 18th-19th centuries. The history of our school and its founding philosophy encapsulate our commitment to teaching, global perspectives and 'learning not just for oneself but for the betterment of others.' Indeed, our philosophy is the spirit of service, transcending all cultures and nationalities.

We hope you will join us and become part of the the J. F. Oberlin family!

--Takayasu Mitani

Japanese Language Classes: The Class

The **Japanese Language Program** at J. F. Oberlin consists of core courses and elective courses. Because contact with Japanese people is so important in learning the language, we offer many special opportunities and facilities that give students a chance to learn through authentic communication with Japanese people.

Japanese Language Core Curriculum:

Students are placed in one of six different levels in the Japanese language program depending on the results of a placement examination given during orientation. Core courses meet one to five days a week depending on the level. All courses integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, and most courses also make use of newspapers, television, video, or the Internet. Current cultural and social issues as well as experiences from students' daily lives in Japan are integrated into the classes. Classes with fewer than five students may be cancelled or consolidated at the discretion of the Director of the Japanese Language Program. Classes are 90 minutes long.



Japanese Language Electives:

In addition to taking core courses, students may also take elective Japanese language courses. Electives meet once a week and are 90 minutes long. Not all electives are taught every semester, and some electives may not be available at all language skill levels. Electives include:

- Kanji
- Speaking
- Grammar
- Reading
- Writing
- Tutorials
- Pronunciation Skills
- Newscasts and Newspapers
- Learning through Experience
- Modern Pop Culture
- Listening and Note-Taking
- Literary Expressions
- Geography and History Expressions
- Workplace Communication



Classroom is Just the Beginning; Authentic Communication is the Goal



Class Visitors and Tutors:

The "class visitor" program at J. F. Oberlin gives students in Japanese language courses a chance to interact with Japanese students. Every semester 150 Japanese students volunteer to participate in class activities on a regular basis to help international students. Activities range from discussing topics in the news to practical activities such as cooking. The large number of volunteers enables international students to interact with several Japanese students in class. J. F. Oberlin is also proud of its Japanese language tutoring service founded and operated entirely by student volunteers, many of whom are majoring in Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language. Each semester the tutoring group matches international students with Japanese student volunteers.



Center for Japanese Learning Resources:

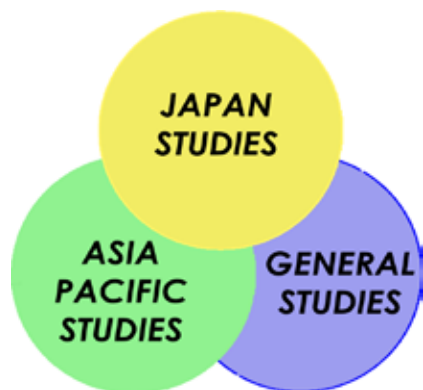
The Center for Japanese Learning Resources has many resources available to help students: textbooks, dictionaries, workbooks, sample standardized tests, fiction and non-fiction books, newspapers, magazines, manga, CD's and DVD's of films and TV dramas. It also has computers for conducting research and completing written assignments as well as a television. Japanese students or senior international students are always available in the Center, while faculty give advice and answer questions one hour every afternoon.



The language program is great because teachers and students help you out a lot depending on your level. The dorms are awesome and fun once you meet people. The campus is nice. Meimeikan is the place to be to find and talk to new people at school. I would recommend joining a club to make friends, too. I joined the Judo Club because it is a lot of fun and a way to practice your Japanese. Besides, it helps me stay in shape. It all depends on what you want to do. Everyone is different so go out there and meet new people.

-Brian
CSU Monterey Bay

Expand Knowledge about Japan and Asia through Courses in English



Content Courses Taught in English:

In addition to Japanese Language courses, J. F. Oberlin offers a wide range of "content courses" taught in English. Many of the content courses deal with Japan, but our courses also cover topics in the Asia Pacific region. A few courses introduce students to topics of general interest that are not specifically connected to Japan or Asia, and a limited number of courses offer students an opportunity to experience "service learning" in Japan.

Most of the content courses are offered for 4 credits and meet for 90 minutes twice a week. Course descriptions and a course schedule are available on the Reconnaissance Japan website (www.obirin.ac.jp/en/rj/academics). Course scheduling, content, and topics may change at the discretion of the university.

FALL

- Comparative Culture
- History of U.S.-Japan Exchanges
- Intercultural Communication
- Introduction to Japanese Folklore
- Japanese Art
- Japanese Cultural Exchanges
- Japanese Culture
- The Japanese Economy
- Japanese Management I and II
- Japanese Politics
- Japanese Women's Literature
- Photography
- Premodern Japanese History
- Modern Japanese Literature



SPRING

- Japan Seen in Real Time
- Japanese Cinema
- Japanese Classical Dance
- The Japanese Economy
- Japanese Literature
- Japanese Society (Service Learning)
- Modern Japanese History
- Political Geography of East Asia
- Postwar Business and Finance
- Sino-Japanese Relations



We also offer courses that stress community involvement and multicultural interaction:

- International Understanding (2 credits)
- Multilingual Interaction (2 credits)
- Bilingual Area Studies (Service Learning) (2 credits)

International students with sufficient Japanese language ability are encouraged to enroll in content courses offered in Japanese.



A Day in the Life of an RJ Student



Overslept. Running late. Good thing the school bus stop is 4 minutes from the dorm!



Pronunciation Class -- no matter how much I try, can't seem to make the 'tsu' come out right.



Kanji test next period. Shouldn't have left this to the last minute!



Met up with Amber's buddy to plan our weekend excursion.

希望

My turn next on the shamisen, but I'm nowhere near as good as Ryan is.



The guys just goofing around. I'm heading to bed.



Nothing like a rousing game of table tennis before bed.



Cooking in the dorm lounge with international friends and my Japanese tutor.



Heading home. Those vending machines are great for quenching my thirst.



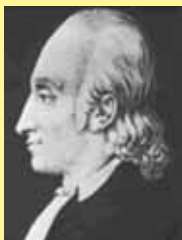
Went to a cheerleading and cheer dance performance. Wow! In Japan, they don't cheer or perform at games like in the States. They practice to compete -- in 2012 the dance team won the world championship in jazz dance.

The Spirit of J. F. Oberlin University



Yasuzo Shimizu (1891-1988), the founder of J. F. Oberlin University, began his career in 1917 as a Christian missionary from Japan to China. He first established a welfare center for Chinese children suffering from famine, and later founded a school for disadvantaged Chinese girls in Beijing. In these endeavors, he and his wife Ikuko carried out the motto "Learning and Labor," adopted from their alma mater, Oberlin College in Ohio. Yasuzo-sensei and Ikuko-sensei returned to Japan from China in 1946. The land for their new school was full of cherry trees, so their first name for the school was Obirin, 'beautiful cherry tree forest.' Later the English name was changed to J. F. Oberlin. They dedicated the school's mission to nurturing people to serve those in need regardless of country, race, or religion.

Yasuzo-sensei's philosophy was also influenced by Jean-Frédéric Oberlin (1740-1826), an Alsatian cleric and philanthropist who devoted himself to the spiritual and material improvement of his impoverished parishioners by establishing schools, clinics, small industries, and orphanages.



In addition to Oberlin College in the United States, a number of schools in Germany and France are named after Jean-Frédéric Oberlin.

Community Activities

As an international student at J. F. Oberlin, you can share your own culture at presentations in K-12 schools. You can also volunteer off-campus by tutoring immigrant children so they don't lose their English ability, by cleaning up the environment, by serving the elderly, and by doing other volunteer work in our local community. If you want to help in the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami recovery efforts, the Service Learning Center or Chaplain's Office would be pleased to introduce you to Japanese student volunteer teams going to Tohoku on weekends. During the Machida Fall Festival, you can help carry the portable shrine around Machida. For the on-campus community, you can represent your home university at the Study Abroad Fairs in the spring and fall, and help Japanese students get ready to study overseas.



School Festival, Performances, Cultural Activities Galore



I think J. F. Oberlin is a lovely campus. It's very small compared to the University of Texas, and the feel is much more intimate, so it was a nice change! I feel like not a single period passes without my seeing several people that I know, so it really seems like a home away from home!

As far as the language program, if you feel you are in the wrong level, talk to the teachers. They are there to help you.

The classes are NOT the place where you learn the most Japanese -- it's out and about, mingling with people! And I definitely encourage that. I know it certainly seems intimidating, but I definitely believe that I've learned the most useful Japanese (slang, common phrases, new verbs, etc.) from my club here at Oberlin. I joined a hip-hop dance club that meets for three-and-a-half hours three times a week; aside from a great workout for my body, it's also a great workout for my brain and my Japanese abilities! My advice is to meet as many people as possible -- fellow RJers and 日本人 alike.

-Alana

University of Texas Austin





I think Obirin is a great school. Everyone is really positive and nice, and I feel like there are a lot of opportunities to meet new people here. The staff at school is really helpful and especially the folks in International Student Services think more about us than in most ryugakusei programs I've heard about in Japan. They organize trips, matsuri and more. They just generally help us with everything we need.

As for language classes, I really feel like the levels are clearly different -- the teachers, the curriculum, the teaching styles. I'm very glad that in all of my classes the workload is fair so I can have time to enjoy my life in Japan! But most of my Japanese I have learned out of class, interacting with Japanese people. In my case, I've made most of my friends through music.

The dorm is great. They have rules, but believe me, most of my friends in other schools here have way worse rules and curfews. We at least don't have a curfew, which is awesome! The rooms are comfortable with the private kitchen and bathroom facilities. That's also rather unique for dorms in Japan.

So all in all, I am really, really happy with my experience here!
-Hildur
University of Iceland

Housing

Almost all students in the RJ program live at JFOU's International House in Fuchinobe, a short shuttle bus ride from campus. There are a limited number of homestays. Every effort will be made to provide friendship families to those in International House who apply.

- **Will I share a room with someone else?**

Almost all rooms are studios with a toilet, a shower, a fully equipped kitchenette with a stove and microwave, and a furnished sleeping/living area. The dorm is completely wired for the Internet.

- **Do only international students live there?**

Of course not. International and Japanese students are totally integrated at JFOU.

- **What do I do about laundry?**

Fuchinobe International House has laundry facilities with washers and dryers on the premises.

- **What do I do about food?**

Students in the dorm are responsible for their own meals. There are supermarkets and convenience stores nearby for grocery shopping. Often students pool their funds and cook for each other -- Mondays native Chinese food, Tuesdays native Korean food, Wednesdays native American food, Thursdays native Egyptian food, Fridays native Silesian food . . . well, you get the idea.

- **Is Fuchinobe convenient?**

Fuchinobe is a small town. From International House it takes 3 minutes on foot to the train station. From the station, it is 7 minutes by train to Machida and 45 minutes by train to Tokyo or Yokohama. Free shuttle buses to campus leave from the station every 5-10 minutes.

For students who request homestays, the host family provides two meals a day. However, students should return home by dinnertime, and often the family determines a curfew. Homestays may be as far as an hour from school, and students are responsible for their own commuting fees. Internet connections are not guaranteed.



Explore Our Neighborhood, Machida City, and of course Tokyo and Yokohama

Reconnaissance Japan participants can find plenty to do off campus. Machida, the Tokyo suburb where JFOU is located, is a lively, upbeat town. It has a little bit of everything -- up-scale department stores, high-volume discount shops, small shops selling traditional goods such as tea or kimonos, and quiet coffee shops featuring all-you-can-eat lunches. It is a young city whose economy is geared toward the college crowd.

Well-served by trains, Machida provides easy access to Tokyo and also to nearby mountains and beaches. Express trains run from Machida into Shinjuku in one direction and out to the ocean in the other. The Yokohama Line runs from Hachioji, near Takao with its Tokugawa Period shrines, to Yokohama with its Chinatown and trendy shopping areas. Students who want to travel to Kyoto or beyond can catch Japan's famed 'bullet train' from Shin-Yokohama station.



Expenses

Program Fee:

¥430,000 per semester for students from non-affiliated schools. The program fee is waived for students on exchange. Students from affiliated schools not on exchange are requested to consult their Study Abroad Director about the program fee.

Other Fees:

Insurance: Approximately ¥15,000 per year (National Health Insurance covers 70% of most medical and dental expenses).

Airport pick-up: ¥4,000 from Narita Airport; ¥2,000 from Haneda Airport.

Fuchinobe International House (Dorm): all rooms are furnished with bed, microwave, refrigerator, stovetop, cable Internet connection.

Fall (5 months): ¥275,000 Spring (4 months): ¥220,000 One month refundable deposit: ¥55,000

Other one-time fees: ¥20,000 cleaning fee; ¥5,000 liability insurance; ¥7,500 bedding.

Utilities included up to ¥10,000 per month Rent during vacations: ¥55,000 per month

Student lounge has a television, desks, sofas, a ping-pong table, and a fully furnished kitchenette.

Students are responsible for their own food, and should budget between ¥30,000 and ¥50,000 per month.

Homestay:

Placement Fee: ¥20,000 Fall: ¥300,000 (5 months) Spring: ¥240,000 (4 months)

Host families provide two meals a day. Approximately ¥700 per day should be budgeted for lunch at school.

Students are responsible for commuting (¥10,000-¥15,000 per month). Internet connections are not guaranteed.

Personal Expenses, Books, and Amenities: Students are responsible for their own personal expenses, books, and amenities.

Refund Policy: Once the semester has started, program and housing fees cannot be refunded.

For information about financial assistance and wiring money, please see our webpage: www.obirin.ac.jp/en/rjprogram/financial/financial_info.html



Keyaki-no-Hiroba:
the quad at the
center of campus



Fuchinobe
International
House

Eligibility, Admission, Visas, and Other Procedures

Eligibility: The Reconnaissance Japan Program is open both to exchange students from J. F. Oberlin's overseas partner institutions and to independent applicants. In either case, applicants must have completed at least one year of study at the college level and have a good academic record. A grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) and a year's study of the Japanese language are recommended (although not absolutely required) for admission to the program.



Application and Deadlines: Applications for the Reconnaissance Japan Program must be made online at www.obirin-cis.com. Applications for study beginning in the Fall semester (September) must be completed by May 1; those for the Spring semester (April) must be completed by November 1 of the previous year.



Screening, Acceptance, and Visas: Screening of your application begins once all required documents are received. Applicants are notified of results in mid-June (for the fall) or mid-December (for the spring). JFOU will send a 'Certificate of Admission' to successful applicants. Then it generally takes about 5-6 weeks for the Japanese government to issue a 'Certificate of Eligibility.' After you receive these two documents, you must obtain a Student Visa from a Japanese Consulate or Embassy. It usually takes five days for the Consulate or Embassy to issue the visa.



Housing and Billing: While you are working on your visa process, we are working on your housing. You will receive notification once housing is secured. Then we will send an invoice for your program fee and housing one month before arrival, so that funds can be wired before you arrive.



Passport, Visa, Plane Tickets: When you have your passport and visa in hand, you can make your airplane reservations. Japanese immigration requires a round-trip open ticket. Let JFOU know your itinerary, and we'll make arrangements to pick you up at the airport for the start of your Japanese adventure.



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