

Japanese Culture Program

No.12

The Center for International Education has conducted Japanese culture classes since 2003 to offer international students the chance to experience traditional Japanese culture and to deepen their understanding of Japan. These programs are also open to Japanese students, and so it is our hope that both Japanese and international students will benefit from this mutual exchange and acquire a global perspective through experiencing traditional Japanese culture together.

いばなきょうしつ
生け花教室

Ikebana Class



こうどうきょうしつ
香道教室

Kodo Class



きょうしつ
きもの教室

Kimono Class



In this globalized world, it is essential for us to live together with people all over the world beyond the differences of language and culture. We, the Center for International Education, are here to help both international students and Japanese students communicate with each other and understand the others culture and language.

This program is designed not only for obtaining the knowledge of Japanese culture but also learning it through personal experience. Student clubs of Ochanomizu University also join the program so that international students and Japanese students are able to have an opportunity for cultural exchange. We hope it helps students to understand cultural differences and provides an opportunity to work together over the differences of language and culture.

This booklet introduces activities that we have held in this program. Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you in the class.

Ikebana Class

Ikebana, also known as *kado* (the way of flowers), is the traditional Japanese art of flower arranging. Ikebana started to flourish in the sixteenth century, and the fundamental concept is to express the three elements of heaven, earth, and humankind in a balanced composition using natural flowers. The way of arranging flowers differs depending on the school of ikebana.

The Ikebana Class has been held at the Center for International Education since 2004. The class is very popular among students, who can learn basic arranging with seasonal flowers and enjoy seeing advanced arrangements designed by the instructor.



Ikebana Instructor Ms . Fusako Akaike

First class grand master of Ikebana,
Ryuka style
Ohara School of Ikebana

Ms. Akaike started learning ikebana forty-five years ago from her mother-in-law, a grand master of ikebana. She has taught ikebana for many years, including at the Ikebana Club of Ochanomizu University. In her free time she enjoys traveling, reading, and doing *chigirie* (torn paper collage art).

★Interview with the Instructor

Q: What do you find fascinating about ikebana?

A: Ikebana can express the beauty of harmony and contrast of different colors. It can also create space using seasonal flowers and your imagination.

Q: From your point of view, what is the importance of introducing Japanese culture to international students?

A: Through this class, I hope the students can learn some things about ikebana that they can talk about when they return to their home countries.

Q: What do you think of the students' flower arrangements?

A: When I first saw the students' arrangements, I felt that they had a sense for flower arranging. They arranged the flowers very nicely even though it was probably the first time for most of them.

Q: What is the impression of the students?

A: They seem to enjoy arranging flowers very much. I am very happy to see that.

Q: What do you find difficult about teaching ikebana?

A: It is not easy to help them understand the spirit of ikebana in only one lesson. But I hope that students will learn not only arranging skills but also feel something about the spirit.

Q: What do you find interesting about teaching ikebana?

A: I'm impressed with the uniqueness of the students' arrangements.

Q: What is most appealing thing about this class?

A: Talking with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Q: Do you have any new ideas for the Ikebana Class in the future?

A: It would be interesting to prepare various flower arrangement materials and let students arrange them anyway they like. Also, giving comments on arrangement to each other in class would be a good inspiration.

Q: Please let us know if you have any recommendations on publications and Web sites.

A: Publications

- *Umeno Ikebana Ohara-ryu Ikebana Soshu 4* : Ohara-ryu Publications
- *Ohara-ryu Ikebana Kihon Manual* : Ohara-ryu Publications
- *Soka* (monthly publication)
- *Kikyo* (bimonthly publication)

Web sites

- Ohara School of Ikebana : <http://www.ohararyu.or.jp/>
- Minna no Ikebana (Ikebana for Everyone): <http://www.minnanoikebana.com>

A Look at the Class

1



The instructor gives a brief explanation about ikebana.

2



Let's start to arrange flowers with the instructor.

3



The instructor helps students to arrange flowers.

6



The teacher puts theory into practice at the end.

5



Students also tried the 'inclining form'.

4



'Rising form' arrangements completed.

Comments from participants



Since it was my first time doing ikebana, it was very new and fascinating! I never thought I could arrange flowers myself!! The teachers were very kind, and I'm grateful for their detailed explanations about the history of ikebana and flower arrangement techniques. I'm really glad that I participated!

It has become an amazing memory! Thank you so much!



Learning from the teachers and listening to their stories was wonderful, and watching her create her own arrangement was very captivating. It was a lot of fun, thank you so much!



Kimono Class

The kimono's form has not changed for several hundred years, and it has lost almost all of its use as daily wear. However, the traditional beauty of kimonos has recently been re-evaluated in Japan, and kimonos have become popular among young people.

The Kimono Class has been held at the Center for International Education since 2005. By learning how to wear a Nagoya-obi (a simple type of sash) and a yukata in the spring semester, and a Nagoya-obi and a kimono in the autumn semester, students were able to experience Japanese traditional culture. The Kimono Class is so popular among both Japanese and international students that it is always filled with liveliness and smiles.



Kimono Instructor Ms. Keiko Gabe

Head Instructor of Keiko Gabe Kimono school
Kimono consultant
Instructor of the Kimono-Wearing Club at Ochanomizu University.
A graduate of Ochanomizu University
Studied at Sodo Kimono School

In junior high school, she began learning the tea ceremony from her aunt and fell in love with kimonos. She later took a break from the tea ceremony but learned to wear kimonos at a Kimono Institute. She has been teaching kimono dressing classes for 40 years now. She has also been involved in wedding ceremonies, photo studios, and commercial photography. She graduated from Ochanomizu University with a degree in geography. She is also a lecturer at the Ochanomizu University Kimono Dressing Club. Author of the book "The Season's Record of Clothing" published by Tokyo Shiki Publishing. Her hobbies include writing haiku and singing songs.

★Interview with the Instructor ★We interviewed the instructor!

Q: During your time at Ochanomizu University, what kind of student were you? Did you have any interactions with exchange students?

A: As a native of a rural area, I was very interested in having a life in Tokyo, which I longed for. I was very interested in life in Tokyo, which I had longed for. I wanted to absorb many things and lead an active life. I don't remember any foreign students from overseas back then, and I only exchanged greetings with Okinawan students who came to my dormitory before Okinawa's reversion to Japan.

Q: When and why did you start learning to dress yourself?

A: I enjoyed the classes at the kimono institute I attended when I was in my early thirties, and I wanted to learn more about kimonos, not only to wear them myself, but also to wear them for others.

Q: What attracted you to kimonos?

A: I have loved cloth since I was a child. It is natural to think about the long history of kimonos, but kimonos have a long history in Japanese culture. The kimono has a long history, but it is also the culmination of the subtle aesthetic sensibilities of Japanese culture. The charm of the kimonos lies in its advanced techniques of dyeing, weaving, and embroidery, as well as in the way the seasons can be experienced through the coordination of the obi (belt) and accessories.

Q: Can you tell us about one time that was difficult for you when you were teaching people how to dress?

A: I can't think of any, but I can imagine that a kimono is not just a garment, but it should fit to the center of the body. It is challenging to be able to visualize that the body is not just wrapped around the body, but is aligned with the cen-

ter of the body. It takes a lot of patience until the back and collar alignments are consistent.

Q: Can you tell us about one time that made you happy when you were teaching a student how to wear a kimono?

A: In the classes for international students, I was very happy when they struggled with their first kimonos and finished them beautifully, and when their smiles broke out. When I see the students decide they want to wear their own hakama for their graduation ceremony, practice hard, and become able to wear it beautifully, I am impressed to realize how hard they have worked so far.

Q: What is the best thing about kimonos and yukatas that you would like to share with international students?

A: Kimonos are the national costume of Japan, but they are also suitable for people from any country. Even if the shape is the same, the patterns and colors are different. The variations of patterns and colors are almost infinite. If you have a chance, please take a look at what you like and enjoy wearing it.

Q: Do you have a final message for us?

A: Kimonos have been on the decline in Japan, but due to the appreciation of kimonos by people from other countries, they have become the new trend.

I believe that new values are being created by the appreciation of kimonos by people in other countries. Cultural exchange is really important, and I hope that all international students will return to their countries and tell others about kimonos. Also, please introduce to us the ethnic costumes of your home country.

A Look at the Class



1 First, students learn about the history of kimonos.



2 Under the guidance of the instructor, the obi is tied one by one.



3 The instructor helps to fit the difficult parts.



6 The dressing is complete.



5 At the end, the instructor will neatly adjust everything.



4 A finished obi.

Comments from participants



It was a wonderful experience to wear such a beautiful kimono. Thank you so much.



It was my first time putting on a kimono by myself. Japanese women are impressive!



I was happy to learn how to wear a kimono from the beginning.



Shodo Class

Shodo (calligraphy) is a form of artistic writing involving the use of a brush and India ink. Originally from China, this aspect of culture developed in Japan to incorporate a combination of *kanji* (Chinese characters) and *kana* (Japanese syllabic characters). Although writing brushes are not used in daily life, people in Japan become familiar with calligraphy from classes in elementary school, culture clubs and the like.

Calligraphy classes have been held at the Center for International Education since the autumn semester of 2003. In addition to the basic practice, in the first semester we wrote on shikishi (fancy square boards used for calligraphy) and in the second semester we are also trying our hand at writing *kakizome* (the first calligraphy of the year) on long paper.



Shodo Instructor Ms. Mika Akagi

Ms. Akagi was 5 years old when she was inspired by her aunt – a Shodo teacher – to start calligraphy. She is a qualified Shodo master and teaches at the Center for International Education. She enjoys both playing and listening to classical music as a hobby, and is a keen food enthusiast.

★Interview with the Instructor

Q: What's the most fascinating thing about Shodo?

A: It's the act of focusing on and writing characters with great attention to detail.

Q: Why do you think it's important to introduce Japanese culture to students from other countries?

A: Experiencing Japanese culture through Shodo gives students perspective and depth to understand both Japanese culture and their own culture.

Q: What do you think of the students' calligraphy?

A: They all follow the basic points, and their work has a very relaxed air.

Q: What's your impression of the students?

A: They write in the same way as they do their research. They first come to understand the meanings of the characters, and then they start writing. I think Shodo and academic research are similar in a way.

Q: What do you find difficult about teaching calligraphy?

A: It's really hard to maintain the right posture and breathe properly when you write to create beautiful work.

Q: What's the most interesting thing about calligraphy?

A: I like the fact that the way Chinese characters are received differs by country, and the choice of themes is very novel and fresh.

Q: What's the most appealing thing about this class?

A: Students can talk about characters with others on an international platform based on their own work.

Q: Do you have any ideas for Shodo class development in the future?

A: I want to try Rinsho, which involves following well-known classic writings. Writing characters on T-shirts might also be an interesting direction to take.

A Look at the Class

1



The teacher demonstrates how to use a calligraphy brush.

2



Students practice basic strokes on Japanese writing paper.

3



Write characters or words you like in line with the teacher's advice.

6



This is our work!

5



We practiced a lot.

4



Students work so seriously!

Comments from participants



It was my first calligraphy experience since elementary school, but the teacher was very kind. Thank you so much.



I'm happy to have been able to write my favorite kanji♥ Thank you!



I've never done calligraphy even with the alphabet, so it was a new experience for me. Since I was able to write the kanji "spring", whenever I think about "spring" from now on, I will remember not only the season but also the experience of calligraphy. I realized that writing characters makes me feel good, so I would be happy to do calligraphy again in the future.

Sado Class

Sado (Japanese tea ceremony) is a path to mastering etiquette through the serving of tea. Often described as a “composite art form,” tea ceremony is a profound world that combines architecture, crafts, *ikebana*, and cooking. There are 42 tea ceremony schools including the Omotosenke school, but the school with the most number of students is the Urasenke school. A tea ceremony class was started at the Center for International Education in 2011, with cooperation from the Urasenke Tea Ceremony Department of Ochanomizu University. The classes are held in a traditional teahouse in a Japanese garden, and have received high praise for providing students with the opportunity to experience authentic tea ceremony.



Sado Instructor Ms . Keiko Yoshida

Head Instructor of Urasenke style

Influenced by her grandmother and mother, Ms. Yoshida got interested in the depth of Sado and started learning it almost sixteen years ago. She enjoys reading and watching movies as her hobbies.

★Interview with the Instructor

Q: What do you find fascinating about sado?

A: Sado is a Japanese composite art. Through learning sado, we also lean the better way of living.

Q: What is most appealing thing about this class?

A: It is valuable to learn sado, but it is not easy in a short time to understand meanings of every movement in sado. I hope we will have another opportunity to lean depths of sado.

Q: What is your memorable story from teaching sado?

A: The main act of sado is boiling water and making tea, though it's all based on rationality and insight in a scientific way. There is a story Einstein was impressed by the wisdom of sado. I felt proud of it.

Q: Please let us know if you have any recommendations of publications, Web sites and classes.

A: Web sites Urasenke Konichian <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/index2.html>

★Interview with assistant, Japanese student who is a vice president of Sado club

Q: What do you find difficult about teaching sado?

A: How to tell the meanings of words and movement which are unfamiliar even to Japanese.

Q: What do you find interesting about teaching Sado?

A: I was glad to see everyone enjoying making tea.

Q: What did you think of the class?

A: We believe participants could learn the beauty of sado in this class.

A Look at the Class



1 The instructor gives an explanation about the history of the tea ceremony.



2 The teacher explains about procedures of the tea ceremony.

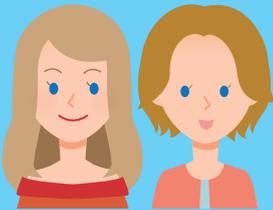


4 Making tea by themselves.



3 Enjoying tea with manners.

Comments from participants



- I was very happy to have the opportunity to participate in a tea ceremony class.
- It was fun. Thank you.
- I had a great time with my first tea ceremony experience!



It was a lot of fun. Thank you. The tea and sweets were delicious. I also had fun chatting with members of the tea ceremony club.



It was fun talking with everyone and learning about the tea ceremony! Thank you so much.



Today's experience was really enjoyable. I'm grateful for being able to enjoy matcha and sweets, and for the kind guidance from everyone. I'm looking forward to participating in the tea ceremony class again next time.



Everyone was very kind in teaching me about Japanese tea ceremony, and the tea and sweets were delicious. It was also fun to have the experience of making tea myself! Thank you very much.



Kabuki Appreciation Class (Traditional Japanese Dance-Drama)

Kabuki is one of the main traditional Japanese theater forms. It is said to have begun around 1603 when Okuni, a shrine maiden of the Grand Shrine of Izumo, performed *Nenbutsu odori* (Buddhist folk dances) in Kyoto.

Ochanomizu University offers international students an opportunity to go on a field trip to see a Kabuki performance at the National Theater of Japan every year in June. In order to better prepare students for the Kabuki performance, the Center for International Education offers a special class. The Kabuki Class is an introductory seminar on the history of Kabuki and ways to enjoy the performances. In the class students gain a deeper understanding of the program, characters, and story.

The Kabuki Class is always popular since it is open to all students. Even if students miss the field trip to the National Theater, the seminar is still a great chance to learn about Kabuki.



Comments from participants



I knew nothing about Kabuki before, so it was educational for me. I found it surprisingly interesting, and now I'm looking forward to watching Kabuki even more. Thank you.



Having learned Kabuki, I became even more excited about watching it.



With images and videos included in the explanations, it was easier for me to imagine what Kabuki is like.

Japanese Calligraphy Class

In the Japanese calligraphy class, participants experience Japanese culture by writing Japanese characters and drawing pictures with a brush pen. Since there are Japanese students among the participants, you can interact with them and have the opportunity to make friends allowing you to feel closer to Japan and Japanese culture.

Comments from participants



It was a great opportunity to make friends with Japanese students. I had a lot of fun. -International student



It was fun to talk with everyone while drawing pictures. I would be happy if there were more explanations. -International student



It was an opportunity to think about Japanese culture. -Japanese student



It was fun to talk to exchange students whom I don't usually interact with. -Japanese student



Manga Class

Japan is a country with a very developed and advanced manga and animation industry. Many international students begin to develop an interest in Japan through Japanese manga and animation.

At the Center for International Education, we started a new manga class in the first semester of the 2018 academic year. We had a great time with members of the manga research club, drawing our favorite characters.



Comments from participants



I was happy to meet so many manga enthusiasts!



It was more challenging than I imagine, but it was fun! Everyone seemed like professional manga artists, which surprised me.



It was very rare and variable experience to have been able to work with screen tones.

Koto Class

The koto is a traditional Japanese musical instrument that came to Japan more than 1,000 years ago from China. It was adapted and developed into something uniquely Japanese. It is mentioned in *The Tale of Genji* and other ancient literary works. The styles of koto playing are divided into the Ikuta-ryu school and the Yamada-ryu school, and the shape of the pick and way of playing are different.

The koto class began at the Center for International Education in the second semester of the 2015 school year. The members of the koto music club performed "Hiyaku," "Sandan no shirabe," and other tunes and everyone played "Sakura" together.



A Look at the Class



Members of the koto club are teaching the participants how to play the koto.



The participants are playing the koto together with members of the koto club.

Comments from participants



I've always been interested in the koto, so I was thrilled to have this opportunity. Thanks to everyone, it was a very enjoyable time. Thank you so much!



I don't usually play musical instruments, but today I was able to challenge myself and try playing the koto, which was really great. There were some difficult parts, but members of the koto club kindly taught me. Thank you very much!

Kodo Class

Kodo is one of the three major art forms in Japan, along with tea ceremony and flower arrangement. In the Kodo class held by the Center for International Education, you can learn about the history of Kodo in Japanese culture, experience the actual aroma, create an aroma bag, and learn about its appealing points.



Instructor Hanako Shimada-Sensei

Hanako Shimada-Sensei graduated from Ochanomizu University and received her master's degree from the University of Tokyo. She has worked to popularize the Oie school of Kodo through culture classes and hands-on lessons in the traditional culture at schools. As an art historian, she has planned and organized exhibitions at art museums in Japan and abroad, appeared on TV, and written numerous articles for magazines and newspapers.

HP: www.haginosono.com

★Interview with the Instructor

Q: How did you get started in Kodo?

A: My great-grandfather was Sanjonishi Gyozan, the head of the Oie School of Kodo, and I used to help my grandmother prepare for her kodo classes during my teenage years. When I became a university student, I began attending the current Soke practice. For my graduation thesis, I chose the theme of the relationship between the Upper and Middle Ages Incense and Clothing Culture.

Q: In one word, what is the appeal of kodo?

A: The attraction is that listening to a wonderful fragrance restores the body and mind, and at the same time sharpens our senses because it focuses the mind on the sense of smell. Not only does it improve my mental health, but I also enjoy being able to touch the old-fashioned incense tools and increase my vocabulary of beautiful Japanese words, such as waka poems and inscriptions, which are the theme of the day's Kumiko.

Q: What do you enjoy about teaching?

A: I am elated when people who experience incense for the

first time tell me how interesting it is. I also enjoy that members of different ages and backgrounds can share a rich time around the same incense burner.

Q: Do you have a message for Ochanomizu University students?

A: I hope you enjoy spending time on our green campus! At other universities, many buildings are like office buildings, and you have fewer opportunities to experience the changing seasons when swamped, so the abundant nature at Ochanomizu University is very precious. I still fondly remember the large ginkgo trees and tansy in the kindergarten, the golden Osmanthus in front of Hui Ondo, the Itadori square in front of the Student Affairs Division, which has been overhauled, and the vivid mulberry seeds that fell on my way home.

A Look at the Class



1 Learn about the history and tradition of Kodo.



3 Making an aroma bag.



2 Actually listen to the fragrance.

Comments from participants



It was very intriguing! The teacher was kind, and their teaching method was excellent. It was wonderful and enjoyable to experience various scents.



Experiencing Japanese Kodo was very meaningful. It was lovely to be able to blend various scents and make scented sachets. Thank you for this opportunity!



I knew nothing about Kodo, so I was happy to learn the types of fragrances, their impressions, and the historical flow of Kodo through the class. Having the teacher explain slowly and allowing us to express our thoughts about different scents in our own words was a good experience.

Assistance for the Japanese Culture Classes

Japanese Culture classes are held with the support not only of the teachers who are leading the classes, but many others as well. The Ikebana class is supported by members of the flower arrangement club, the kimono class by members of the kimono-wearing club, the tea ceremony class by members of the Urasenke tea ceremony club, and the koto class by the members of the koto music club. These individuals help prepare the necessary materials for the class and support the teachers.

Foreign language classes taught by native speakers

There are about 200 international students enrolled at Ochanomizu University. Foreign language classes taught by native speakers have been held at the Center for International Education in the first and second halves of the academic year since 2002 with the aims of (1) fostering international human resources, (2) promoting exchange between international students and Japanese people, and (3) providing opportunities for international students to contribute to Japanese society. At these classes held during the lunch break, students learn pronunciation, greetings, and simple everyday conversation. For the participants, they provide opportunities not only to study foreign languages, but also to deepen their understanding of different languages, cultures, ways of thinking and values. For the international students serving as teachers, these classes provide them with a valuable experience in Japan.

“Italian” was offered in the second semester of 2023.



Comments from participants



This was my first experience with the Italian language, and I learned so many things such as the difficult pronunciation, reading methods different from English, and new vocabulary. I already had an interest in Italy as a country, but now I feel even stronger about wanting to visit. Learning about Italian culture, including Christmas traditions, has been very fun.

I've become interested in Italian culture, thanks to the insights provided during the course. I now want to visit Italy. The explanations were always clear, and the conversational practice was very enjoyable. Thank you for this valuable opportunity.



Comments from the instructor



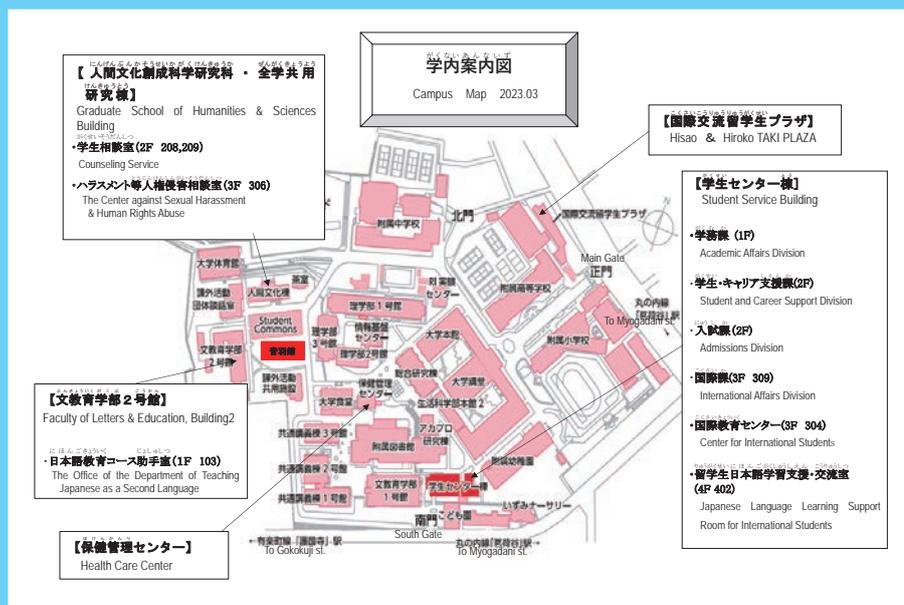
I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to teach Italian. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity. The students from Ochanomizu University are all very kind, so I always enjoy Thursdays. They approach the lessons with great enthusiasm, and their attitude towards learning is excellent. I'm impressed every time. Thanks to them, I feel even more motivated to teach! I want to express my gratitude to all the students who participated this semester and to Ochanomizu University and the teachers who provided this opportunity. Thank you very much!

Annual schedule

	Culture program	Foreign language class	Public lectures
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manga class ● Kimono class ● Shodo class 		
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ikebana class ● Kabuki appreciation class ● Yukata class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foreign language class 	
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sado class 		
October			
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kodo class ● Kimono class ● Calligraphy Class 		
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ikebana class ● Koto class ● Kimono class ● Sado class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foreign language class 	
January			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public lecture ● International Student Forum
February			

* The schedule of events varies from year to year.

The Center for International Education



The Center for International Education (CIE) was established in April 2001 as an education and research facility. The International Student Division offers the following programs and services:

- Courses in Japanese language and culture for undergraduate and graduate international students
- Guidance and counseling on academic research, continuing education, and campus and social life in Japan
- Creating a system and environment to promote cultural interaction between Japanese and international students

The Center for International Education home page:

<https://www.cf.ocha.ac.jp/gec-in/>

Japanese Culture Program home page:

https://www.cf.ocha.ac.jp/gec-in/j/menu/events/cul_school.html

Foreign language classes taught by native speakers:

https://www.cf.ocha.ac.jp/gec-in/j/menu/cul_exchange/native.html

Public lectures:

https://www.cf.ocha.ac.jp/gec-in/j/menu/cul_exchange/l_meeting.html

Editor's Note

After compiling this booklet, we realized once again that the Cultural Affairs Department has been sustained by the cooperation of many people. We would like to thank the teachers at the center who have always supported us from the time we started the cultural classes, the teachers of the cultural classes who always teach us with their heart and soul, and the assistants who have always been there to help us. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the teachers and assistants in the culture class who taught us, and to Ishida Rina for the English translations.

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