

UW Summer Launch in Japan: Supernatural and Surreal Summer 2024

Updated March 18, 2024

The UW Summer Launch in Japan: Supernatural and Surreal program is a collaboration between CIEE and International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This IAP Program Handbook provides you with information and advice available at the time of posting. This handbook will be expanded as program details are finalized in the coming months. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad, and you will receive notification of these changes through your wisc.edu email.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, course credit, health and safety, billing, etc.) should be directed to IAP.

This program handbook contains information about:

- Program Contacts
- Program Dates
- Pre-Departure Preparation
- Packing
- Travel and Arrival
- Academics
- Life Abroad

Contact Information

CIEE On-Site Contact Info

You can call 800-40-STUDY (1-800-407-8839) or 207-553-4000 at any time. If you reach a recording during normal business hours, 9am-5pm Eastern Time, press zero to reach an operator. After 5pm Eastern Time, follow the prompts for the CIEE emergency answering service.

You will be given the in-country phone number of your local on-site program contact when you arrive in Japan.

UW-Madison IAP Contacts

IAP contacts are listed under the My Contacts tile in your MyStudyAbroad portal.

IAP Emergency Contact Information

In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number **(608) 265-6329** between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday (Central Time). After-hours or on weekends, call the IAP 24/7 Emergency Line at **(608) 516-9440**.

Contact information for your fellow program participants is located in your MyStudyAbroad portal under the Contacts tab if you wish to contact fellow UW students before your program.

Embassy Registration

All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register online at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country's embassy or consulate.

U.S. Embassy in Tokyo
1-10-5 Akasaka
Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420 Japan

+81 03-3224-5000
<https://jp.usembassy.gov/>

Program Dates

SOAR session: register and attend any session prior to the program orientation

Program Orientation on UW Campus: July 22 (noon) – July 23, 2024

Departure: July 23 on group flight departing together from campus

Japan: **July 24 – August 9, 2024**

Return to campus: August 9 (or 10 depending on flights)

IAP will inform you about additional departure and returned details once flights are confirmed.

If you are living in on-campus housing this fall, you will likely learn your fall housing assignment around mid-June. Move in dates for Fall 2024 will be published in August 2024. More information can be found here:

<https://www.housing.wisc.edu/residence-halls/assignments/freshmen/>

IAP will not be arranging for early move in or lodging on the day of return. Please arrange for your own lodging or pick up on August 9 (or 10). More information will be provided before orientation about the timing of your return.

Please note that IAP pays CIEE your fees for the program, so please do not pay CIEE directly.

Pre-Departure Preparation

This program takes place in a very hot, humid, and crowded environment. Getting to class involves navigating busy urban streets, walking for at least twenty minutes each way. Daily fieldtrips require extensive intermittent physical activity, whether walking to bus stops, riding crowded trains/subways, climbing frequent steps at temples and/or (for one fieldtrip) hiking narrow mountain paths. Japanese train stations also feature many stairs. In general, elevators are inconveniently situated or (at temples) simply non-existent. If you need any physical accommodations to navigate these terrains, please [connect with the McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) to apply for accommodations ASAP and disclose that information in your health and wellness form.

Be sure to discuss your program plans with your healthcare provider (if relevant) and/or your McBurney Access Consultant prior to your departure and as soon as possible. We work closely with McBurney and can help come up with a plan for you.

Once you've discussed your needs with your healthcare provider (if relevant) and McBurney Access Consultant, please contact Carmen Pitz (carmen.pitz@wisc.edu) to discuss any questions you have about receiving accommodations on your program. **Planning for your accommodations can take time, so the sooner you begin this planning process, the better.**

Pre-Departure Orientations

Students and families will be invited to participate in a web-based pre-departure orientation co-hosted by CIEE's Kyoto Center staff and UW-Madison International Academic Programs. Date, time and meeting link will be shared with students via email and in the MyStudyAbroad portal.

Students will meet with Program Leader Professor Charo D'Etcheverry online shortly after the online CIEE predeparture orientation. Date, time and meeting link will be shared via email and in the MyStudyAbroad portal.

There will also be an in-person orientation for both students and families the afternoon of July 22 on the UW Madison campus. More information will be provided via email.

Immigration Documents

Passport

A passport is needed to travel to Japan. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one, as your passport information will be needed to confirm your flight shortly after program acceptance. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website (<http://travel.state.gov/passport>). If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least six months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

Visa

A visa is not required for U.S. passport holders. U.S. citizens may enter Japan for up to 90 days for tourist or business purposes without a visa.

Starting November 1, 2022, travelers to Japan may pre-register for airport Immigration, Customs, and Vaccination review, and use “Fast Track” at major airports across Japan using [Visit Japan Web](#). You will receive additional instructions on this prior to departure.

Packing

Most past study abroad participants will tell you that they brought too much with them. Think carefully about what you really will need (and must carry on your own) as you plan for packing.

While most things are readily available in Japan, some items may be more expensive or simply inconvenient to purchase there. You may wish to bring particular items with you from home. Recommendations include:

Clothes: Temperatures in the summer can be humid, ranging from 75-90 degrees Fahrenheit. The following items are recommended:

- Comfortable shoes – you will do a lot of walking.
- For men, semi-dress pants like cotton khakis.
- For women, a dress, skirt or semi-dress pants.
- Jeans for casual wear.
- Shorts (comfortable to wear at home in the summer, seldom worn by Japanese students to school).
- Rain jacket/rain boots – July is part of the rainy season.

Personal Items:

- Deodorant (it is difficult to purchase U.S.-style anti-perspirant in Japan)
- Any over-the-counter medicines you think you may need. While it is possible to get Japanese brands of over-the-counter medicines, if there is something you are accustomed to using often (pain relievers, cold medication, etc) you may wish to bring it with you. Please note that some American over-the-counter medications (e.g., Sudafed) are not legal in Japan. We recommend consulting the following site as you pack: <https://jp.usembassy.gov/services/importing-medication/>
- Contact lens solutions in Japan differ from American brands and American brands can be difficult to find, so you might want to bring your preferred brand.
- Personal hygiene products
- Bandana/light handkerchief for drying hands in a public restroom
- Masks (multiple layer cloth or disposable face mask that covers your nose and mouth and fits snugly against the sides of your face)
- A working cell phone with an international calling/texting plan is required for this program as public wifi is not readily available in all locations of the program.

Prescription Medications: A one-month supply of prescription medication is allowed. Medications must be in their original container with the prescription label. 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 from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. If more than one month's supply is required, prior permission from the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare in Japan is required:

Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare

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

Be sure to have a copy of the prescription and/or letter from your prescribing physician explaining the nature of the medication, the purpose of taking it, recommended dosage, and frequency of ingestion.

Pepper Spray

Do not bring pepper spray or any similar self-defense tool with you when traveling abroad. While pepper spray or similar self-defense items are legal in the United States, they are illegal to possess and carry in many other countries (e.g., Australia, Japan, United Kingdom).

Electronics

A working cell phone with an international calling/texting plan is required for this program as public wifi is not readily available in all locations of the program.

Japan runs on 100V (volts), which is different from North America (110-120 V), 60Hz (cycles) AC and uses the Type A plug (almost identical to the United States standard plug). If you plan on bringing any electronics from the United States, keep in mind that any three-prong plugs will require adapters/converters which you should purchase before departure. It may be less expensive to purchase small appliances in Japan (such as a hair dryer) if you find them necessary.

Travel and Arrival Information

IAP will book your transportation from the UW-Madison campus to Kyoto and back to the UW-Madison campus. This is likely to be a bus from campus to O'Hare International Airport followed by a flight to Kyoto and the reverse. CIEE will provide group airport shuttle service in Kyoto.

The flight schedule will be confirmed and communicated one month prior to flight.

Upon arrival, you will participate in an in-country orientation, which will cover academic matters, practical matters related to cross-cultural living and learning, a tour of facilities, health and safety matters, program-specific rules and regulations, local transportation modes, and a tour of the local area. A welcome meal is also provided.

The Academic Program

General Information

This course treats supernaturally-themed texts, sites, and performances in Kyoto and beyond as windows onto Japanese popular culture over time. Daily reading, discussion, and quick writes about beliefs, texts, and sites, combined with revised papers and formal presentations, will foster a deep understanding of the role played by the supernatural in Japanese culture. Professor D'Etcheverry will be the primary instructor for the course.

A note on daily life: For the first two weeks, expect to spend two hours in class weekday mornings, followed by afternoon visits to local temples, shrines, theaters, and museums. You will also have some free time integrated

to catch up on homework and explore the city. The last week of the program, we'll have class for three hours most mornings, as you spend afternoons drafting the final paper--your personal response to supernatural Japan! Your instructor will support you throughout this project, with personal paper conferences as well as informal brainstorming sessions.

Daily Routine

Days are long, filled with significant physical activity in the morning, followed by afternoon class and then more walking to find dinner. Occasionally, the order of class and fieldtrips will be reversed, but the total physical effort will remain the same. Upon return to the hotel at night, it is necessary to complete daily written assignments. All of this means that there is very little free time on this program, and that much of the day you will be hot, sweaty, and tired (especially with the jetlag).

Course and Credit Information

Upon successful completion of the program, you will earn 3 credits and be able to select one of the following approved equivalents:

- Asian Language and Culture 253: Japanese Popular Culture
- History 273: Study Abroad: Non-Western History
- Anthropology 455: Study Abroad Topics- Cultural Anthropology

Refer to the program page for the full listing: <https://my.studyabroad.wisc.edu/CourseList/Index/330164>

Participants will be invited to enroll in a one credit post-program course, [CP 125](#), the following fall semester and will receive additional information about enrolling prior to their pre-departure orientation.

Pass/Fail/Drop/Audit

Students are expected to enroll in the full-time academic program. The academic course may not be dropped during the program. Please refer to the [IAP Study Abroad Handbook](#) for additional Academic Policies.

Grades and Grade Conversions

You will receive a letter grade for the program course, and that grade will be factored into your UW-Madison GPA.

Living Abroad

Japan

Japan is an archipelago comprised of four main islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu, although thousands of smaller islands occupy the surrounding water. Its climate is temperate, with four seasons. It rains between 40 and 120 inches a year, contributing to Japan's long growing season from early spring to early autumn. Steep hills and mountains cover over 70% of the land which divide the habitable parts of the country. Due to this, Japan is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with a population of over 120 million people.

Japan has few natural resources, apart from some wood, fish and rivers for hydroelectric power. Unlike most industrialized nations, Japan is almost completely dependent on imports for its raw materials and is one of the world's major importers of oil, coal, iron ore, lumber, cotton, wool and even silk. And even though its farms are among the most productive in the world, Japan still imports much of its wheat and other foods. Nevertheless, no other country in the world with so few natural resources has achieved the level of economic success that Japan has. After World War II, the Japanese people built their country from virtual devastation to a leading economic power. Textile manufacturing was its first success, then shipbuilding. Today, the automobile industry is key, as well as its advancements in a variety of technological industries.

The government in Japan is democratic with a constitution that guarantees representation and individual rights. Japan has one of the world's oldest unbroken monarchies with an emperor who, while possessing no governmental power, continues to perform many ceremonial state functions.

While most Japanese people do not practice religion on a regular basis, Japan has been influenced by two major religions: Shinto and Buddhism. The basic Shinto belief is that people should live in harmony with all living things. Shinto established a set of ethics that guide the relationships between human beings and nature, and between the individual and society. Buddhism taught that salvation was possible by purging oneself of personal desires and attachment to worldly things. In practice, millions of Japanese are both Shinto and Buddhist, for example, using Shinto rites when they marry and Buddhist funeral rites when they die. The two beliefs are not incompatible. In everyday life, also, the Japanese perspective on morality and ethics has been influenced by Confucianism, which is not a religion but a philosophy of personal behavior. Most Japanese do not consider themselves to be Confucianists, but its concepts of a rational approach to life and society strongly influence the culture.

Kyoto

Japan's cultural capital of Kyoto has it all, from meditative Zen temples and teahouses to the world's first Manga museum and world-class game leaders like Nintendo and Q-Games. Studying abroad in Kyoto creates a unique experience for students in a picturesque city nestled in a valley with hiker-friendly hills dotted with World Heritage sites.

Housing

Program participants will be housed together in Kyoto in hotel accommodations. Students will share rooms with other UW-Madison students on the program in double occupancy rooms. Each room will include a lockable door, a bed for each individual, bedding/linens, and access to a shared bathroom.

Students under the age of 18 during the time of participation will be housed with other program participants under the age of 18.

We typically place students in rooms with others of the same sex. In some locations, this is necessary for legal or cultural reasons. We understand that not all students may identify as female or male, and we want to create a welcoming environment for you while you are abroad. We are happy to work with students who identify as transgender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, and/or non-binary regarding life abroad. If you have questions or concerns regarding housing as it relates to your gender identity, please contact your Study Abroad Advisor, Carmen Pitz – carmen.pitz@wisc.edu

Handling Money Abroad

The official currency of Japan is the yen (JPY or ¥). Generally, we recommend that students take a small amount of US dollars with them and plan to withdraw money on a regular basis using a debit card from ATMs.

Current exchange rates: <https://www.oanda.com/currency-converter/en/>

Japan is still a very cash-based society, so consider the following:

ATM/Debit cards: Not all ATMS are available 24 hours a day. Convenience stores have ATMs which support most major bank cash cards, and many have begun offering 24-hour services. There is often a small service charge.

To withdraw yen using your U.S. ATM/debit card, consider visiting a Japanese post office (open from 9:00 am – 3pm), as ATM machines in Japanese banks accept only cards issued by Japanese banks while post offices will accept foreign bankcards operating on the Cirrus (MasterCard) or PLUS (Visa) systems. Seven Eleven ATMs also

accept foreign debit cards. Besides post offices, other places with ATMs that may accept foreign-issued cards include Citibank (which usually accepts both Visa and MasterCard and sometimes American Express as well), large department stores, and airports.

Credit cards: Japan is primarily a cash-based society, with most establishments not accepting credit cards for purchases. Credit cards may be used for obtaining cash and paying for accommodations, meals at expensive restaurants, train or air tickets, and major purchases. The most readily accepted cards are MasterCard (also called Eurocard), Visa, and the Japanese credit card JCB (Japan Credit Bank).

Train passes can now be used as payment at many department stores and convenience stores. This is another way to carry money around without having to carry bills and coins.

Shopping in Kyoto

Most stores are open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with most convenience stores open 24 hours. Past participants recommend ¥100 Shops for buying cheap snack and Gap and UNIQLO for clothes.

Public Transportation

Students' travel for academic excursions will be facilitated by CIEE, and students will be provided a local transportation pass for the duration of the program that they can load with additional money.

Safety

You are required to participate in IAP's Health and Safety Orientation online, which will provide general information on how to minimize risk, as well as health and safety resources available to you abroad. Carry your emergency card and insurance card throughout your program.

Your on-site orientation will provide specific information once you arrive to Kyoto, but some general tips to encourage safety in any location include:

- Use caution when traveling around the city.
- Do not travel alone after dark.
- Tell someone your whereabouts.
- Have a working telephone on your person.
- Intoxication compromises your ability to make safe choices and may increase your risk for being a target of crime.

The UW Code of Conduct applies during your time abroad and means that alcohol consumption is not allowed during any program events or activities, regardless of whether you are of legal drinking age in Japan. Additionally, alcohol is not permitted in program housing, regardless of whether you are of legal drinking age in Japan.

For emergency response by Japan's Police, dial **110**. For emergency response by Japan's Fire department, dial **119**.

Health

Students will be covered by CISI supplemental health insurance for the duration of their program. More information on the CISI health insurance coverage can be found in My Study Abroad under the Health Insurance section. If you need to see a doctor, you will most likely have to pay out of pocket and submit a claim to CISI to be reimbursed.

You should observe health precautions similar to those that would apply while traveling in the United States. For more information on recommended immunizations for travel to Japan, please see the Center for Disease Control (CDC) web site: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/japan>

Communication

When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences. To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always “1”) followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online (<https://countrycode.org/japan>).

A popular option for students is to get an international plan on their US phone just for the duration of their time abroad. Check with your provider for rates. Another option, if you have an unlocked phone, is getting a Japanese SIM card. Skype, Line, WeChat, WhatsApp, Kakao Talk, and other platforms are cheap or free ways to call/text home online instead of via phone.

Wifi is available at the airport to check in with family upon arrival.

Additional Relevant Information/Websites of Interest

U.S. State Department:

<http://travel.state.gov>

Cost of living info:

<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/>

Identity Resources :

<https://www.ciee.org/about/what-we-stand-for/diversity-inclusion/city-specific-resources/diversity-kyoto>

<https://www.ciee.org/about/what-we-stand-for/diversity-inclusion/city-specific-resources/diversity-tokyo>